

SOCIO-ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO SEXUAL DEBUT
AMONG ADOLESCENT GIRLS LIVING IN INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS: A
CASE OF KIBRA, NAIROBI COUNTY

by

Imelda M. Mwau

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APPROVAL

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by

Imelda M. Mwau
14-0508

In accordance with Daystar University policies, this thesis proposal is accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Arts degree.

Stephen Many, PhD,
1st Supervisor

Susan Njuguna, PhD,
2nd Supervisor

Roseline Olumbe, PhD,
Coordinator, Child Development

Kennedy Ongaro, PhD,
Dean, School of Human and Social Sciences

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DECLARATION

SOCIO-ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO SEXUAL DEBUT
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CASE OF KIBRA, NAIROBI COUNTY

I declare that this thesis is my original work and has not been submitted to any other college or university for academic credit.

Signed: _____
Imelda Mwau
14-0508

Date: _____

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

APPROVAL	ii
DECLARATION	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vi
LIST OF TABLES	viii
LIST OF FIGURES	ix
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS	x
ABSTRACT.....	xi
DEDICATION.....	xii
CHAPTER ONE	1
INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY	1
Introduction	1
Background to the Study	2
Statement of the Problem	4
Purpose of the Study	5
Objectives of the Study	5
Research Questions	5
Justification for the Study	6
Significance of the Study	6
Assumptions of the Study	8
Scope of the Study	9
Limitations and Delimitations of the Study	9
Definition of Terms.....	10
Summary	11
CHAPTER TWO	12
LITERATURE REVIEW	12
Introduction	12
Theoretical Framework	12
General Literature Review	22
Empirical Literature Review	35
Conceptual Framework	39
Summary	41
CHAPTER THREE	42
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....	42
Introduction	42
Research Design.....	42
Population	43
Target Population	43
Sample Size.....	44
Sampling Techniques	45
Data Collection Instruments.....	45
Data Collection Procedures	47
Pretesting.....	47
Data Analysis Plan	48
Ethical Considerations	48
Summary	49

CHAPTER FOUR.....	50
DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION	50
Introduction	50
Analysis and Interpretation	50
Summary of Key Findings	68
Summary	68
CHAPTER FIVE	70
DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	70
Introduction	70
Discussions of Key Findings.....	70
Conclusion	78
Recommendations	79
Recommendations for Further Research.....	80
REFERENCES	81
APPENDICES	90
Appendix A: Questionnaire 1.....	90
Appendix B: Questionnaire 2.....	95
Appendix C: Map of Kibera.....	98
Appendix D: Ethical Clearance.....	99
Appendix E: Research Permit	100
Appendix: F: Plagiarism Report.....	101

LIST OF TABLES

<i>Table 3.1: Census Data for 13-17-year-olds Who Accessed YFS in November 2019.</i>	44
<i>Table 3.2: Summary of the Purposive Sampling Process</i>	45
<i>Table 4.1: Basic Characteristics of the Study Population.....</i>	51
<i>Table 4.2: Age at Sexual Debut</i>	53
<i>Table 4.3: Number of Rooms for the Whole Family.....</i>	53
<i>Table 4.4: Nature of Relationship with People Involved during Sexual Debut.....</i>	54
<i>Table 4.5: Sufficient Sexual Privacy for Adults at Home</i>	55
<i>Table 4.6: Importance of the Slum Upgrade Program towards Providing Sexual Privacy for Parents/Guardians</i>	56
<i>Table 4.7: Heads of Household</i>	57
<i>Table 4.8: Reason for Engaging in Sexual Debut.....</i>	58
<i>Table 4.9: Sufficient Knowledge on Sex</i>	62
<i>Table 4.10: The Appropriate Age for Sexual Debut</i>	63

LIST OF FIGURES

<i>Figure 2.1: Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory</i>	13
<i>Figure 2.2: Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs</i>	18
<i>Figure 2.3: Conceptual Framework</i>	40
<i>Figure 4.1: Ever Witnessed People Engaging in Sex</i>	55
<i>Figure 4.2: Timing of Sexual Debut Occurrence</i>	58
<i>Figure 4.3: Religious Affiliation of Those that had Experienced Sexual Debut</i>	60
<i>Figure 4.4: Main Source of Information Regarding Sex (for those who have experienced sexual debut)</i>	61
<i>Figure 4.5: Do You Think it is Important to Abstain?</i>	63
<i>Figure 4.6: Use of Contraceptive at Sexual Debut</i>	64
<i>Figure 4.7: Regrets Regarding Sexual Debut</i>	65
<i>Figure 4.8: More Sexual Interactions after Sexual Debut</i>	66

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CBO	Community Based Organizations
ECP	Emergency Contraceptive Pill
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FMP	First Monthly Period
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
ICD-10	International Classification of Diseases- 10 th edition
ISP	Internet Service Providers
KAIS	Kenya AIDS Indicator Survey
KDHS	Kenya Demographic and Health Survey
KFCB	The Kenya Film Classification Board
KHRC	Kenya Human Rights Commission
KNBS	Kenya National Bureau of Statistics
NGO	Non-Governmental Organizations
RHRA	Reproductive Health and Rights Alliance
SES	Socio-Economic Status
STD	Sexually Transmitted Diseases
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infections
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
YFS	Youth Friendly Services

ABSTRACT

Early sexual debut among teenage girls in informal settlements has been known to have serious negative impacts whose consequences could last a lifetime. The study sought to identify the socio-environmental factors that contribute to the first sexual experience of adolescent girls in Kibra, establish the perception of adolescent girls living in Kibra on sexual debut, and evaluate intervention strategies towards delaying sex debut among the adolescent girls. Through purposive sampling, the study identified a sample of 100 out of a target population of 333 teenage girls aged 13-17 who accessed the Kibra Community Health Centre-AMREF for youth-friendly services. Qualitative and quantitative data were collected by the use of two questionnaires, and the collected data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), version 23. Regarding the reasons behind the adolescents' first engagement in first sexual activity, the adolescents' willingness ranked first, at 55%; followed by peer pressure, at 27.8%. Further, the social workers attributed adolescents' sexual debut to poverty and lack of sexual privacy. Regarding their perceptions on sexual debut, more than half (56.3%) of the adolescent girls believed that they still needed to learn more about sex, while most of them (88%) felt that it was better to abstain from sex until they are 18+ years of age. On the intervention strategies towards delaying sex debut among the adolescent girls, the highest mentioned by the adolescent girls was guidance and counseling (at 60%), while the social workers mentioned provision of basic needs to the girls, among other strategies. The study recommends the establishment of more institutions oriented towards instilling good values in teenage girls so as to help them uphold abstinence and only engage in sex marriage.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my loving husband, Benson Njumwa Mwawongo, and my children: Andreas Mghanga Njumwa, Asher Mwang'ala Njumwa, and Ayana Mabori Njumwa, for their support in every way.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Introduction

Teenage sex and its implications in one's life is a topic that is common in Kenya as well as in many parts of the world. Precocious initiation into sexual activity predisposes adolescents to negative aspects of development psychologically and emotionally (Sitati, 2016). Teenagers in the developed world are sexually active, with some countries in Europe, such as the Netherlands, treating the issue as a normal part of growth. On the other hand, in the United States of America (USA), this is a great issue of concern (Schalet, 2011).

There is an existing relationship between teenage sexual behavior and parental involvement in terms of monitoring, communication and discipline in Western countries (Okigbo, Kabiru, Mumah, Mojola, & Beguy, 2015). However, the American culture seems to be on the opposite camp, especially fueled by the multibillion-dollar pornography industry, Victoria's Secret at every shopping mall, and Hollywood's sex-saturated messages on television. In South Asia, as well as in West, Central, and East Africa, sex initiation still happens early because of early marriages, specifically for the girls since their husbands are normally of advanced age (Baumle, 2013).

In recent years, the issue of teenage sex in Kenya has been frequently in the limelight, more often than not depicting risky sexual behavior (Adhiambo & Njagih, 2019). Despite awareness through sex education in schools, churches, and organizations working with the youth; matters of teenage pregnancy and motherhood, abortion, infant mortality, use and abuse of the emergency pill, child pornography, school dropout, and

new HIV/AIDS infections are still rampant in our society and are evident among adolescents in Kenya.

Background to the Study

Tulloch and Kaufman (2013) stated that while few human beings have their first sexual intercourse before the age of 13, most experience it before the age of 17. Eventually, nearly all human beings end up losing their sexual virginity. To some children, this first experience may occur willingly, while to others, it takes the form of abuse. The 2014 Kenya demographic and health survey disclosed that 15% of women aged 20-49 years had their first sexual intercourse by the age of 15, while 50% had it by the age of 18 years. The same survey revealed that 22% of men in the same age bracket had their sexual debut by the age of 15, and 56% of the same age bracket had it by 18 years of age (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics [KNBS], 2015). Though alarming, these findings are significantly lower than those of Western countries such as the USA, where, according to Eaton (as cited in Santrock, 2013), 63% of twelfth graders - about 17 years - reported having experienced sex.

The environment in which children live affects their development and well-being (KNBS, 2015). Traditionally, the African culture prohibited public discussions on sex as it was considered taboo (Okechi, 2018). However, at present, these discussions can no longer be limited to privacy because of the widespread sexual activity. The increased focus by the Kenyan Media in the recent past on adolescents' sexual behavior has brought to the fore the discussion on adolescence and sex.

Analysts have observed that there is a general increase in engagement of teenagers in sexual activities, including what is termed as non-conformist or nonconventional sexual behaviors such as group sex (Kibor, 2015); oral sex, anal sex, and same-sex relationships (Lesbianism, 2013). Similarly, the media, especially social

media and radio, have been saturated with sex talk, and this has effect on adolescents, especially when it concerns cross-generational sexual relationships.

HIV/AIDS Prevalence

A 2011 study by Kabiru, Beguy, Crichton, and Zulu (2011) reported higher HIV prevalence in urban informal settlement areas in comparison to urban non-slum areas in Nairobi County. The actual figures are estimated to be 12% in these informal settlements (Korogocho and Viwandani), 5.6 % nationwide, and 7.0% in Nairobi as a whole (Kabiru et al., 2011). The 2012 Kenya AIDS indicator survey highlighted that in Kenya, most youths get infected with HIV during adolescence, a situation that affects more females than their male counterparts (National AIDS and STI Control Programme [NAS COP] - Kenya, 2014).

Teenage Pregnancy

In a 2013 investigation of correlates of the timing of transition into motherhood among adolescent girls in two informal settlements in Nairobi County, Beguy, Ndugwa, and Kabiru (2013) observed that teenage child-bearing and the total fertility rate is higher in sub-Saharan Africa compared to other parts of the globe. In addition, Beguy et al. found out that about 15% of the girls between 15-17 years of age had given birth. As reported by the 2014 Kenya demographic and health survey, drivers of risky sexual behavior that lead to childbirth during adolescence include negative influence, being out of school because of lack of resources, and early marriages. The survey also noted that teenage mothers, more often than not, are more likely to curtail their educational achievement (KNBS, 2015). A research by Marston, Beguy, Kabiru, and Cleland (2013) that sought to understand the drivers of sexual debut among adolescents in the informal settlements of Nairobi highlighted various social, psychosocial, and behavioral factors, among them lack of parental supervision, low aspiration, high self-

esteem (surprisingly), family dysfunction, and lack of civic participation (Marston et al., 2013).

Statement of the Problem

A report by Onyango and Tostensen (2015) on the situation of youth and children in Kibra revealed that adolescent girls living in informal settlements in Nairobi “face numerous challenges as they transit from adolescence into adulthood” (p. 3). The same report also indicated that these adolescent girls “find themselves in a rather hostile slum environment characterized by unemployment, poor housing, large family sizes, violence, crime, drug and alcohol abuse, poor education facilities and lack of recreational activities” (Onyango & Tostensen, 2015, p. 3). Poor neighborhoods have been associated with high sexual activity among adolescents, mainly due to cultural beliefs and permissiveness on certain behavior (McLeod, Lawler, & Schwalbe, 2014).

As reported by the 2012 Kenya AIDS indicator survey, seven in every 100 children in Kenya aged 12-14 years have had sex (NASCOP, 2014). Adolescent girls living in informal settlements are at high risk of early sexual debut. Sitati (2016) maintained that adolescents living in the informal settlements of Kibera engage in riskier sexual behaviors compared with their peers in non-informal settlements of cities. Sitati further stated that adolescents who initiate sex very early, as opposed to those who start engaging in sex later, are exposed to myriad negative sexual and reproductive health outcomes. These outcomes include multiple and concurrent partners, leading to the acquisition of sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV. Early sexual intercourse also increases the risk of early pregnancy, which is associated with complications during birth that can lead to death or poor health outcomes for both mother and child. Young people often terminate unwanted pregnancies through induced abortions that can lead to psychological trauma and maternal complications, including

death (Sitati, 2016). Further evidence associates early unintended pregnancy with poor educational and employment opportunities.

Despite the coverage of the human reproductive system in the school curriculum and social structures, these two systems have always taken the responsibility of introducing sex education as part of life skills to teenagers. Adolescent girls in Kibra have continued to suffer the effects of early engagement in sexual activities. In light of the preceding discussion, this study sought to examine the socio-environmental factors in the environment unique to Kibra that compel adolescent girls to engage in sexual activities.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the environmental factors that drive adolescent girls in Kibra, an informal settlement in Nairobi City, to engage in sex for the first time.

Objectives of the Study

This study was guided by the following objectives:

1. To identify the socio-environmental factors that contribute to the first sexual experience of adolescent girls in Kibra.
2. To establish the perception of adolescent girls living in Kibra on sexual debut.
3. To determine the intervention strategies that can be employed towards delaying sex debut among adolescent girls.

Research Questions

The study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What socio-environmental factors are associated with sexual debut among adolescent girls living in Kibra?

2. What is the perception of adolescent girls living in Kibra towards sexual debut?
3. What intervention strategies can be employed to delay sex debut among adolescent girls?

Justification for the Study

The outcomes of early sexual debut and sexually active adolescence typically hurt girls more than it does boys. Girls are more likely to suffer physical abuse, and because of their biological nature, they are more vulnerable to sexually related infections and teenage pregnancy (Doyle, 2014). Women are also known to invest more emotionally in relationships and consequently more likely to suffer depression and suicide attempts (Doyle, 2014).

Successful combat against early sexual activity among teenage girls through programs, such as comprehensive sexuality education, would have several positive results. Such results would include a decrease in the spread of STIs, reduction in the number of single parents and teenage parents, reduction in the rate of infant mortality and abortion, and a general increase in happy women later in life who stand a higher chance of maintaining stable marriages (World Health Organization, 2018). Additionally, much as educational success is not always as a result of sexual abstinence, delay in coital activity for teenage girls will eventually result in better grades in school, better educational aspirations, and higher educational achievement as the girls will have a reduced chance of suffering the negative outcomes of practicing teenage sex (The Institute for Youth Development, n.d.).

Significance of the Study

The media, especially social media, has brought to light the involvement of young people in sex, homosexuality, lesbianism, sexting and pornographic content

sharing, sexual abuse in secondary schools, incest, and sex tourism at a very early age. The resultant effects of teenage sexual activity on a child's development call for urgency to investigate and address the motivation behind teenage girls' sexual debut. The successful and dignified transition of the adolescent girl child into a young woman ensures a prosperous future, an uplifted community, as well as a developed nation (Menstell, 2015). It is hoped that the findings of this study could be used towards ensuring that girls in low-income areas of Kenya are better equipped in delaying sexual debut and consequently excel in their education, as well as preserve sex for marriage.

The actual environment in which children are being raised is highly sexualized in terms of what the mass media presents to its audience and viewers, as well as the physical atmosphere (Muthoni, 2015). As reported by Muiruri (2016), poverty has made Kibra informal settlement dwellers adventurous, with some of them selling the only hope of owning the new apartments put up by the government to those with money but do not need these houses for shelter. Hopefully, as a result of the findings of this study, the residents of Kibra and their children will have a new outlook on the importance of decent and better housing.

The government and key policy makers in issues concerning women would gain more insight on matters revolving around sexual and reproductive health among adolescents. The war against new HIV infections, abortion, early childbirth, sex tourism, drug abuse, and child pornography among others, would probably be more successful when the focus is more on catalyzers of sexual debut. When teenage girls are able to delay first coitus to adulthood or marriage, they would have an easier time achieving their academic goals as well as leading healthier lives as far as reproductive health is concerned.

The researcher also anticipates that the outcomes of this study would aid parents towards being more vigilant in terms of close supervision of their young daughters. The parents would also work towards ensuring that they are more involved in teaching their daughters about sexuality and reproductive health. This is more so considering the availability of evidence suggesting that some children learn the negative aspects of sex from their parents and close relatives. With proper knowledge, therefore, the parents and relatives would impact positive aspects of sexuality on reproductive health on their children. It was also hoped that the study's findings could aid in emphasizing the importance of sexual privacy.

Hopefully, the study may also inform all stakeholders on how much knowledge teenage girls have regarding teenage sex. Further, the study findings may help in understanding the circumstances and factors surrounding early sexual debut in order to inform policy development, design, and implementation of appropriate interventions. The finding could also inform areas for further research by researchers who are passionate about teenage sexuality.

Assumptions of the Study

This study made the following the following assumptions:

1. Female adolescents are exposed to sexual activities because of their family social environment.
2. Girls aged between 13-17 years have had both first consensual sexual experience and nonconventional sex.
3. Exposure to sexual debut to girls either in their adolescence or before has interfered with their development negatively.

Scope of the Study

This study aimed at unveiling environmental factors that lure adolescents, specifically females aged between 13-17 years, into their first sexual experience. The sample population was picked from both school-going and non-school-going girls from Kibra informal settlement who have accessed youth-friendly services at Kibra Community Health Centre - AMREF. The study ensured that only residents of Laini Saba village, Kibra informal settlement, Nairobi County, took part in this study.

Limitations and Delimitations of the Study

One limitation in this study was that the respondents would give information that is not true due to the fear that their parents and society would be informed of their individual cases, a situation that may invite stigma or punishment. To mitigate this, the researcher assured the respondents of confidentiality and briefly took them through the benefits of this study for them, as well as for future generations.

Considering that it is likely that sexual debut that occurs during or before adolescence is nonconsensual, the researcher encountered emotional breakdown by teenage girls, especially those who were raped or sexually abused. To delimit this aspect, the researcher was accompanied by a counselor specialized in debriefing victims of sexual abuse so that the session left them with a way forward on how to stop the abuse or how to overcome the psychological trauma.

Kibra, like any other informal settlement in Africa, would have posed security threats to the researcher during data collection. To reduce the chance of attacks, the researcher worked together with someone who resides in Kibra and interacts well with the residents. The researcher also ensured that the data collection took place inside the AMREF clinic and during the centre's working hours.

Definition of Terms

Adolescent: A person in the stage of human life between 10-19 years (World Health Organization as cited in Smith, 2016). This study will specifically consider persons between the ages of 13 years and 17 years. This term was used synonymously with the term teenager.

Environment: Defined as everything surrounding human beings; from the things around them to how they live their daily lives, and fellow human beings around them (King & McCarthy, 2019). For the purpose of this study, environment referred to the immediate surrounding that is specific to slum dwellings, including socio-economic aspects of the lives of the adolescents such as family background and SES, cultural beliefs, exposure to media, and education level.

Informal settlements: “Residential areas where inhabitants have no security of tenure vis-à-vis the land or dwellings they inhabit, with modalities ranging from squatting to informal housing...and lacking basic services and city infrastructure...” (United Nations Human Settlement Program [UN-Habitat], 2015, p. 1). This study adopted UN-Habitat’s 2015 definition of the term informal settlements.

Sexual debut: The first intercourse experience (Golden, Furman, & Collibee, 2016). This study used the same definition.

Socio-economic factors: According to the American Psychological Association (as cited in Berzofsky, Smiley-McDonald, Moore, & Krebs, 2014), socio-economic factors refer to important aspects such as income and education that influence the operations and behavior of humans for the entirety of their lifetime. This study used the same definition.

Socio-environment: “...encompass[es] the immediate physical surroundings, social relationships, and cultural milieus within which defined groups of people

function and interact” (National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, 1999, p. 465). The study adopted this definition.

Summary

In this chapter, the researcher has introduced the study, given its background, and presented the problem statement. The objectives and questions that the study sought to address have also been captured. In the next chapter, the researcher discusses the study’s framework, analyzes general and empirical literature related to the study topic, and presents the study’s conceptual framework.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter presents a systematic analysis of both general and empirical literature about sexual debut and general sexuality of teenagers, specifically teenagers living in areas classified as low in socio-economic status (SES). More than 60% of Nairobi's population lives in informal settlement areas where the conditions are deplorable, and access to basic needs is a challenge (Wanzala, 2018). The study's theoretical framework was based on two theories: Urie Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (EST) and Maslow's hierarchy of needs.

Theoretical Framework

Ecological Systems Theory (EST)

The ecological systems theory developed by the famous psychologist Urie Bronfenbrenner states that human development is influenced by the different types of environmental systems (Sincero, 2012). Urie Bronfenbrenner's concept of explaining human behavior and development is based on an individual's biological makeup as well as their interactions with the environment they live in (Liu, 2017). This theory comprises five ecological systems, namely microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem, and chronosystem - which all work in a bidirectional manner in a child's life to finally influence who the child becomes, and at the same time the individual influencing the environment he lives in (Sincero, 2012). Sex is part of life (Rosenzweig, 2012). Sex should happen at the ripe age of adulthood when the individual can handle its consequences and engage in it in the Bible-guided boundaries.

Figure 2.1 is a representation of Urie Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory.

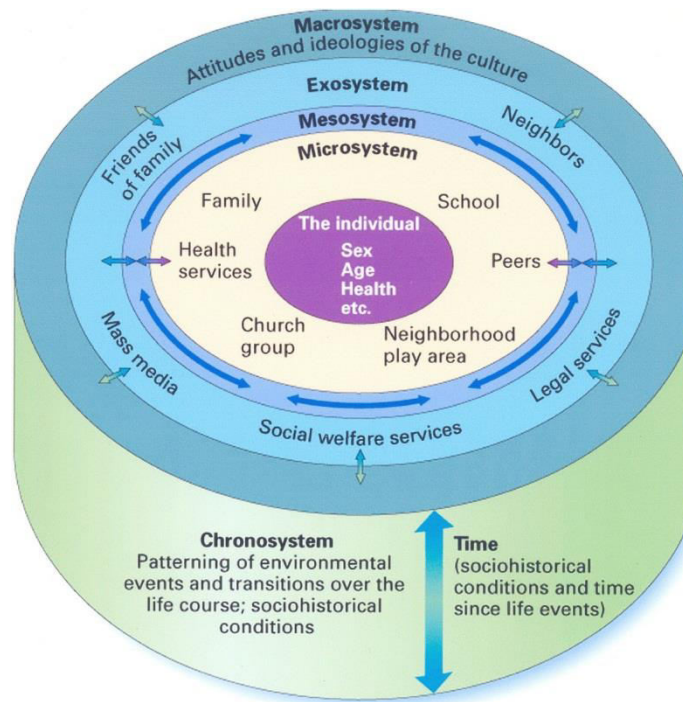


Figure 2.1: Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory
Source: Pittenger, Huit, and Hansen (2016)

Microsystem

Guy-Evans (2020) described the microsystem as the innermost layer representing a teenager's immediate surroundings and interactions. For a teenage girl, this layer would be represented by her family, neighbors, and neighborhood - including the kind of housing and general physical environment - school, and her peers, among others. According to Mutisya (2015), in Kibra informal settlement, there are at least 10,000 mud-walled structures roofed with iron sheets, each occupying an average space of 12ft by 12ft, and housing an average of seven family members - 90% of which are rented and paid for by monthly rent (Mutisya, 2015). Houses made of rusty brown iron sheets as walls and roof are also a common phenomenon in Kibra (Njogu, 2011).

The researcher found the described environment to be of special interest to this study. In the researcher's opinion, sexual debut may be influenced by factors, such as crowding of living space in the house, what the girl child is exposed to in terms of seeing and hearing from the family members and neighbors, among other factors. Parents do not wish to raise children in informal settlements. This study recognizes that it is the tough economic times we live in, especially in developing countries, Kenya included that force parents to raise their children in informal settlements.

A well-informed teenage girl on matters of sex and its consequences may be able to preserve herself till marriage even with the given circumstances. The same applies to a teenage girl who is physically and mentally healthy. This would help a lot in the event the girl needs to voice out or even run to safety in case she is attacked by a sexual abuser. A child who is cognizant of boundaries may also be able to sense when there is an intrusion into her personal space and privacy. This represents instances where the child influences her environment and determines her own behavior.

Mesosystem

This layer represents the kind of relationships existing between elements of the microsystem (Guy-Evans, 2020). For instance, the relationship between an adolescent girl's parents and the school, between the girl's biological parent and a stepparent, and between parents and their daughter's friends. Wanzala (2018) noted that recently there had been a crisis in Kenyan schools after teenage girls in boarding schools raised the issue of being raped, one such school being Moi Girls School Nairobi. In the case of Moi Girls School Nairobi, the link between parents and the school's board of governors was non-existent because the board had been informed and had established that rape had occurred yet chose to sweep the issue under the carpet.

Mathew (2017) reported of a 2007 study carried out by the Ministry of Women and Child Development of the Government of India in 13 Indian states. The study established that about 53.2% of adolescents were being sexually abused and that 50% of the abusers were familiar people to the adolescents, such as family relatives, that is, stepfathers, brothers-in-law, stepbrothers, and cousins. In other cases, neighbors and drunkards were the abusers of adolescent housewives and girls in informal settlements (Mathew, 2017). These findings have stirred up a need in this researcher to try and find out if healthy relationships between neighbors and parents, a biological parent and a stepparent, and basically attentive parenting can save the day in the event teenage girls are undergoing the same predicament in Kibra informal settlements.

A neighbor can be sexually abusing a pre-teen girl child, a situation that could be well known by another neighbor. If the relationship between the parent and the neighbor is not good, the neighbor may choose to keep quiet until it is too late. Sometimes teenagers are in conflict with their parents; they can choose to confide in their peers in matters as delicate as sexual abuse. If there exists a healthy bond between the friends of a daughter and her mother, some situations of sexual abuse whereby the abuser is someone close can hopefully be saved.

Exosystem

This third layer (exosystem), as explained by Guy-Evans (2020), comprises institutions that indirectly affect the child but affect the microsystem to determine the outcome of an individual. These include the parent's work environment, mass media, and community resources, among others. Generally, due to tough economic situations, parents in the informal settlements, in the same manner as their counterparts, have to work very hard to make ends meet. Demanding working life that forces parents to leave

their homes before sunrise and get home after dark and very exhausted is a norm in Kenya's Capital, Nairobi.

The researcher was, therefore, motivated to find out if parents in informal settlement areas have time left to vet programs watched by their teenage girls, as well as movies watched during weekends and during school holidays. In this digital era marked by easily available phones, are parents able to moderate the content accessed by their daughters through the internet? Is there a chance that mass media, through Facebook, Telegram, WhatsApp, and YouTube, among others, is pushing teenage girls to their first sexual experience? This study sought to unveil how institutions in the exosystem in informal settlements can be empowered to ensure that they help in the fight against early sexual debut and sexually active adolescence.

Macrosystem

The macrosystem is a broad established system that, as normal citizens, we may have no control over. It includes laws and beliefs that govern how children should be treated, the system of education to be followed, the economic status of a country, culture, and ethnicity (Guy-Evans, 2020). The presence of trained social workers who champion the rights of children and who are friendly and approachable may be a big solution in reducing child abuse cases in informal settlements. An education system that empowers the girl child in sexual matters and awareness can also help raise awareness of risk factors in informal settlements and how to deal with situations that threaten the security of teenage girls.

A government, whose system has loopholes, will allow the sale of illicit alcoholic drinks to minors in informal settlements and this would in turn increase sexual activeness among teenagers. Operation of movie shops that sell pornographic content to teenagers as well as the airing of content that is not appropriate to teenagers on

national television (TV) can also have an effect on the timing of sexual debut among teenagers.

Chronosystem

Lastly, according to Guy-Evans (2020), the chronosystem is all about changes over time that affect an individual or their environment. These include the death of a family member, divorce, civil war, among other factors. Post-election violence is a recurrent phenomenon in Kenya, occurring almost after every election period. The devastating impacts are felt most in informal settlements, including Kibra, where tension begins and takes time before cooling off. Unfortunately, rape cases are nothing new during post-election violence scenarios in Kenya. The most affected are normally the old, women, and children - teenage girls included (Njogu, 2011).

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

As stated by McLeod (2018), Maslow's hierarchy of needs is a theory of human motivation put forth by Abraham Maslow to explain the position of human beings at any given point of their lives. The theory puts emphasis on the needs of human beings being met at a hierarchical level basis, whereby a human being is naturally motivated to higher-level needs only when needs of the lower levels have been met (McLeod, 2018).

Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory postulates that "people are motivated by five basic categories of needs: physiological, safety, love, esteem, and self-actualization" (Hopper, 2019, para. 1). The theory "is most often displayed as a pyramid. The lowest levels of the pyramid are made up of the most basic needs, while the most complex needs are at the top of the pyramid" (Cherry, n.d., para. 6), as shown in Figure 2.2.

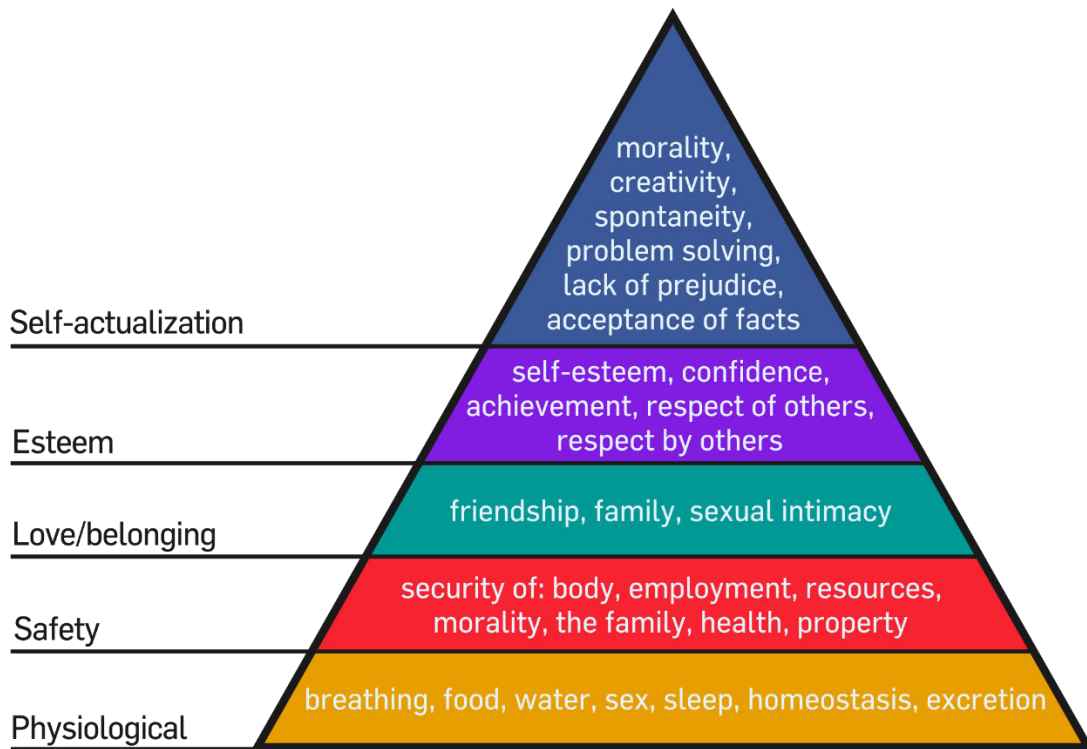


Figure 2.2: Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Source: Logan and Everall (2019)

Physiological needs

These include the lowest level needs, considered necessary for life. Things such as food, shelter, and clothing are a priority for all human beings. In this study, the researcher looked at how sexual debut can be fast-forwarded due to unmet physiological needs. The majority of the Kibra residents live in abject poverty, below the poverty line (Bodewes, 2013). This suggests a struggle for three meals in a day, proper shelter, good warm clothes, and sanitary towels, among other items for the teenage girls. In Kibra. In the quest to get any of these needs met, these girls could be lured to giving in to sex for money. In other words, initiation into sex could be easily avoided or delayed if the child has the basic provisions from the caregivers or non-governmental organizations (NGOs) within the informal settlement.

Security and safety needs

After meeting the basic needs, human beings are now motivated towards the next level, which is purely the need to feel safe and out of danger (“The Hierarchy,” n.d.). This aspect more directly looks at rape cases and sexual abuse in informal settlements. Informal settlements are marked by squeezed alleys, poor drainage, poor lighting, sometimes lack of toilets and bathrooms, very many structures selling cheap liquor, and sometimes idle youth - due to high rates of unemployment - who sometimes turn into crime. Mugging in alleys consequently is an everyday ordeal, and so is robbery with violence at night. This not only robs slum dwellers of their possessions but also throws them into a state of fear and insecurity.

Every five years, for almost every general election in Kenya, there have been cases of post-election violence whose impact is most felt in Kibra as well as in other informal settlements. It is marked by the torching of houses, raping of women and young girls, young men being killed by stray bullets, house break-ins, residents turning violent against each other based on ethnic groups, and massive destruction of property. Therefore, young girls are constantly under the threat of being raped by criminal gangs and being sexually abused by drunkards. This introduces forced early sexual debut for some who would have waited till the right moment.

It was the researcher’s view that the fear of being targeted by sexual offenders can throw a teenage girl into early sexual activity. This is likely to occur when men or teenage boys offer protection to innocent girls with the promise that no one will harm them if they give in to their sexual advances. No sooner as the girls begin to get comfortable with the sense of security accorded to them than they lose their virginity to the males who were supposed to protect them.

Love and a sense of belonging

Hopper (2019) held that,

According to Maslow, the next need in the hierarchy [once the physiological, and the safety and security needs have been met] involves feeling loved and accepted. This need includes both romantic relationships as well as ties to friends and family members. It also includes our need to feel that we belong to a social group. Importantly, this need encompasses both feeling loved *and* feeling love towards others (para. 5).

With the physiological, the safety, and security needs having been met, human beings automatically seek to feel loved and have a sense of belonging from fellow human beings. Love from home is fundamental. If anyone lacks this at home, they may be forced to go out looking for acceptance by others. In the perception of this researcher, the busy life of struggling parents in the informal settlements, coupled with their strictness in their efforts to raise their children successfully in this environment, could lead to teenagers feeling unloved. Being in this vulnerable state, anyone can take advantage of them and introduce them not only to conventional sex but even to lesbianism.

Self-esteem and confidence

According to Maslow, we can only be motivated to achieve this higher-level need once the lower ones have been achieved. It is described by how confident one feels about themselves and the worth we put on ourselves, the respect we command (Hopper, 2019; “The Hierarchy,” n.d.). This researcher opined that for a teenage girl, this feeling can be elevated by good teachings and having the people who matter, who believe in her, and always encouraging her. These people include parents and teachers

who, when not at the forefront of this, the teenager may pick any other, including peers and bad company, as long as they will respect her.

Additionally, this researcher was of the view that troublesome groups in our secondary schools are more often than not led by students who perform poorly in their studies. Teachers, other students, and parents will openly praise high achievers in school. Students who feel worthless and are not recognized for anything may look for ways to command respect from their peers. It is not uncommon for teenagers to turn to sex to boost their confidence as they experiment with different partners (Cowie, 2012).

Self-actualization

This is ranked as the highest level need to be achieved after every other need has been met (Cherry, n.d.). This researcher perceived self-actualized teenagers in this study as those who have freely chosen abstinence as their way of life even despite a tough struggle dealing with poverty, an unsafe neighborhood, low self-esteem, and generally a difficult life in the informal settlement. Some measures of achieving these include good sex education in the curriculum, putting structures in place to delay sexual debut, developing a culture of friendship between parents and teenagers, and recognizing little efforts by teenagers in their studies and other key areas.

In this study, the researcher employed Maslow's hierarchy of needs to emphasize the role needs play in determining a teenager's life outcome in terms of whether they will engage in sexual activity or not. Further, the study endeavoured to establish the role played by the environment in pushing teenagers towards their initiation into sex and sex-related activities.

General Literature Review

Adolescence and Sexuality

Hall and Thirston (2011) have submitted that adolescence is a critical period of growth and development for girls as they (the girls) are getting ready for adult life. It is a period in the girls' lives during which they go through physical, psychological, social, and emotional changes. Puberty for most girls sets in at this time, between 14 and 18 years of age, but can start as early as eight years for some girls (Hall & Thirston, 2011). These biological changes are accompanied by sexual urges and attraction to the opposite sex coupled with a lot of confusion about love and infatuation (Mwenisongole & Mligo, 2018).

During this period, the adolescents begin to question who they are and try to develop a sense of autonomy (Batra, 2013). Notably, this happens at the time the teenager's attention is supposed to be fully engaged in studies and constructive co-curricular activities in order to be a productive citizen. Furthermore, the teenager is still fully dependent on the parent and therefore not ready for consequences that come with sexual-related activities. Successful adolescence marked by healthy relationships and responsible behavior can only be realized when the adolescents are given correct information on delaying sexual debut, as well through proper guidance from parents and teachers.

Socio-Environmental Factors Contributing to Early Sexual Debut Among Girls

Social-economic status (SES)

The SES of the teenage girls' families is believed to contribute to the timing of first consensual sexual activity in a teenager's life. Of particular interest to this study was low SES because residents of Kibra are generally classified as being of low SES.

Akella and Jordan (2015) attested that children coming from poor backgrounds record high school dropout rates, teen pregnancies, and juvenile crime. This researcher was of the view that tough financial situations in informal settlements may force teenage girls to engage in sex in exchange for cash in order to afford basic needs.

Lack of sexual privacy

According to a research done in the informal settlement of Kibra in 2016, teenagers are unfortunately witnessing adults having sex at home and in the neighborhood (Sitati, 2016). Privacy in these spaces is achieved by the use of curtains to split the bed space from the other space where cooking and sitting take place. The reality of this setup is that it would be almost impossible to have sexual privacy in the event the house is a normal household with parents and children, as in the case of most average Kibra homes. The situation would be compounded if any or both parents indulge in alcohol or other forms of drug abuse, as is the case of numerous informal settlements dwellers.

The African culture is well known to permit many people to live under one roof even when the space is strictly limiting. Every year there usually is mass movement of rural-urban migration in search of employment, and elder relatives normally come to add to the already little space. It may not be surprising to find that early sexual debut results from the elder relatives and siblings coercing the teenage and preteen girls into sex with them. The remaining space in itself can only logically permit bed-sharing regardless of the difference in gender.

This researcher argues that apart from parents exposing their own children to sex, neighbors may also be doing the same. Iron sheet walls are not soundproof, and within a short time, they rust and develop cracks and holes. These teenagers may also

be watching neighbors from the comfort of their houses which may translate into the effects they get from watching pornographic content on social media.

The issue of communal toilets and bathrooms has been discussed severally but mostly because it is an issue of concern when it comes to sanitation and communicable diseases. A personal toilet in the slum is still a luxurious dream for urban informal settlement dwellers. This study sought to understand if the idea of having to always walk from the house even at night to relieve oneself may have a hand in early sexual debut, keeping in mind that the washrooms are also mostly made of iron sheets or in worse scenarios of sack material.

Rampant prostitution and brewing of illicit liquor in the informal settlements

Studies have shown that most informal settlements are associated with rampant prostitution and numerous liquor dens, and Kibra is no exception. Young girls are easily exposed to child prostitution directly or indirectly through close proximity with the drunkards as some of the girls' mothers work in these liquor dens or own them. In a similar situation in Bengali, India, Dalla, Baker, DeFrain, and Williamson (2011) found out that the customers, who were mostly police officers and the drunkards, preferred teenage girls to their mothers who were the social workers, because they believed that the girls were virgins and, therefore, less likely to infect them with STDs.

Religion

Poor attendance to religious programs was one of the factors found to facilitate sexual debut among the 15-24-year-olds of Woldia Town in northeast Ethiopia (Kassahun, Gelagay, Muche, Dessie, & Kassie, 2019). This research concluded that religion plays a significant role in molding a teenager into a responsible and God-fearing adult, and most churches preach and teach that premarital sex and abortion are wrong, as they are indeed sin.

Child marriages

Child marriage is not a rare phenomenon, especially in developing countries in Africa (Ahonsi et al., 2019). Unfortunately, in Ghana, as in many other countries, it is an occurrence indirectly encouraged by both Islam and Christian religions as their culture greatly discourages and at times punishes childbearing out of the marriage institution (Ahonsi et al., 2019). Marriage is still considered prestigious and honorable by certain communities, so the girl child sometimes is pushed into it any time after menarche. This is a cultural practice that is inevitably supporting sexual debut among teenage girls in Africa.

Family background - parenting styles

Studies have indicated that authoritarian, permissive, and uninvolved parenting, more often than not, tends to be associated with problematic teenage life as opposed to authoritative parenting (Cherry, n.d.; Hoskins, 2014; Morin, 2019). This is because the mentioned three parenting styles, in one way or another, either apply low supervision of the children, have little or no involvement in the children's lives, lack guidance and consequently trust towards the children, have harsh reactions to the children's actions, or fail to show love to the children (Cherry, n.d.; Hoskins, 2014; Morin, 2019). Consequently, teenagers brought up in this manner tend to turn out as violent, sometimes engaging in drug abuse and alcohol, as well as in irresponsible sexual behavior (Maugi, 2019). A close relationship between mother and daughter has been proven to contribute a lot towards abstinence and the use of birth control (McWhirter, McWhirter, & McWhirter, 2013).

Family background - discussion of sex at home

The African culture has been known to prohibit the discussion of sexual matters between parents and their children. Originally, girls were sent to their grandparents and aunts to be taught on sexual matters in preparation for marriage. Presently this topic is very much alive in nuclear families because times have changed. A study on Dutch adolescents by e Silva, van de Bongardt, van de Looij-Jansen, Wijtzes, and Raat (2016) has shown that teenage girls who confide their sexual matters and discuss freely with their parents, especially mothers, seem to delay sexual debut and use protective measures, compared to their peers.

Family background - dysfunctional homes

Lev (2020) described a dysfunctional family as one that exhibits unfavorable characteristics such as tension, abuse, inverted family power hierarchy, lack of unreserved love, children playing the role of parents, single parenthood due to divorces, and neglect due to drugs and alcohol. Lack of parental supervision is one of the psychosocial factors indicated as drivers of sexual debut among adolescents in Nairobi's informal settlements (Marston et al., 2013).

This researcher opined that while there may be no such thing as a perfect home, a very turbulent family environment can push a child into an early sexual debut. For instance, orphaned children may be compelled to engage in prostitution in order to get money for basic needs for themselves and their younger siblings. In a broken home where the mother is overburdened with providing for a large family on her own, lawlessness may arise because the parent is so engaged in providing for the family and ignoring nurturing the teenage girl socially and emotionally. These are situations that may cause early sexual debut among teenage girls in Kibra.

Peer environment

Psychologists categorize adolescence as the period most affected by peer pressure (Ciranka & van den Bos, 2019; Steinberg & Monahan, 2017). Adolescents are easily influenced by what their peers do, as long as they perceive it to be okay. In respect to this study, if a teenage girl's close friends hold permissive attitudes towards sex and are sexually active, she may be easily lured to engage in it. According to a study carried out in Nairobi's Dagoretti District on factors influencing sexual debut among teenage boys and girls, 13% reported engaging in sex willingly for the first time because of peer pressure (Ndung'u, 2015).

Sex education

Sex education is key for teenage girls in delaying sexual debut. Leaving the responsibility of educating children solely on teachers' shoulders may not have the desired results (Crocker, Pit, Hansen, John-Leader, & Wright, 2019). Parents need to strengthen their bond with their children and have this discussion with them. According to this researcher, the relationship between parents and children probably has not been the best across the board, sometimes due to tight work schedules for the parents or simply because it may not be a very comfortable discussion between the two parties. Times have changed, and parents need to take the front seat in the said discussion.

Social media and mass media

Exposure to pornographic content in movies is another factor that quickens sexual debut. O'Hara, Gibbons, Gerrard, Li, and Sargent (as cited in Kastbom, 2015) noted that in this digital era, social media is an explosion with many applications that facilitate the rapid transmission of pornographic content. Such social media platforms include WhatsApp, Telegram, Facebook, YouTube, and much more accessible via

mobile phones as long as one has access to the internet. As long as a child can access a phone, there is a risk of viewing images and videos usually circulating on social media groups.

Other Factors Contributing to Early Sexual Debut Among Girls

Timing of puberty onset

Puberty can occur before the girl reaches the teenage stage. According to Cornelius, Clark, Reynolds, Kirisci, and Tarter (as cited in Kastbom, 2015), early onset of puberty sometimes leads to early sexual debut in girls, and an early sexual debut is a risk factor associated with alcohol and drug abuse as well as anti-social behavior. At eight years of age, a preteen might not be well equipped in terms of knowledge to understand the dangers of sexual activity.

Prior victims of sexual abuse

Kenney, Reinholtz, and Angelini advanced that prior sexual abuse of any form to a child predisposes a teenager to early sexual debut by consent, to higher unprotected sexual activity, to having multiple partners, to acquiring STIs and HIV, and to early pregnancy (as cited in Navarro, 2013). Victims of sexual abuse are normally vulnerable, especially if healing has not taken place. They may not feel like they have negotiating power when it comes to deciding when they are ready to engage, with whom, and under what circumstances.

Adolescent Girls Perception Towards Teenage Sexual Debut

Assuming that all adolescent girls think that sexual debut during adolescence is destructive would be fallacious. A study undertaken by Widman, Choukas-Bradley, Helms, and Prinstein (2016) unearthed that teenage girls' sexual behavior is influenced by the girls' peers. Peer pressure during adolescence is common, deeply rooted, and

rampant because of the need to belong as well as to acquire a social identity and reward. This belief pushes so many teenagers to have sex, to have it frequently and with several partners by the time they go through adolescence (Widman et al., 2016). This could be one of the reasons adolescent girls in Kibra to have sex at a time they are supposed to be concentrating on schoolwork to build their future.

The chances are that there are cases of adolescent girls who have positive perceptions as well as those whose perceptions may not appear to be ideal. There is a need to explore the girls' thoughts on teenage engagement in sex and why it is worth or not worthy to involve oneself until later in life. This would inform on areas that need addressing in society to give these girls a healthier perspective and successfully win against teenage sexual activities.

Aguila et al. (2017) sought to establish the perception of a teenager on premarital sex. The participants in the study, who had already experienced premarital sex, thought that teenagers who take part in sex have emotional problems, are immature, and are ignorant (Aguila et al., 2017). Another study done among pregnant and never pregnant teenage girls in Rakai town of Uganda revealed that many never pregnant girls were against teenage sex but believed their pregnant counterparts engage in sex as a means to secure future financial freedom through getting pregnant. This is because they anticipate that responsible men will marry them and take care of them and their children, an easy escape from poverty (Maly et al., 2017). This is an encouragement that also in Kibra, there could be a good percentage of teenagers that would support the campaign against teenage sex.

Intervention Strategies Towards Delaying Sex Debut Among Adolescent Girls

Sex in early and late adolescence has never yielded positive results. Parents do not wish for their children to be sexually active before adulthood. A lot of research has

been done regarding outcomes of teenage sex, and how to try and lead teenage girls into abstinence and safe sex to in order reduce teenage pregnancy and abortions, STIs and new HIV infections, infant and maternal mortality, rates of school dropout, and general success of adolescence as a stage. Some of the intervention strategies that have been employed, as captured in literature, are discussed in the ensuing section.

Involving mothers in disapproving early sexual debut

Research carried out even outside of Africa has shown that a mother's involvement in raising a daughter in the nuclear family has a greater impact in comparison to when the mother is not involved. For instance, e Silva et al. (2016) researched how maternal relationships influence early sexual initiation among Dutch adolescents. The research found that girls, who are closely connected to their mothers and where the mothers strongly disapproved of teenage sex, seemed to delay sexual debut as opposed to those who were not close with their mothers and whose mothers did not openly disapprove of teenage sex. Sexual matters would best be discussed in a family set-up where the female parent is the one facilitating the talk with her daughter as opposed to the male parent. This could be attributed to the fact that even when there was no formal schooling in Africa, daughters were initiated into sexual matters by their aunts and grandmothers. This tradition changed due to the introduction of formal education. Empowering the mothers in Kibra on sex education and how to guide their daughters through successful teenage marked by total sexual abstinence would play a significant role towards adolescents delaying sexual activities to marriage.

Sex education integrated with life skills

There is a need to keep emphasizing giving more weight to sex education coupled with life skills at all levels of a teenage girl's life (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2019). This researcher's opinion was that the

responsibility of sex education should be shared among parents, teachers, church leadership on the teenage programs, NGOs, and anybody else involved in the life of the teenage girls. The topic of delaying sexual debut should not only be linked to avoiding direct consequences of sex but also to helping young women have a better life with better opportunities.

Success of the slum upgrade initiative

Kibera, just as any other slum in Kenya, has long been characterized by limited access to appropriate housing, electricity, and sanitation (Onyango & Tostensen, 2015). As mentioned earlier, the residents in Kibera basically live in small, shared rooms, which mostly are iron sheet or mud-walled with a communal washroom area. The Kenya Slum Upgrading Program (KENSUP), under the Kenyan government in conjunction with the UN-HABITAT, has been engaged in building stone houses with better sanitation, water, and electricity in the struggle to upgrade slum dwellers lives and eventually to eradicate the present deplorable physical living conditions (Sebambo, 2015).

However, little success has been achieved as the slum dwellers opt to either sell their houses or rent them out to make some money to pay back the mortgage and immediately go back to living in the same deplorable conditions. According to Jones (2015), the said beneficiaries claim that there is little difference regarding conditions in the new houses and those of the typical slums hence the renting out and moving back into the shanties. Clearly, there is a crisis with this project, and there is a lot of emphasis on trivial matters such as sanitation, maintenance, and the rightful beneficiaries.

Sadly, little is said about the decency of the living space. The slum dwellers seem not to look at this project from the angle of more space to share with family members, more privacy, and a lesser number of people sharing the washroom area. This

researcher noted the need for civil participation in the slum upgrade project to achieve desired results and educate residents on the holistic growth that this change is supposed to bring into their lives. The government also needs to ensure that the trend of slum relocation, as opposed to slum upgrade, is put to an end without delay. Lack of sexual privacy has been found to play a big role in exposing young girls to nudity and sexual acts by parents and neighbors. If all the slum dwellers could afford at least a one-bedroom stone house ensuring parents have their own bedroom, things would probably significantly change.

The clergy and church discipleship

According to James Fowler's theory of faith development, adolescents are at a stage of spiritual development whereby they choose what to believe and can personalize faith (Walsh, 2016). They decide what is ideal and what they will follow in terms of behavior and values, all based on community norms. This is why their peers play an important role in shaping who they become (Walsh, 2016). This knowledge is important because it is an opportune time for the church to impart the correct knowledge holistically in adolescents through bible teachings and faith-based programs. The church can organize workshops, seminars, and camps, just to mention a few, to teach the adolescents how to guard their hearts, mind, and body against any sexual immorality, just as taught in the Bible (New International Version, Proverbs 22:6). These teachings would go a long way in helping adolescents make goals, work towards achieving them, and remain focused through their daily challenges.

The government's involvement against child sex exploitation

Currently, the age of consent regarding sex in Kenya remains 18 years old. The Court of Appeal in 2019 proposed a bill to lower the age of consent to 16 years, citing lengthy jail terms imposed on culpable young men (Muthoni, 2019). Concerning the

protection of children from sexual exploitation, The Kenya Children Act, Chapter 141 has declared that “a child shall be protected from sexual exploitation and use in prostitution, inducement or coercion to engage in any sexual activity and exposure to obscene materials” (National Council for Law Reporting, 2010a, p. 15). The law has been consistent with the penalties due for sexual offenders, especially on rape cases against minors. However, once in a while, we watch and listen to controversial news involving sexual exploitation of minors and many unresolved court cases on the same. The government should, therefore, tighten the laws on these offenders who occasionally include close relatives, the clergy, and teachers mandated to take care of these children.

Media and internet regulation

The media in Kenya, including TV and radio, plays a major role in influencing teenagers on issues to do with premarital sex. Programs need to be vetted before being aired on national TV, and radio presenters need to be given boundaries on what they can and cannot discuss on air. The Kenya Film Classification Board (KFCB) has been working well to ensure that children are not exposed to adult content on TV, especially between 5 a.m. and 10 p.m. (Mulwa, 2016). However, there is a lot of room for improvement regarding content aired past 10 pm. For instance, we have witnessed an uproar concerning the popular TV program: 10 over 10, aired on Citizen TV over the highly sexualized dress code and dancing. This prompted the KFCB boss, Ezekiel Mutua, to urge Kenyans to boycott watching the program and insisted on children sleeping before 10 p.m. (Okoth, 2018).

Radio, on the other hand, seems to have a long way to go. Several radio stations insist on airing sex talks during peak hours in order to maximize audience numbers. As reported by Soy (2016), it is not uncommon to get into a *matatu* or bus as you ride to

work in the morning and awkwardly have to go all the way listening to sexual drama happening in our Kenyan homes and society in general.

Internet governance, particularly on obscenity and pornography, has appeared to be a big challenge to date. This, in fact, is one of the greatest trials of the digital era. It has even worsened with the easy availability of phones and the affordability of cheap data bundles from internet service providers (ISPs). Children are able to navigate through internet-supported applications, such as YouTube, Facebook, WhatsApp, and Telegrams. One may be able to track what is being accessed via the internet on computers, but it is not easy to do the same for mobile phones. Pornographic addiction has become one of the problems teenagers have to fight very often. According to the researcher, the discovery of ways to fight this menace may just be the discovery of the century.

The music played inside *matatus* in most parts of the country is also questionable. These minibuses that serve as the main means of transport in Kenya sometimes usher teenage girls into sexual activity directly by the crew coercing them to sleep with them or indirectly, whereby the kind of videos played on their screens are of explicit nature. The government, via the traffic police, should be more vigilant regarding the kind of music and video played in *matatus*.

Genuine NGOs' involvement in teenage girl matters

Cronin (2012) noted that numerous NGOs and community-based groups work in Kenyan slums, including Kibera. AMREF medical clinic is the only international NGO present in Kibera. The rest are nationally or locally funded schools, churches, health clinics, self-help clean-up groups, and community-based organizations (CBOs), for example, Kibera Silanga Usafi Group and KISEP Kibera Slums Education Program.

All these organizations have prioritized basic human needs in order to better the lives of residents of this slum (Cronin, 2012).

It was this researcher's view that the existing organizations, in addition to the birth of genuine teenage-centered organizations, would help delay sexual debut among teenage girls in Kibra. With organizations supporting teenage programs geared towards engaging adolescents during weekends and long holidays, cultivating good morals in them, and growing their God-given talents, the result should be fewer teenage girls engaging in immorality.

Empirical Literature Review

The earlier the sexual debut, the more chances of sexually active adolescence, consequently higher numbers in terms of STIs and new HIV infections, school dropouts, teenage moms, abortions, infants and maternal deaths, depression, suicide cases, and low performers in O- level exams (Durowade et al., 2017). According to a study done on sexual and reproductive health of adolescence living in urban informal settlements in Kenya, 8% of girls have already had their sexual debut (Marston et al., 2013). Another study by Ndung'u (2015) on factors influencing sexual debut among high school students in Nairobi suggested that 40% of teenagers, both male and female, had their first sexual debut before their 18th birthday. According to the 2014 Kenya demographic and health survey, 15% of women between 20-49 years of age had their sexual debut by the age of 15 and 50% by the age of 18 (KNBS, 2015). Through it was specific on girls between ages 13-18 years, this study hoped to unveil the percentage of teenage girls living in slums who have already had their sexual debut before the age of 18 years.

According to Inthavong and Sychareun (2020), each year, there are 333 million people who contract curable STIs, the highest rates being experienced by 20-24-year-

olds, closely followed by 15-19-year-olds. There are more than two million new HIV infections globally every year (NASCO, 2014). Sadly, Kenya is among six countries with the highest adolescents HIV infections globally (Kairu, 2015). Other countries with high adolescents HIV infections are Tanzania, South Africa, Nigeria, Mozambique, and India. These statistics, given by the UN, clearly indicate that teenage girls account for more than two-thirds of the new HIV infections (Kairu, 2015). This is a clear indicator that many adolescent girls do not use protection and hence the high exposure to STIs and HIV. Unfortunately, these infections can occur at sexual debut because many girls may not be well prepared for the experience and therefore may not be able to use protection.

Contracting STIs and HIV may not be the worst that can happen to a teenage girl. Some of the STIs can cause barrenness in the future; others cause miscarriages or children born with lifelong illnesses, for instance, blindness (Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 2017). Treating opportunistic illnesses such as tuberculosis is an uphill task considering the time it takes to heal, time wasted at hospitals, and of course, finances wasted on something that could have been avoided. Other repercussions of these HIV infections are depression and, at times, suicide attempts as well as early widowhood and orphaned children.

The number of unwanted pregnancies remains high among teenage girls in Kenya owing to early sexual debut and low use of contraceptives. The 2014 Kenya demographic and housing survey revealed that 15% of girls between 15-19 years of age have already had their first child (KNBS, 2015). Notably, teenage girls from poor families between the same ages are affected more by this issue compared to those from affluent families, numbers being at 26% and 10%, respectively (Oliech, 2016). As an explanation for this phenomenon, Oliech's (2016) study further established that teenage

girls who are not school-going due to many cultural and financial reasons start childbearing earlier than their counterparts who have high school education. This could also be attributed to the wealthy being able to afford a safe abortion and other reasons that this study is likely to unearth. Unwanted pregnancies among teenage girls bring along many other issues to an individual, such as maternal mortality and morbidity, abortions, dropping out of school, single parenthood, low incomes, and continuity of poor livelihood to a country (Williamson, 2014).

The constitution of Kenya, 2010, allows abortion only in the event that the life or health of the woman is in danger. This means that abortion is illegal according to the law (National Council for Law Reporting, 2010b). Moreover, it is strongly fought by the religious teachings and Christian fraternity in Kenya at large, only allowing it on medical grounds as stated in the constitution of Kenya, 2010, Article 26(4) (Federation of Women Lawyers-Kenya, 2019).

Ironically, abortion is still rampant in Kenya, and unsafe abortions are the leading cause of maternal mortality and morbidity (Mohamed et al., 2015). In 2012, it was estimated that 464,000 abortions were carried out in Kenya, which translated to about 48 abortions for every 1000 live births among women in the age category of 15-49 years (Mohamed et al., 2015). In 2003, the Kenya Ministry of Health, in collaboration with the Kenya Medical Association, The Federation of Women Lawyers in Kenya, and Ipas Africa Alliance, carried out a study whose findings indicated that each year, 316,560 abortions are carried out in the country, of which 50% were among girls aged between 14-24 years (Omondi, 2015).

Maternal death had been defined by the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-10) as:

the death of a woman while pregnant or within 42 days of termination of pregnancy, irrespective of the duration and site of the pregnancy, from any cause related to or aggravated by the pregnancy or its management but not from accidental or incidental causes. (Patwardhan et al., 2016, p. 6079)

Maternal morbidity refers to a continuum of events from normal pregnancy to near-miss death conditions related to pregnancy (Velde, Scholefield, & Plante, 2013). Many deaths occur from abortion-related complications though there are other medical reasons. A research carried out in Nairobi's informal settlements by Lugaliki (2013) found that maternal deaths are linked to abortion-related complications. The research also concluded that safe abortion in a professional environment reduced the risk of maternal deaths. Additionally, a study conducted in 2005 concluded that almost 30% of women in Kenya admitted to hospitals yearly due to abortion complications also suffer from other complications such as hemorrhage, sepsis, and shock (Lugaliki, 2013). Other causes of maternal mortality in Kenya include postpartum hemorrhage, hypertensive disorders, obstructed labor, HIV, and anemia (Kagia, 2011).

The education of teenage girls, whether in primary or secondary school, will inevitably be disrupted, especially if they get pregnant or get serious sexually transmitted illnesses. Other times the girls may be forced out of school entirely because they prefer being married early to staying in school. According to a study carried out by the Population Council (as cited in United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2017), in Kibra, 43% of girls compared to 29% of boys stayed out of school for various reasons. Noteworthy is the fact that even though teenagers stayed out of school for other reasons such as lack of school fees, the percentage of the girls who stayed out of school was higher than that of boys. This is because sexual debut repercussions are heavier on the girls, as discussed earlier in this proposal.

The emergency contraception pill (ECP), also referred to as the morning-after pill, has been instrumental in reducing the occurrence of unwanted pregnancies among teenagers in Kenya. On a positive note, this contraception method has ensured a reduction in disrupted education, abortion cases, maternal death, and morbidity among teenagers. However, the risk factors of using the ECP are realized when one uses it regularly. A pharmacy in Kiserian reported of regular sales of up to 30 doses every Monday to the same teenage girls averagely three times in a month (Koros, 2014). The challenge arises in the availability and repeated use of the contraceptive, which may have adverse effects on the reproductive health of the user (Kweyu, 2018). Very many drugs in Kenya are bought over the counter, the ECP being one of them. The most adverse effects of abusing this drug include infertility and cancer (Kweyu, 2018).

Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework gives relevance to the study and supports the suitability of the proposed study (Ravitch & Riggan, 2012). Figure 2.3 presents the different variables (independent, dependent, and intervening) in this study and demonstrates how they related.

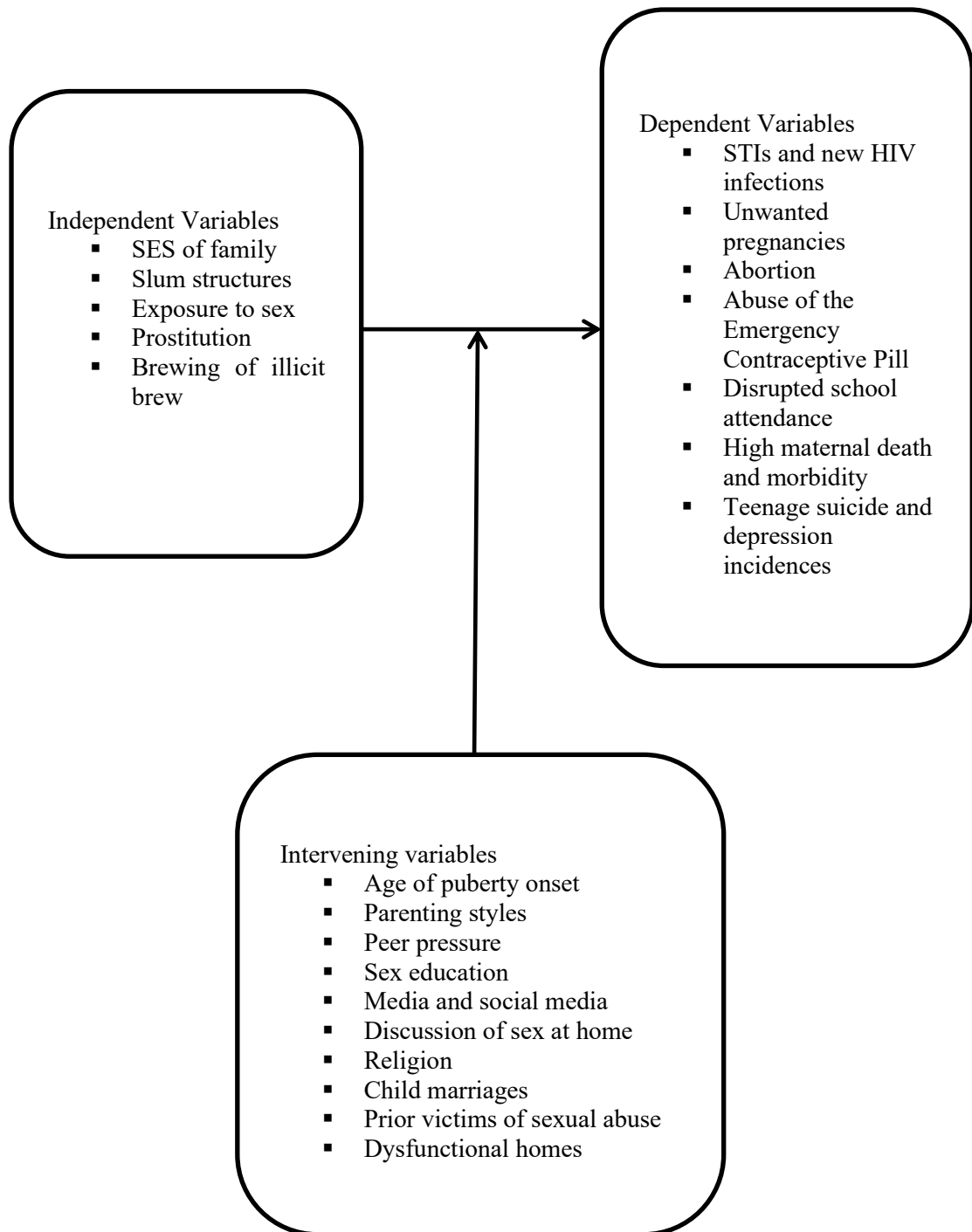


Figure 2.3: Conceptual Framework

Source: Author (2021)

Discussion

As presented in Figure 2.3, the independent variables in this study were the presumed causes of sexual debut among teenage girls living in informal settlements: low SES; exposure to sexual activities due to lack of room for sexual privacy; the slum

structures, prostitution which exposes the girls to child prostitution; and the brewing of illicit brew. The dependent variables were the resultant phenomena of teenage sexual debut among girls generally. These included STIs and new HIV infections, unwanted pregnancies, abortion, maternal deaths and morbidity, abuse of the emergency contraceptive pill, disrupted education, and low quality of life later beyond adolescence.

The intervening variables comprised the other influencers of teenage sexual engagement among girls, which are present in other environments and not specific to slum settlements. These were early puberty onset for the teenage girls; permissive, over-strict, and non-committal elements in parenting styles; negative peer pressure; poor participation or lack of it in religious matters; the girls being prior victims of sexual abuse; airing of adult content and exposure to pornographic content on mass media and social media; lack of sex education; discussions around sex at home; and dysfunctional homes.

Summary

This chapter has explored the documented causes of sexual debut and the resultant features through its detailed literature review. The next chapter discusses the research methodology that this study employed.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

In this chapter, the research methodology that this study used towards establishing the environmental aspects that influence sexual debut among teenage girls in Kibra is discussed. The aspects of the research methodology discussed include the research design, area of study, population, target population, sample size, sampling techniques, instruments of data collection, the procedure of administration of the data collection instrument, pretesting, plan for data analysis, and ethical considerations.

Research Design

To achieve the objectives of this study, the researcher employed a descriptive design approach. The purpose of descriptive research is to describe the situation as it exists at present (Kothari & Garg, 2019). In descriptive research, one seeks to describe the facts and characteristics of a given population systematically, factually, and accurately (Daniel & Sam, 2011). This study attempted to describe factors around sexual debut among teenage girls in Kibra slums in relation to the environmental factors in Kibra slums.

Study Area

This study was carried out in Kibra slums, which is in Lang'ata Constituency, Nairobi County. The slum is located about 6.6 kilometers southwest of the city centre. It is considered one of the largest slums in Africa (Desgropes & Taupin, 2011). Kibra was selected for this study because of its relatively low socio-economic status (SES). Musoi, Muthama, Kibor, and Kitiku (2014) described Kibra slum as a place with high

poverty levels, marked with high crime rates, homelessness, lack of secure tenure, and limited access to water and sanitation. The slum has 13 villages (Map Kibera, n.d.).

Population

A population is a group of individuals, objects, or items from which samples are taken for measurement (Creswell, 2012). The population forms an entire group of persons or elements that have similar features (Creswell, 2012). As per the 2009 Kenya national population and housing census, the total population of Kibra in 2009 was 170,070 people (Mosoku, 2019). With the KNBS estimating a rate of natural increase at 2.8% per annum, Kibra's total population in 2017 can be estimated at about 215,000 people. The population for this proposed study was derived from a census done at the Kibra Community Health Centre - AMREF, which captured the total attendance of 13-17-year-old boys and girls for November 2019 to be 562.

Target Population

The target population for this study included teenage girls, specifically those between the ages of 13-17 years who live in the informal settlements of Kibra. Social workers from the Kibra Community Health Centre - AMREF, attending to the teenage girls, formed the second group of respondents in this study. According to Kibra Community Health Centre - AMREF census data for November 2019, a total of 562 teenagers aged between 13-17 years visited the clinic to access the Youth Friendly Services (YFS). The 562 teenagers comprised 229 boys (40.7%) and 333 girls (59.3%). The health center is located in Laini Saba village, which is situated in Laini Saba Location, Kibera Division, Nairobi West District, Nairobi County. The data shown in Table 3.1 was derived from the YFS clinic register for November 2019, and it was categorized by gender.

Table 3.1: Census Data for 13-17-year-olds Who Accessed YFS in November 2019

Kibra Community Health Centre – AMREF							
YFS Register November 2019							
	Age	13yrs	14yrs	15yrs	16yrs	17yrs	Total
Week 1							
(11/01/2019)	Male	4	3	2	0	4	13
	Female	7	4	4	6	2	23
	Total	11	7	6	6	6	36
Week 2							
(11/04/2019- 11/08/2019)	Male	6	9	17	10	12	54
	Female	5	18	17	21	14	75
	Total	11	27	34	31	26	129
Week 3							
(11/11/2019- 11/15/2019)	Male	3	11	14	6	8	42
	Female	8	7	17	16	13	61
	Total	11	18	31	22	21	103
Week 4							
(11/18/2019- 11/22/2019)	Male	4	18	18	12	14	66
	Female	4	14	32	27	16	93
	Total	8	32	50	39	30	159
Week 5							
(11/25/2019- 11/29/2019)	Male	7	14	13	16	4	54
	Female	3	23	22	21	12	81
	Total	10	37	35	37	16	135

Source: Kibra Community Health Centre – AMREF, YFS Clinic Register

Sample Size

A sample is a subsection of the population selected either through probability or non-probability methods to participate in the study (Matula, Kyalo, Mulwa, & Gichuhi, 2018). It is the number of subjects used in a study and is usually abbreviated as n (Wambugu, Kyalo, Mbii, & Nyonje, 2015). The total number of teenage girls between 13-17 years of age residing in Kibra and who sought the services at the clinic in November 2019 was 333. Kothari (2013) stated that a sample size of 10-30% of the target population is acceptable. In this study, 30% of 333, which is 100 was used. Therefore, the sample size was as illustrated in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2: Summary of the Purposive Sampling Process

Age of girls	13yrs	14yrs	15yrs	16yrs	17yrs	Total
Attendance (in %)	8.108108	19.81982	27.62763	27.32733	17.11712	100
Sample Size	8	20	28	27	17	100

Sampling Techniques

In sampling the respondents to the questionnaire, purposive sampling technique was used. In this technique, also known as judgment sampling, elements are chosen based on the purpose of the study (Wambugu et al., 2015). The researcher in this study reported to Kibra Community Health Centre – AMREF, YFS section, daily from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm. The administrator tasked with the registration of everybody coming into the clinic would send all 13 to 24-year-olds to the YFS section, as was the procedure.

The researcher would specifically pick 13 to 17-year-old girls who resided in Laini Saba, seeking services from the clinic for a subsequent time and understood basic English. The social worker would then explain to them the purpose of this particular research, give them consent forms to take home, and proceed with the youth-friendly services. Thereafter, those who managed to submit consent forms issued earlier, duly signed, would be led to a quiet room, where the questionnaire would be administered to the respondents individually and privately until the sample size was achieved. The two social workers attending to the youth were also given a questionnaire to fill.

Data Collection Instruments

Since the study mainly relied on primary data, information was collected through two main instruments. The primary sample (that is, teenage girls in Kibra) was given a questionnaire (see Appendix A) for the literate ones. The semi-illiterate ones were taken through the same questionnaire but assisted whenever they raised the need to be assisted. The second questionnaire was administered to two of the social workers giving the YFS to the teenagers in the clinic (Appendix B). The questionnaire mostly had

structured questions, which included open-ended and closed-ended questions that provided the research with qualitative data on sexual debut and the environment.

The study used one questionnaire with four different parts. The first part of the questionnaire had the demographic information capturing the actual age of the respondents, their age at first menses, their relevant school details, and religious affiliation. The second part of the questionnaire sought to establish facts about the immediate environment and family factors that are unique to each individual and that are probably thought to enhance the individual's sexual behavior. These include the physical environment at home as well as who the respondent resided with. The third part extracted information on knowledge and attitudes towards sex as well as sexual behavior. This part specifically sought to inform sexual activity trends among teenage girls as well as the perpetrators who facilitate this moral decadence in our society. The same also sought to inform the research on delaying sexual debut among teenage girls growing up in informal settlements in Kibra.

The final part of the questionnaire captured other environmental factors that influence sexual debut among teenage girls. Through this, the research sought to establish other environmental factors that drive children into sexual activities, such as the media and social media. This part also sought to inform the research on the main sources of information to children on issues to do with premarital sex. Through the second questionnaire, which was filled by the social workers, the study sought to unearth the environmental factors pushing the girls in the slum to engage in the first coitus and possible measures that can be put in place to delay sexual debut among teenage girls.

Types of data

The researcher intended to collect both quantitative and qualitative data. The respondents described their age at first intercourse and the factors that could have led to this. According to the structure of the instruments, the research sought to inform on the adolescents' perspective on premarital sex and ways of delaying sexual initiation at teenage or before this stage for the girls.

Data Collection Procedures

Before the data collection process, the researcher obtained ethical clearance from Daystar University Ethics Review Board and an introduction letter from the School of Human & Social Sciences of Daystar University. After that permission to collect data was sought from The National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation, and from the Kibera Community Health Centre - AMREF. Owing to the sensitivity of this kind of study, consent was sought from parents of the girls and the respondents were randomly selected from the girls willing to freely participate in the study.

The questionnaire was administered to each individual respondent in a quiet atmosphere. The respondents were encouraged to fill in the details individually and privately. They were allowed sufficient time to fill in the questionnaire. The researcher availed herself for clarifications or translation into Swahili, especially for the non-school-going girls. The social workers who filled the second questionnaire did so willingly after consent was sought from them.

Pretesting

To test the suitability of the data collection instruments, the researcher did a pretest of the questionnaire on a similar but smaller population of 5% of the total sample

size (which is equivalent to 5 girls) at Glory Secondary School. This helped to determine the appropriateness of the data collection instruments. The pretesting was undertaken a week before the actual study.

Data Analysis Plan

The data collected from the research was analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), version 23. The study objectives were used as themes to organize and present the data. Data collected through the questionnaire was collected and grouped under the different themes. Descriptions and inferences were drawn from the analyzed data.

Ethical Considerations

The human race bestows some level of sacredness when exploring issues around sex, sexual relationships, and sexual union (Okechi, 2018). This particular topic of research attracts high levels of sensitivity and privacy, and consequently, the respondents only participated after giving consent.

Ethical approval was sought and obtained from Daystar University Ethics Review Board, after which permission to conduct the research was obtained from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation under (licence number 507553).

In the case of respondents under the age of 18 years, self-consent and parental consent were sought. The researcher also sought consent from the AMREF clinic in Laini Saba before the commencement of the fieldwork.

Confidentiality and anonymity are important when carrying out sensitive research (Coffelt, 2017). In this study, respondents were not required to give any identifying information to the researcher, and confidentiality was assured while

administering the research instruments. To ensure anonymity, findings were generalized and reported statistically without naming the individuals.

The researcher also adhered to the intellectual ethical requirements throughout the study. This was done by proper acknowledgment of each person's input throughout the research as guided by the American Psychological Association's (APA) ethics code (Central Christian College of Kansas, 2016). The researcher also strived to ensure that lecturers, authors, research according to the assistants, and fellow students were given due credit for their contribution.

Finally, the researcher commits to disseminate, to the relevant institutions, the study findings for academic use. Should there arise any other need to use this information for purposes beyond academics, further consent shall be sought.

Summary

This chapter has presented the research methodology used for this study. The areas that have been discussed in the chapter include the research design, target population, sample size, sampling technique, data collection instruments, types of data, data collection procedures, pretesting, data analysis plan, and ethical considerations.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Introduction

This chapter presents an analysis and interpretation of the study findings as set out in the research objectives and methodology. The purpose of this study was to examine the environmental factors that drive adolescent girls in Kibra, an informal settlement in Nairobi City, to engage in sex for the first time. The chapter also provides the major findings and results of the questionnaires administered and discusses the findings and results against the literature reviewed in chapter two. The researcher made use of frequency tables, percentages, bar graphs, tables, and charts to present data.

Response Rate

The first questionnaire, which was administered to 100 respondents, achieved a response rate of 96% after the researcher ruled out 4 of the filled questionnaire copies due to inconsistencies of the information given. According to Babbie (2013), a response rate of 85% is acceptable for analysis and reporting.

Analysis and Interpretation

Demographics

The demographic information captured in this study included the age of respondents, their age at first monthly period, level of education and the type of school, as well as the religious affiliation. The study was conducted on girls of ages 13 to 17 years, at the time living in the informal settlement of Laini Saba Village, Kibra, Nairobi County. The 100 girls were picked through purposive sampling from those who had accessed YFS at the Kibra Community Health Centre - AMREF located in Laini Saba village, at least once before and had a basic understanding of the English language.

Table 4.1: Basic Characteristics of the Study Population

Study Variables	Frequency (N=96)	Percent
Age		
13 years	12	12.5
14 years	16	16.7
15 years	23	24.0
16 years	27	28.0
17 years	18	18.8
Age at first monthly period		
13 years and below	43	45.0
14-17 years	38	40.0
Not yet experienced	4	4.0
No response	11	11.0
Levels of education		
Primary	38	39.6
Secondary	51	53.1
College	3	3.1
Not in any school	4	4.2
Category of school		
Mixed day school	52	54.2
Girls day school	10	10.4
Mixed boarding school	11	11.5
Girls boarding school	19	19.8
No response	4	4.2
Religious Background		
Catholic	32	33.0
Protestant	41	43.0
Muslim	9	9.0
Other (Not specified)	10	11.0
None	4	4.0
Ever had sexual intercourse		
No response	1	1.0
Yes	18	18.8
No	77	80.2

Table 4.1 shows that 43 (45.0%) of the girls had already experienced their first monthly period (FMP) by the age of 13 years, while 38 (40.0%) of them began between the ages of 14 and 17 years. Evidently, only 4% of the girls were yet to experience FMP, while 11% did not respond to this question. This meant that the majority, 81 (84.4%), were at risk of teenage pregnancy if they experienced sexual debut during their teenage years.

Demographics on level of education showed that 95% of the respondents were in upper primary school, secondary school, and college. This was crucial as the respondents were able to respond to the questionnaires with little or no help as they had

a basic knowledge of the English language. Moreover, this also meant that they had been taught about the human reproductive system and sexuality in school as the Kenyan system caters for that as early as standard six and life skills (Sidze et al., 2017).

The number of the students who went to mixed day secondary and mixed boarding schools was 63 (65.7%) of the 96 teenagers. According to the study, this was a finding that suggested that interactions with the opposite sex and the environment was a part of the teenage girls' daily lives, and as such, they were probably more vulnerable to begin conventional sex early as compared to the minority 29(30.1%) who were in girls' schools.

The majority of the respondents, 73 (76%), were Christians under various denominations, while 9 (9%) were Muslims. Christianity and Islam are religions known to strongly condemn sex before marriage (Zed, 2016). The study established that the majority, 77 (80.2%), of the respondents had never engaged in sexual intercourse, while 18 (18.8%) had experienced sexual debut. There was only one respondent who did not respond to this question. This finding indicates that the two main religions practiced by the respondents, that is, Christianity and Islam played a major role in discouraging sex before marriage among teenage girls in the informal settlement.

Socio-Environmental Factors Leading to Teenage Sexual Debut

The first objective of the study was to establish the socio-environmental factors that influenced teenage girls into sexual debut in the informal settlement of Kibra. The questions used in the tool were, however, not restricted to only socio-environmental factors but covered all contributors to sexual debut among teenage girls in informal settlements. Table 4.2 shows their age at sexual debut.

Table 4.2: Age at Sexual Debut

Age	Frequency (N=18)	Percent
Before 13 years of age	3	16.7
14 years	2	11.1
15 years	2	11.1
16 years	2	11.1
17 years	3	16.7
Age not indicated	6	33.3

As seen in Table 4.2, out of the 18 girls who had experienced sexual debut, 33.3% did not mention the age at which it happened. Pre-teens accounted for 16.7%, with the earliest age being at six years of age according to the questionnaires filled by the teenage girls. The particular respondent who experienced coitus at six years revealed that it was rape, but she was not in a position to discuss the matter further.

According to the social workers attending to the youth at the YFS clinic, nine years was the earliest age of sexual debut presented to the clinic. These findings indicated that 16.7% of girls in the informal settlement of Kibra began having coitus even before they became teenagers. There is a possibility that the number could have been higher had the 33.3% given their ages. Based on this finding, it seems that there is a need to integrate human sexuality and related life skills lessons earlier than standard 6 in the Kenyan curriculum.

Number of Rooms for the Whole Family

The researcher sought to find out the number of rooms each respondent's family shared in totality.

Table 4.3: Number of Rooms for the Whole Family

	Frequency (N=96)	Percent
Single room with shared community toilet	66	69.0
Double room with community shared/community toilet	25	26.0
Three rooms with shared toilet	3	3.0
Single room with no toilet	1	1.0
Double Room with own toilet	1	1.0
Total	96	100.0

All respondents lived in semi-permanent houses specifically made of iron sheets or mud. The larger part of the respondents, 66 (69%), lived in single rooms with a shared community toilet, followed by 25 (26%) who lived in double rooms with shared community toilets. This situation indicated reduced privacy among the family members due to the little shared physical space and encouraged interactions with the neighbors because of the shared community toilet. This placed the teenage girls in an uncomfortable situation in terms of lack of adequate personal space, physical privacy, and unnecessary interactions that could otherwise be avoided.

Nature of Relationship with People Involved during Sexual Debut

Table 4.4 below shows the relationship of the persons the teenagers were involved with for the first time.

Table 4.4: Nature of Relationship with People Involved during Sexual Debut

Age	Frequency (N=18)	Percent
Relative	1	6.0
Neighbor	2	11.0
Classmate	4	22.0
Friend	11	61.0

Among the people involved with the 18 girls who had experienced sexual debut, 11 (61%) were friends while neighbors were also responsible at 2 (11%). While a neighbor and a classmate could also be classified as a friend, friends seem to be very influential in sexual debut. According to the researcher, there is a need to tirelessly reinforce the importance of positive peer influence among teenagers, as this could delay first coitus among adolescent girls in the informal settlement.

House Space and Sexual Privacy

This study also wanted to establish from the participants, if there was enough sexual privacy for parents or guardians in the house. The results are shown in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5: Sufficient Sexual Privacy for Adults at Home

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	36	38.0
No	60	62.0
Total	96	100

According to 60 (62%) of the respondents, the physical setup at their homes did not provide enough sexual privacy for parents/guardians, while 36 (38%) indicated that there was enough sexual privacy. Both social workers felt that the houses did not at all provide enough sexual privacy for adults. For instance, in the view of the first respondent, *there is no sexual privacy because most families live in single rooms [self-confused] too congested (translated) houses.*, while the second respondent opined that *if they [adults] rented more than one room, there would be sexual privacy.*

In relation to the above findings, the study sought to further establish if indeed these teenagers had witnessed sex happen in their lives and the following were the findings as illustrated in Figure 4.1.

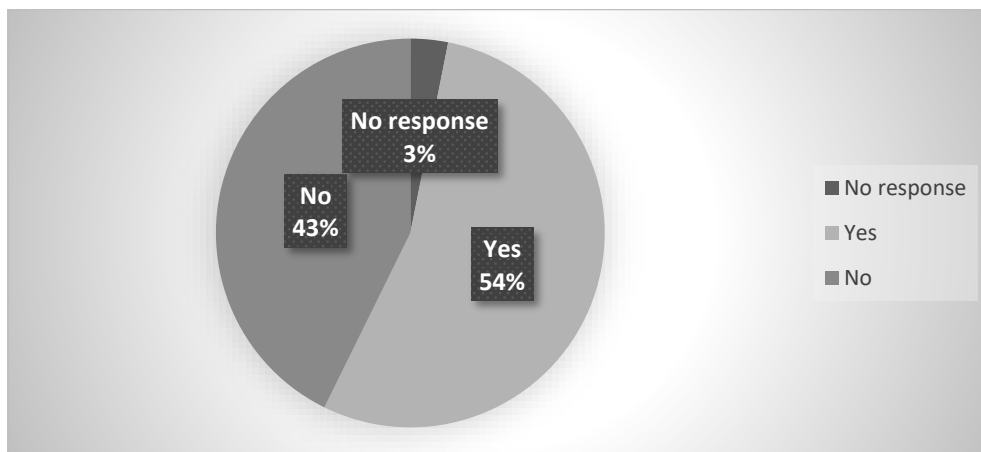


Figure 4.1: Ever Witnessed People Engaging in Sex

The findings revealed that 52 (54%) of the respondents had witnessed people having sex at home at an early age, either by seeing or by hearing. Among the 52 mentioned, 27 (51%) witnessed it from neighbors at their homes or in their houses. This was brought about by the kind of materials used to separate the rooms, in most cases being old iron sheets or pieces of clothes that separate the sections of the rooms.

One of the two questionnaires filled by social workers (SWs) attending to the teenage girls, Social Worker-001 (SW-001) highlighted the above as a reason pushing the teenage girls to engage into the first sexual experience, by stating as follows: *some want to experience it because they see their parents doing it*. The researcher agrees that this is a major exposure factor that may lead teenagers to sexual debut.

Table 4.6 presents the importance of the slum upgrade program towards providing sexual privacy for parents and guardians.

Table 4.6: Importance of the Slum Upgrade Program towards Providing Sexual Privacy for Parents/Guardians

	Frequency (N=96)	Percent
Very Important	82	86.0
Somewhat Important	5	5.0
A Little Important	1	1.0
Not all Important	2	2.0
Don't Know	6	6.0
Total	96	100.0

A five-point Likert scale was used to establish whether the building of permanent and more spacious rooms to replace the semi-permanent structures in the informal settlements by the government in conjunction with the UN was considered of any importance by the informal settlement dwellers. As captured in Table 4.6, the majority of the respondents, 88 (92%), believed that the slum upgrading program had a level of importance in providing sexual privacy for parents, while only 2 (2%) of them thought it was of no importance. There were 6 (6%) who had no idea whether it was an important project or not. This finding shed light on the state of sexual privacy, which probably led to negative exposure to the teenagers.

Attention to the Teenage Girls that had Sexual Debut

The research paid particular attention to the teenage girls who had already engaged in first coitus in their lives. Table 4.7 shows the heads of the households to the houses that these 18 girls hailed from.

Table 4.7: Heads of Household

I live with	Frequency (N=18)	Percent
Father and mother	4	22.2
Father alone	1	5.6
Mother alone	7	38.9
Relative	4	22.2
No response	2	11.1
Total	18	100.0

A cross tabulation indicated that among the 18 girls who had experienced sexual debut, 7 (38.9%) lived with their mother alone. Households headed by both parents and a relative followed in rank by 22.2% and 22.2%, respectively. Those led by single father comprised the least at 5.6%. Based on this, it can be inferred that there exists a relationship between children raised by single mothers and high teenage sexual activity in the informal settlement.

Timing of Sexual Debut

Figure 4.2 demonstrates the timing of sexual debut of the teenage girls.

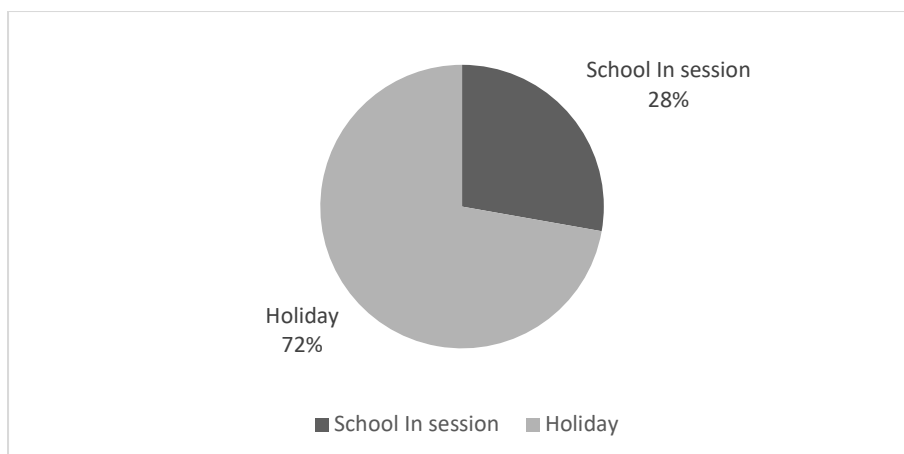


Figure 4.2: Timing of Sexual Debut Occurrence

When asked whether the first indulgence in sex took place during holiday or school was in session, the majority, 13 (72%), of the 18 girls reported that their first sexual experience was during holidays while the minority 5 (28%) reported that it happened during school sessions. This finding informed the study of the need to ensure healthy ways to spend holiday times for school-going children. This ground is proof that teenage girls in the informal settlements have a lot of free time which could be used by parents, the church, and NGOs to yield productive outcomes

Reason Behind First Sexual Activity

The girls' reasons for engaging in first sexual activity are shown in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8: Reason for Engaging in Sexual Debut

Reason for engaging in sexual debut	Frequency (N=18)	Percent
By choice	10	55.5
Peer influence	5	27.8
Need to feel rebellious	2	11.1
Rape	1	5.6
Total	18	100.0

The highest reason given by the girls for engaging in sex for the first time was the willingness to engage, at 10 (55.5%) of the 18 girls. Peer pressure ranked second, at 5 (27.8%) of the 18 girls. Another reason given by 2 (11.1%) of the 18 girls was the need to feel rebellious. Furthermore, There was a notable 1 (6%) whose reason was rape. The responses given by the social workers that push teenage girls into sex were,

poverty- some of the children are forced by their parents to go do it in exchange for money (SW-001), and peer pressure, lack of parental care and love and fear of talking about it in public, according to Social Worker-002 (SW-002).

The counselor accompanying the researcher assisted in brief counseling of the victim of rape even though she seemed to be coping well with the situation and did not want to discuss it in depth. The misguided feeling that the girls are ready for sex and negative peer pressure are, without doubt, the strongest drivers of teenage sexual debut among girls in the informal settlement.

The social workers observed that teenage sexual debut took place *in lodgings as they are cheap, in their boyfriends' rooms, so called "Keja" (translated room), under "mama mboga's kibanda" (translated as women's grocery semi-permanent structures) and in the corridors (SW-001).* Additionally, SW-002 noted that *just in houses especially because of the semi-permanent structures and tiny places whereby they also hear their parents and neighbors practicing it, in bars and clubs. Teenagers that are sexually active indulge in lodgings attached to these premises."*

The easy availability of physical areas that house teenage sex was another environmental factor that encouraged early sexual debut. The above-mentioned places offered very cheap accommodation per day and others were absolutely free because they were just dark hideouts.

Religious Affiliation

The religious affiliation of those that had experienced sexual debut are presented in Figure 4.3.

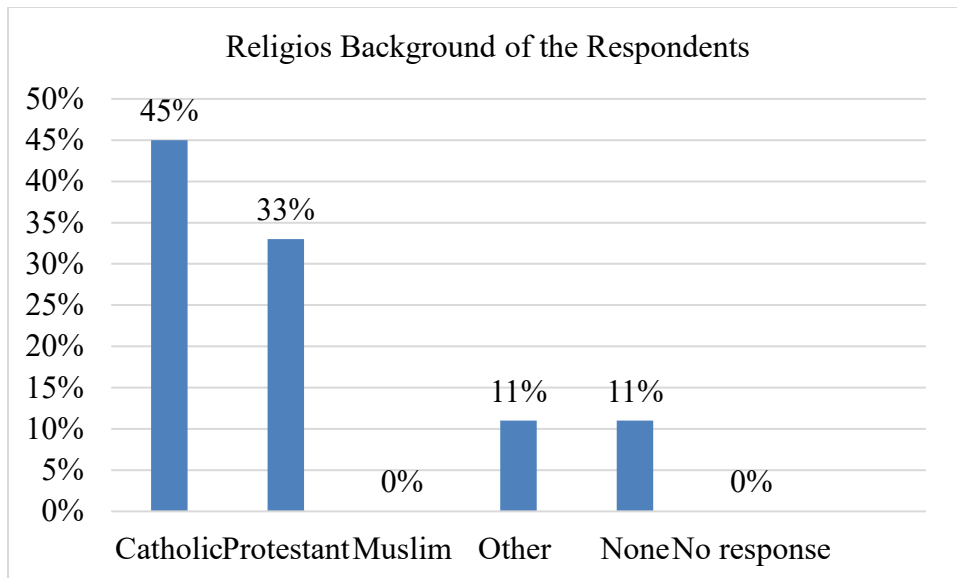


Figure 4.3: Religious Affiliation of Those that had Experienced Sexual Debut

Paying particular attention to the religious affiliation of the girls who have had their first coitus, findings indicated that the majority 14 (78%) of the 18 girls were Christians from Catholic and protestant denominations while none were Muslim. Sex before marriage is highly condemned in the Christian and Islam religions, as stated by Zed (2016). This researcher believed that the harsh consequences of pre-marital sexual engagement by Islam as a religion was a key contributor to this particular outcome.

Source of Information Regarding Sex

When asked about their main source of information regarding sex was, 35% of the 18 adolescent girls responded as shown in Figure 4.4.

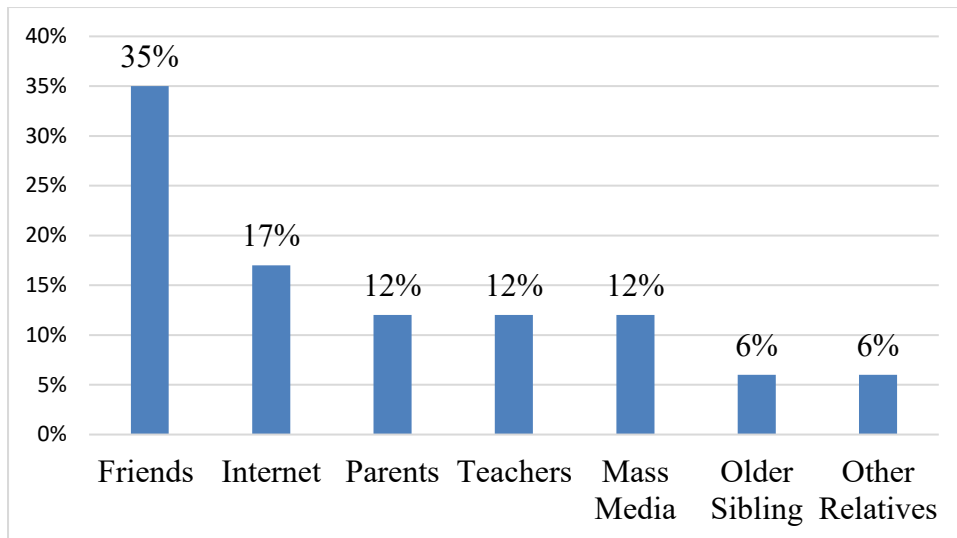


Figure 4.4: Main Source of Information Regarding Sex (for those who have experienced sexual debut)

As captured in Figure 4.4, the main source of information regarding sex was friends, which was at 35% of the 18 girls who have had sexual debut. The internet was the second main source, scoring 17%, followed by parents, teachers, and mass media each at 12%. Older siblings and other relatives scored 6% each. These findings draw attention to the importance of positive peer pressure and regulation of content accessible to teenagers to minimize bad influence.

Perception of Adolescent Girls Living in Kibra on Sexual Debut

The second objective of this study was to establish the perception of adolescent girls living in Kibra on sexual debut. In order to obtain a clear perception, the research sought to find out about the teenage girls' thoughts on the knowledge they had at that time regarding sexual matters.

Sufficient knowledge on sex

This research wanted to know the level of satisfaction with sexual knowledge already available to teenage girls in the informal settlement area of Kibra, and the

following results in Table 4.9 were the responses to the question “Do you think you know enough regarding sex?”

Table 4.9: Sufficient Knowledge on Sex

	Frequency	Percent
No Response	6	6.3
Yes	36	37.5
No	54	56.3
Total	96	100.0

Based on the findings, 54 (56.3%) of the 96 teenage girls believed there was more to learn on sex, while 36(37.5%) believed they were very knowledgeable when it came to sex matters. Only 6(6.3%) of the 96 girls did not respond to this question. It was encouraging to know that more than half of the sample were eager to add on to the knowledge and yet discouraged to know that there were those that thought they knew enough.

Importance of abstinence

The respondents were asked if, in their opinion, it was important to abstain, and their responses were as shown in Figure 4.5.

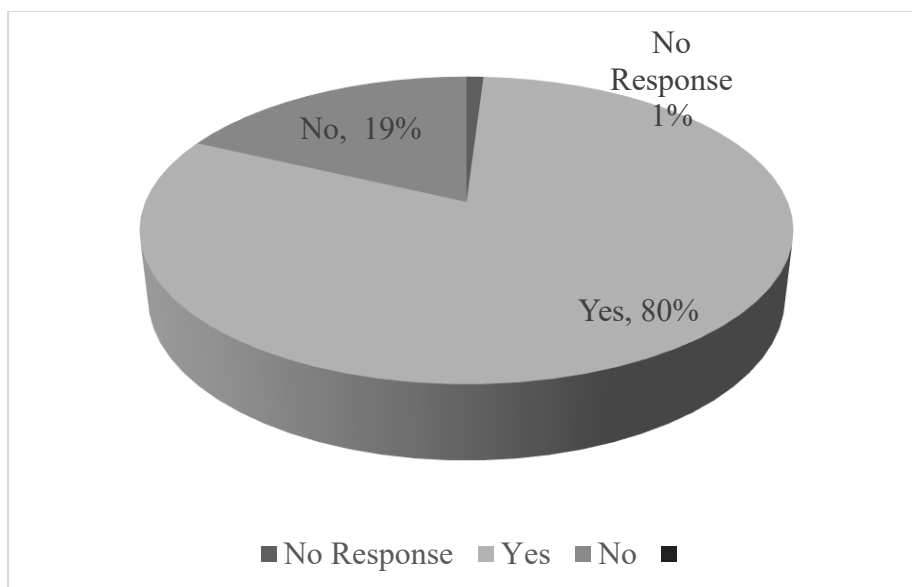


Figure 4.5: Do You Think it is Important to Abstain?

The majority, 77 (80%) of the 96 teenagers, thought it was important to abstain during adolescence, while 18 (19%) thought it was not as important. There was 1 (1%) of the 96 respondents that did not respond to this question. It appears as if a lot still needs to be done to convince all teenagers of the need to postpone sex to adulthood.

Appropriate age for sexual debut

The study further sought to find out from the respondents what they thought was the appropriate age for one to start having sex. The findings are indicated in Table 4.10.

Table 4.10: The Appropriate Age for Sexual Debut

	Frequency (N=96)	Percent
Before Age 18	1	1.04
At age 18	30	31.25
Age 20-30	53	55.21
Age 30+	1	1.04
After marriage	8	8.33
No response	3	3.13
Total	96	100

As indicated in Table 4.10, the majority of the respondents, 84(87.5%), of the 96 girls thought it is appropriate to begin coitus any time as long as one was over 18 years of age, while 8(8%) believe sex should be practiced after marriage. No response was given to this question by 3 (3.1%), while only 1(1.04%) of the 96 adolescents

thought it is fine to begin sexual relations before one attains 18 years of age. The social workers were totally against teenage sex. SW-001 stated that *there is no need [for teenage sex] because that is immorality in our society*, while according to SW-002, *there is no need because most of them are still in school and cannot take good care of them-selves financially*.

Attention to the perception of teenage girls that had sexual debut on teenage sex

The researcher wanted to shed light on the perception of teenage sexual debut from the girls who had already indulged. Figure 4.6 illustrates the use of contraceptive at sexual debut.

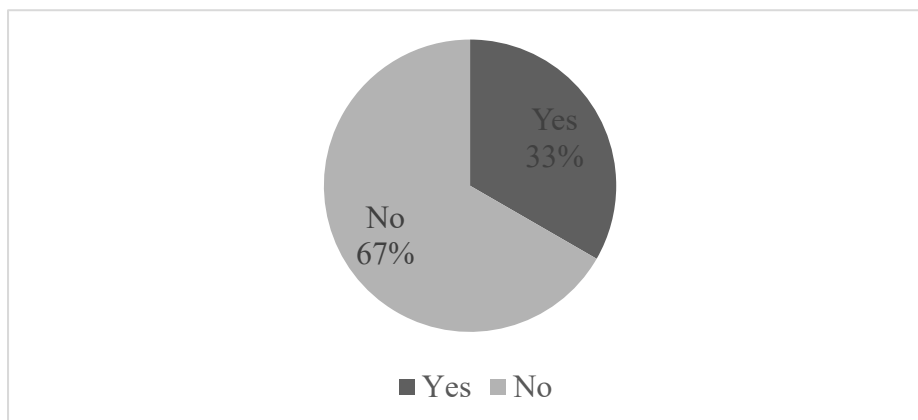


Figure 4.6: Use of Contraceptive at Sexual Debut

The findings (see Figure 4.6) indicate that 12 (67%) of the respondents did not use any contraceptive at sexual debut, while only 6 (33%) of the girls were afraid of falling pregnant and used contraceptives. This is an unsettling finding since condoms are the most common and easy to find contraceptives, and, in this case, they were not used, yet. only one of the 18 girls was defiled. Therefore, teenage parenting, new HIV infections, and the spread of STDs will continue to trouble teenagers in the informal settlement of Kibra for a while until protected sex is supported when sexual debut cannot be avoided.

Regrets regarding sexual debut

This particular group of respondents was asked if they regretted having engaged in sex at their tender age, and they responded as indicated in Figure 4.7.

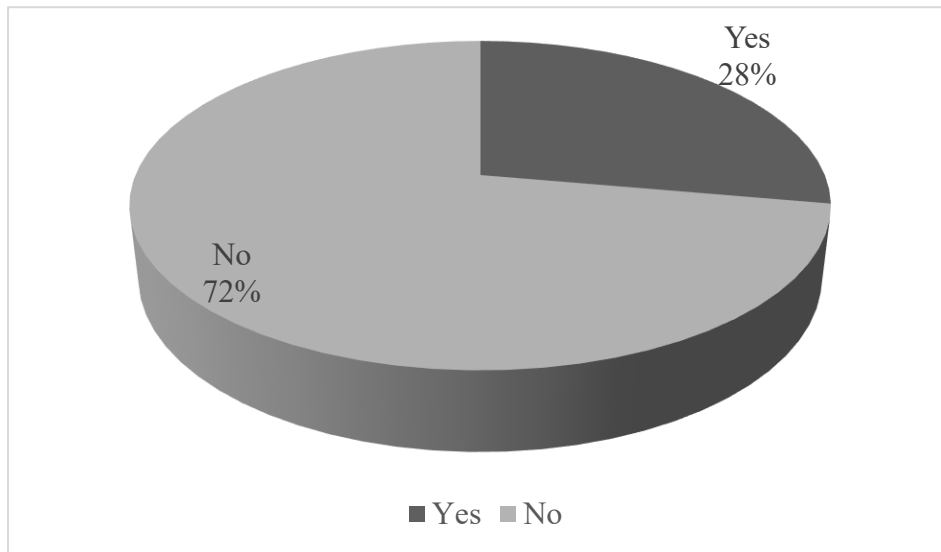


Figure 4.7: Regrets Regarding Sexual Debut

The findings indicated that the majority, 13 (72%) did not regret having engaged in sex for the first time at all, while only 5 (28%) of the 18 adolescent girls regretted it. Having remorse or lack of it, in this case, is important in giving direction as to whether the girls will probably engage in sex more times or will not during their teenage life. To support this statement, the respondents were asked if they had engaged in coitus further after the debut, and the findings were as follows:

More sexual interactions after sexual debut

Figure 4.8 presents the findings on sexual interactions after the sexual debut of the teenage girls in this study.

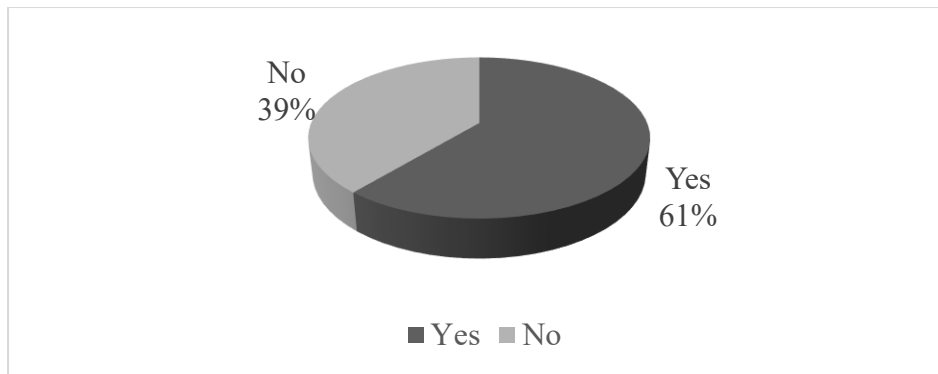


Figure 4.8: More Sexual Interactions after Sexual Debut

Further findings established that of the 18 girls who had started coitus, 11 (61%) of them continued to engage in sex while 7 (39%) stopped at the debut. Based on this, it is evident that this research was necessary to prove that delaying sexual debut is weighty in fighting all negative effects of teenage sex whose weight is felt more by girls than boys.

Intervention Strategies Towards Delaying Sexual Debut among Adolescent Girls

The third objective in this study was to evaluate intervention strategies towards delaying sexual debut among the adolescent girls. This study was able to unearth some of the key strategies that could assist in delaying sexual debut among teenage girls in Kibra, and they are shown in Table 4.11.

Table 4.11: Proposed Interventions to stakeholders to Promote Abstinence

	Frequency	Percent
No response	2	2
Avoid bad Company	4	4
Engage parents	4	4
Providing for their basic needs	14	15
Creating awareness	12	13
Ideal Dress code	1	1
Guidance and counselling	58	60
Support girls who dropped out of school	1	1
Total	96	100.0

Among the key interventions, guiding and counselling was indicated by 58 (60%) of the 96 respondents as a good way to educate and empower the teenagers on the need to delay sexual debut. The specific areas mentioned by various respondents

include providing mentorship for young girls between ages 13-17, teaching young girls more on STDs and the importance of protected sex, and counseling of guardians and parents on the topics of sex. Other areas mentioned were holding seminars to empower young girls, and guiding on proper usage of phones and the internet and on how to use their leisure time wisely.

Providing for the girls' basic needs as a way of delaying sexual debut ranked second by 14(15%). Sharing in the same sentiments, SW-001, when asked about what causes girls in the informal settlements to begin sexual relations early, cited *lack of basic needs that forces them to exchange sex for money, so as to afford basic things such as clothes and sanitary towels.*

Creating awareness on sex education through life skills and seminars in religious institutions was the third way suggested by the 12 (13%) of the 96 girls to help in delaying sexual debut amongst them. This was a thought shared by SW-001 as follows: *creating sensitization and awareness on matters sex among adolescent girls, investing more on youth forums, creating income generating activities for the youth to reduce idleness and provide more ways to reduce poverty in families, door to door campaigns on discouraging adolescence sex.*

Avoiding bad company and negative peer pressure, engaging parents, dressing decently, and supporting girls who drop out of school because of lack of finances followed were at 4%, 4%,1%, and 1%, respectively. On this, SW-002 suggested *[provision of] spacious rooms that offer privacy for parents while engaging in sex* as an intervention strategy.

Findings from the teenage girls indicated that guiding and counseling, creating awareness against sexual debut, and providing for girls' basic needs were among the topmost powerful intervention strategies against early sexual debut. Avoiding bad

company, parental engagement, decent dressing, and supporting school dropouts were strategies but among those that would have less impact.

Findings on the ground suggest that a teenage girl in Laini Saba, Kibra has a higher chance of abstaining from sex if frequent guidance and counseling is offered to her, if she is engaged in activities that create awareness against teenage sex, and if basic needs such as food, clothing, shelter, sanitary pads are in constant supply. In addition, the importance of decent houses that provide sexual privacy cannot be over emphasized.

Summary of Key Findings

1. High self-esteem (by choice), peer pressure, and poverty were the strongest factors influencing sexual debut among teenage girls in Kibra.
2. Many teenage girls in Kibra had a positive perception towards teenage sex as they thought it was wise to wait till the age of 18+ before starting to engage in sex. Also, many of the respondents (teenage girls) were of the opinion that there is more to learn about sex in their age that will benefit them more in the future.
3. More guidance and counselling, creating awareness, and provision of basic needs were considered as the most powerful strategies towards delay of sexual debut among teenage girls in Laini Saba, Kibra,

Summary

In this chapter, the researcher has presented the study's data, as well as the analysis and interpretation of the same. The teenage girl in Laini Saba, Kibra is predisposed to teenage sexual debut owing to the social environment she grows in. There is hope in saving the situation, since as per the findings, the teenage girls are against teenage sexual debut and are aware of gaps that need to be addressed in order to achieve sexual abstinence in the same environments. In the next chapter, the

researcher discusses the study findings and gives the study's conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This chapter presents the discussion of key data findings, conclusions drawn from the findings highlighted, and recommendations made thereto. The conclusions and recommendations drawn were focused on addressing the purpose of this study which was to examine the environmental factors that drive adolescent girls in Kibra, an informal settlement in Nairobi City, to engage in sex for the first time

Discussions of Key Findings

The findings showed that 18 (18.8%) of the 96 girls had experienced first coitus at the time of the survey, with 3 (16.7%) of the 18 having begun sexual interactions before they were 13 years of age. In a study previously done on the sexual and reproductive health of adolescence living in urban informal settlements in Kenya, 8% of the girls had initiated coitus (Marston et al., 2013). The findings also revealed that 7 (38.9%) of the respondents lived with their mothers alone as the head of their families. Further, many of the respondents indicated that it is wise to wait till the age of 18+ before starting to engage in sex. A high number were of the opinion that there is more to learn about sex in their age that would benefit them more in the future. On the strategies to delay sexual debut given by the 96 respondents and the social workers, guidance and counseling, creating awareness, and provision of basic needs carried the day.

Socio-Environmental Factors that Contribute to the First Sexual Experience of Adolescent Girls in Kibra

The low SES of Kibra is one of the main contributors to teenage sexual debut, according to the findings of this study. The majority of the Kibra residents live in abject poverty, below the poverty line (Bodewes, 2013). This study established that 62% of the respondents thought that their semi-permanent houses and small spaces do not provide enough sexual privacy and that 54% of the 96 respondents had witnessed either parents or adults engage in sex in those houses and the neighborhood. According to research done in Kibra in 2016, 7.5% of teenagers witnessed their parents and neighbors having sex at home because of the small, shared spaces and the semi-permanent materials used in constructing the houses (Sitati, 2016).

The ecological systems theory explains human behavior and development as based on an individual's biological makeup and interactions with the environment they live in (Liu, 2017). In the findings of this study, the low SES of the Kibra environment again manifests as fueling sexual debut and rampant teenage sex through the easy availability of cheap physical areas that facilitate the vice. According to the social workers' responses to where in Kibra sexual activities occur, lodgings that were readily available and cheap, attached to multiple illicit liquor dens and numerous bars, under *mama mboga's* structures "*Kibanda*" as well as their boyfriend's rooms. Using Urie's Bronfenbrenner postulation, the reverse could be true, suggesting that the absence of these cheap and readily available places would delay sexual delay among teenage girls in Laini Saba. Kibra.

Generally, the low socio-economic status of Laini Saba is typical of other villages in Kibra and subjects the inhabitants to a deplorable and almost inhumane state of life. The majority, 98% of the 96 respondents, use shared community toilets, most of which are paid for per every single use with the option of "flying toilets" where cash

for access was unavailable. Elimination of this challenge would reduce the unnecessary social interaction between teenage girls and neighbors, who comprise 11% of persons who were sexually involved with the 18 girls. This percentage could even be higher because the girls might also have categorized some of them as friends, who comprised 61% of the people they got involved with at first engagement of sex.

Sharing the small spaces, most rooms measuring 10*10ft as noted by Egondi, Kabiru, Beguy, Kanyiva, and Jessor (2013), was a characteristic of Kibra houses. Apart from the lack of space to privately change clothes, there was also sharing of beds with both genders, a situation that could be encouraging incest. Out of the 96 girls, 18 of them had already experienced their first coitus. Out of those 18, there was evidence that one of them had engaged with a family member, translating to incest, at 6%. However, the limitation of the physical setup in a home does not necessarily result in incest but may encourage sexual relationships between family members who are not well-grounded in the word of God.

The Kenya Slum Upgrading Program (KENSUP), a project initiated in 2001 by the government of Kenya in conjunction with UN-HABITAT (Sebambo, 2015), if eventually successful, would be the much-needed solution to the challenge of small space shared among family members as well as in the entire neighborhood. This was according to 92% of the 96 respondents who thought that the program would go a long way in enhancing sexual privacy in their homes. The project was aimed at building stone walled houses, having one toilet per household, increasing the room spaces from 10 ft by 10ft, and putting up streetlights, among other improvements. These would contribute to bigger personal space, better partitioning methods in the homes, and consequently sexual privacy for the adults, especially those living with teenage girls.

According to the responses given by the respondents in this study, other key drivers of sexual debut among teenage girls include the willingness to engage, at 55%, which was attributed to high self-esteem. The teenage girls felt they were physically mature to engage, and when they got involved in relationships, and the chance presented itself, they went for it. This finding agrees with a study on predictors of sexual debut among young adolescents in Nairobi's informal settlements by Marston et al. (2013) which stated that teenagers, both males and females who have low self-esteem, are less likely to have their first coitus at teenagehood compared to those who had high self-esteem.

Peer pressure, which scored 27.8%, was the second factor given as a major reason behind the 18 teenage girls in Laini Saba, Kibra engaging in first coitus. This particular finding agrees with research done by Ndung'u (2015), which highlighted peer pressure as a major reason behind boys and girls in Nairobi's Dagoretti District, initiation into sexual activity. The influence of peers cannot be ignored when discussions about adolescent development are taking place not only in Kibra but also globally.

The place of peer influence resurfaces again when looking at the source of information around sex education among the adolescent girls living in Kibra. Friends scored 35% as the key informants on this topic among the 18 girls who had already experienced sexual debut. This finding is a major one as it emphasizes adolescent empowerment and continuous counseling on matters of sex to delay sexual debut among the girls; knowledge is power. This strong influence of peer pressure also approves Urie Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory in postulating that human beings are a result of their biological makeup and the environmental influences around them.

The Internet and mass media were mentioned by 17% and 12%, respectively, of the 18 girls as being their main source of information on sex education. According to the researcher, these figures are quite low because a phone and books beyond the curriculum could be luxury to people struggling to afford basic needs. Nonetheless, the numbers are important in emphasizing the censoring of pornographic and adult content, which is accessible through our social media and mass media.

The findings of this study are in total contrast with research done in Woldia Town, in Ethiopia in 2016, that indicated that poor attendance to church, failure to read the bible, and little involvement in church activities contributed to early sexual debut (Kassahun et al., 2019). This is because the majority (78%) of the 18 teenage girls from Kibra, who were already indulging in coitus, were Christians.

According to research done in Ghana on child marriages, Islam and Christianity were found to indirectly encourage teenage sexual debut by condemning childbirth outside marriage and at times punishing the act (Ahonsi et al., 2019). The findings of this study partly contradict the research done in Ghana as among the girls that had already had their first coitus in Kibra, none was from the Islamic religion.

Cronin (2012) established that there are numerous NGOs and CBOs in Kibra, both locally and internationally funded. Most of these organizations, however, focus on providing basic needs for the people of Kibra. According to the findings of this research, it is also important that NGOs and CBOs focus on keeping the teenage girls busy productively, especially during long breaks and holidays. This is because, in this study, 72% of the 18 already sexually active girls mentioned that their debut happened during school holidays and not during school sessions. The holidays provide a lot of free time and possible idleness among the teenager in Kibra.

Family dysfunction that manifests as lack of parental supervision due to authoritarian, permissive, or uninvolved parenting is among the psychosocial factors indicated as drivers of sexual debut among adolescence in the informal settlements in Nairobi (Marston et al., 2013). The findings of this research do agree with Marston et al.'s (2013) study, as 7 girls out of the 18 who have experienced their first coitus reported to have been living with the mother alone as the head of the family. This was also highlighted by one of the social workers as a lack of parental love and care. Raising a child single-handedly can be challenging as the single parent would have to work harder than both parents working together to provide for a child's needs financially, emotionally, spiritually, and socially. Single mothers probably have less time at their disposal to closely monitor their teenage daughters' activities or even barely have time to guide and counsel them on matters of sex.

Lack of sufficient knowledge is evidently contributing to teenage and pre-teen sexual debut among the teenage girls in Kibra because, according to the findings of this study, (16.7%) of the 18 girls began sexual interactions before they were 13 years of age. It is possible that the percentage is higher since 33% did not indicate the age at sexual debut. The school level for 95.8% of the respondents was upper primary, secondary, and college, indicating a basic understanding of the English language and a good knowledge of the basics of human sexuality. Human reproduction is introduced as a lesson to 12-year-olds at standard six and integrated into life skills, according to the education curriculum in the Kenyan system (Sidze et al., 2017). This finding suggests that there is a need to introduce the topic earlier to curb the problem of pre-teen sexual debut.

Perception of Teenage Girls on Sexual Debut

When it comes to thoughts and beliefs on teenage sexual debut, only 19% of the 96 girls thought abstinence is of no importance. Coincidentally, also only 18.8% of the girls had already had sexual debut. This finding matches that of a study carried out among teenage girls in Rakai Town of Uganda, which found the girls who upheld abstinence throughout adolescence faulted their pregnant counterparts arguing that they engaged in sex in the first place as a means to future financial freedom through pregnancy and eventually marriage to financially able men (Maly et al., 2017). Also, the close association of sexual debut and provision of basic needs among the teenage girls of Kibra is an indicator that as much as the girls oppose it at times, it seems to be their easiest option out of their needy, desperate situation, a finding that agrees with that of the Ugandan teenage girls in similar circumstances.

A disturbing finding that informs the girls' perception of teenage sex is that out of the 18 girls that had initiated coitus, 67% of them did not use contraception, such as condoms, which are easily and more readily available as compared to other methods of contraception. This is worrying as it seems that the girls are not afraid of pregnancy, STDs, and HIV. In as much as 33% use contraceptives, it is also still a worrying trend. This confirms findings of a study done in Kiserai, Kenya on the use and abuse of the ECP that highlighted that one chemist would sell up to 30 doses of ECP every end of the weekend to the same girls up to three times in a month (Koros, 2014).

Based on the findings of this study, regrettably, the majority (72%) of the 18 girls who had engaged in the first coitus, did not regret the act. This could also be the thinking behind a further 61% who had more sexual interactions after the debut. Previous discussions on teenagers likely to continue engaging in sex after debut suggested that this is more likely to happen when one was a prior rape victim, according

to Kenney et al. (as cited in Navarro, 2013). In this case, the findings of this research did not agree with that particular discussion as rape accounted for only one (1) respondent among the 18 girls. The majority of those who had started engaging thought it was okay to continue, and by the time they all reach 18 years of age, the 61% score is likely to have increased.

The study established that 87.5% of the 96 adolescents thought that it is fine to begin sexual interactions anytime from 18 years of age. Only 8% thought that the initiation should be preserved for marriage. This trend of thought among the teenagers might not be as alarming. Still, there is an obvious need to associate sex before marriage with the quality of life of an individual financially, emotionally, spiritually, and socially as a consequence of indulging.

Proposed Intervention Strategies towards Delaying Sexual Debut among Adolescent Girls

The findings of this entire section revolve around changing the social environment within which a teenage girl in the informal settlement grows in order to have an impact on her ability to delay sexual debut until she is a responsible adult who can handle well the consequences of sex. Making any alterations in her life would mean directly influencing her environment and hoping she, in turn, influences the environment around her in order to delay sexual debut. This, in essence, is approving and facilitating the ecological systems theory by Urie Bronfenbrenner, as was discussed in depth in chapter two of this study.

Guiding and counseling, was indicated by 58 (60%) of the 96 respondents as the most popular way to delay sexual debut among teenage girls in the informal settlement. The teenagers felt there that there are gaps in the knowledge they already have on sex matters and, therefore, proposed more of guidance and counselling in order to empower them to say no to teenage sex. The specific areas mentioned include

providing mentorship, deeper teachings on STDs and dangers of unprotected sex, empowering guardians and parents on the topics of sex, facilitating seminars to empower young girls, enlightenment on mobile phones usage and healthy ways to interact with internet, and on productive use of leisure time.

According to Hopper (2019), Maslow's hierarchy of needs explains the importance of meeting human needs by beginning with basic needs, which are fundamental to decent living. Providing for the girls' basic needs as a way of delaying sexual debut ranked second by 14 (15%), as proposed by the adolescent girls. One of the social workers, SW-001 said poverty, which leads to a struggle in affording basic needs, forces the girls to exchange sex for money so that they can afford basic things such as clothes and sanitary towels. This agrees with findings by Beguy et al. (2013) that teenage girls are forced into sexual relationships in order to provide for their household's livelihood needs.

Creation of awareness on sex education through life skills and seminars in religious institutions was the third way suggested by the 12 (13%) of the 96 girls to help in delaying sexual debut amongst them. One of the social workers strongly proposed this strategy and went ahead to suggest more investment in youth forums, the creation of income-generating activities to reduce idleness while improving the financial status of the teenagers' families, and door-to-door campaigns against teenage sex.

Conclusion

The following conclusions were drawn from this study:

The majority of the teenagers in the informal settlement of Kibra have not yet begun coitus, and they oppose sexual debut before 18 years of age. The three main reasons the respondents gave for their first indulgence into sex were their choice, which can be interpreted as having high self-esteem; peer pressure; and poverty. The fact that

there are still several teenagers who see no issue with teenage sexual debut is a wake-up call for society to work harder towards discouraging the vice among adolescents in the informal settlement of Kibra.

More guidance and counseling, creating awareness, and provision of basic needs were considered by the respondents in this study as the most powerful tools toward delaying sexual debut among teenage girls in Laini Saba, Kibra. Minimizing sexual exposure by adults around the child featured subtly, according to the researcher, is a key area of interest also in delaying sexual debut in the locality. Another factor is continued spiritual teachings that encourage sexual abstinence among teenagers.

Recommendations

From the findings of this research, the researcher makes the following recommendations:

1. The government and parents need to put more effort towards poverty eradication, through provision of basic needs, such as better housing in terms of spaces per household and family toilets, specifically in houses with pre-teens and teenage girls. This will ensure sexual privacy for the adults in Kibra and consequently mitigate early sexual debut among teenage girls in Kibra.
2. There is a dire need for more institutions whose goals are oriented towards instilling values in young teenage girls to help them uphold abstinence and only engage in sex inside marriage. Any already existing of this nature can consider changing the approaches in spreading the word of God, engaging the teenagers in productive activities even during holidays, and investing on awareness and guidance and counseling of the teenagers.
3. The immediate caregivers of the teenage girls: parents, teachers, and religious institutions to facilitate more of sex education by way of awareness seminars,

guidance and counseling, and equipping the teenage girls with more knowledge on sex matters and abstinence.

Recommendations for Further Research

This study only focused on the drivers of sexual debut among teenage girls in Kibra due to the limitation of time and resources. The researcher, therefore, recommends further research on the following:

1. A qualitative study to describe the place of self-esteem in encouraging teenage sex so as to debunk unhealthy myths in our society.
2. A study on the methods the church is using to encourage abstinence among adolescent girls of Kibra and the methods' efficacy.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Questionnaire 1

SECTION A: SOCIAL DEMOGRAPHICS

1) Age of respondent in years (Tick as appropriate)	13	14	15	16	17
2) Age of first monthly period in years eg 11 years)					
3) School attended	a.Primary	b.Secondary	c.College	d.Other (mention type)	e.Not in any school
ii) If answer is (e) above, explain reason					
4) Which category does your school fall under?	a.Mixed day school	b.Girls' day school	c.Mixed boarding school	d.Girls' boarding school	
5) What class/form/ level are you in?					
6) what is your current religious background?	a.catholic	b.Protestant	c.Muslim	d.Others	e.None

SECTION B: HOME: PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT AND FAMILY FACTORS

7a) Type of residence. Only ONE ANSWER (Tick as appropriate)		
a.Mud Wall and iron sheet / Mabati roof		
b.Iron sheet wall and iron sheet roof / Mabati wall		
c.Stone/brick wall and iron sheet		
d.Other (Explain)		
7b) Number of rooms for the whole family (<i>tick only one answer, as appropriate</i>)		
i.Single room with shared/ community toilet		
ii.Double room with shared/ community toilet		
iii.Other . Briefly explain		
7c) Do you think the physical set up at your home provides enough sexual privacy for parents/ guardians?		Yes No

7d. In regards to the government and the UN slum upgrading program, (the on -going one that is building stone houses for families in Kibera and giving them mortgages)do you think this is , very important, somewhat important, a little important, or not at all important in providing sexual privacy for parents/ guardians?	a.Very important	b.Somewhat important	c.A little important	d.Not at all important	e.Don't know
7e) Considering other factors like better sanitation, more permanent housing, better street lighting, improved security among others that are supposed to come with the slum upgrading program, would you prefer to move to the new houses?				Yes	No
8a) I live with	i.Father and mother	ii.Father alone	iii.Mother alone	iv.Other, (state relationship)	
8b) Other family members include: (Mention number eg 1,2, 3.. brother(s)	i. brothers		ii. sisters	iii. Others, (state number and relationship)	
8c) Total number of people in my house					

SECTION C: ATTITUDES AND KNOWLEDGE TOWARDS SEX

9) Do you think that you know enough regarding sex? (<i>Only one answer</i>)	Yes	No
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10) Who do you confide in on matters to do with sex? (more than one answer allowed)	i. Father	ii. Mother	iii. Both parents	iv. Guardian	v. Siblings	vi. Peers/Friends	vii. Teachers	viii. Others (state relationship)
11) Do you think there is need for teenage girls to NOT engage in sex?							Yes	No
12) What do you think is the appropriate age for one to start having sex?								
13) Which of the following best describes you? (<i>Does not mean that you are having sex with them</i>)				I. Attracted to boys	ii. Attracted to girls	iii. Attracted to both boys and girls	iv. Not sure	v. None of the above
13b) In your view, what makes you attractive to boys?								

Sexual behavior (Cb)

14.a) Have you ever had sexual intercourse?						Yes	No
14b) How old were you when you first engaged in sex? <i>Proceed to question 15 if your answer is NO above</i>							
14c) Was the school in session or was it during the school holiday?						School in session	Holiday
14d) If yes during the holiday, which holiday?					i. April	ii. August	iii. December
14e) What was the age of the person who you had sex with first time?							
14e) What was the age difference between the two of you?					i. Same age	ii. Younger	iii. Older
14f) What was the gender of your first sexual partner?					i. Girl	ii. Boy	iii. Girl and boy
14g) What was the relationship between you and your first sexual partner?	i. Classmate	ii. Relative, briefly explain	iii. Neighbor	iv. Teacher	v. Friend	vi. Stranger	
14h) Was your first sexual encounter vaginal, oral, or anal?					i. Vaginal	ii. Oral	iii. Anal

14i) Why did you engage in your first sexual intercourse?	i. By choice	ii. Need to feel rebellious	iii. Family pressure	iv. Forced	v. Peer influence	vi. Under the influence of a recreational drug?
	vii. Socioeconomic pressure. Were there any promises?..... Relationship?..... Money?.....	viii. Knowledge of family planning	ix. rape	x. Media influence	xi. After a sex education class	xii. Others, please specify
14j) Did you use any contraception during this encounter?	Yes specify which one please i. Condom..... ii. emergency contraceptive..... iii. Others, specify.....				No	
14k) Do you regret having your first encounter?					Yes	No
14l) Did it result to a pregnancy?					Yes	No
14m) Did it result to a sexually transmitted infection?					Yes	No
14n) Was that the last time you had sex					Yes	No
14o) If no (above), how many sexual partners have you had in your lifetime?						
14p) How many sexual partners have you had in the past year?						
14q) How frequently do you engage in sexual intercourse?	i. Once a week	ii. More than once a week	iii. Only during school recess	iv. When opportunity arises		
14r) How regularly do you use condoms?	i. Always		ii. Sometimes	iii. Never		
14s) Are you doing anything to prevent pregnancy?	Yes specify which one please: i. Condom..... ii. contraceptive..... which one? iii. Safe days..... iv. withdrawal..... v. emergency contraceptive/P2..... vi. Others..... Specify				No	
14t) Are you under any influence of alcohol or other recreational drugs when you engage in sex?					Yes	No
14u) Have you ever gotten pregnant?					Yes	No
14v) Have you ever aborted?					Yes	No
14w) Do you have a child/ children?					Yes	No

SECTION D: ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS

15a) Have you ever had any discussion on sex with any of your family members?						Yes	No
15ai) If Yes in (16a), which one?	i. Father	ii. Mother	iii. Both Father and Mother	iv. Guardian	v. Older sibling	vi. Other, briefly state relationship.....	
15aii) Was the discussion helpful?						Yes	No

16a) What is your main source of information regarding sex?	i.Parents	ii.Guardian	iii.Older siblings	v.Other relatives		v.Friends	
	vi.Teachers	vii.Internet/ social media	viii.Mass Media	ix.Other sources, state			
16ai) If your answer includes Internet / social media, which ones?		i.Youtube	ii.Facebok	iii.Telegram	iv.Watsa pp	v.Others. Please state	
16aii) If your answer includes Mass media, which ones?	i.TV	ii.Radio	iii. Magazine s/ Books	iv.News papers	v.Mobile Phones	vi.movies	vii.Others. Please state
17a) Have you ever witnessed people having sex at your home or in the neighborhood? (Both seeing or hearing)						Yes	No
17ai) If yes above; who and where?	i.Parents ii.A relative iii.Neighbors iv. others , brief explanation.....		At home/ in the house At home/ in the house At their home/ in their house Location.....				
18) What is the level of education of your parent or guardian?			i.Did not go to school	ii.Primary school	iii.Secondary school	iv.College/ University	
19) Thinking about your life right now, how important is it to you to avoid becoming pregnant? Would you say very important, somewhat important, a little important, or not at all important?			i.Very important	ii.Somewh at important	iii.A little important	iv.Not at all important	v.Don't know

20. In your view, what needs to be done to support abstinence among teenage girls of

Kibra ?.....

Appendix B: Questionnaire 2

Tool B

QUESTIONS

Initials	
Gender	
Age	
Level of Education	

1. What is the earliest age of sexual debut for girls, have you encountered in your work?

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2. According to you, what reasons drive teenage girls in Kibra to start having sexual relations?.....

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3. In your experience in Kibra where do sexual activities happen most and why?.....

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4. In what ways do you think the physical set up in Kibra homes provide enough sexual privacy for parents and guardians?

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5. In your view do you think there is need for teenage girls to engage in sex?

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6. As social worker, how do you assist children that are already sexually active?.....

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7. What is your main source of information regarding sex?

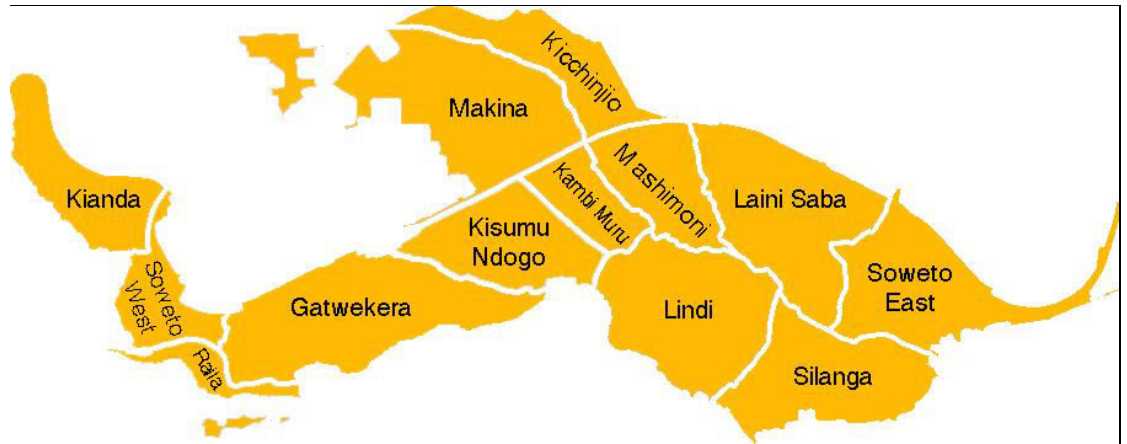
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8. What measures in your view can be taken to delay the onset of sexual activity among teenage girls in Kibra?

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Appendix C: Map of Kibera



Source: Map Kibera Project (n.d.)

Appendix D: Ethical Clearance

VERDICT – PASS
Daystar University Ethics Review Board

Our Ref: **DU-ERB/17/02/2020/000400**

Date: 17th February 2020

To: Imelda M. Mwau

Dear Imelda,

RE: AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO SEXUAL DEBUT AMONG ADOLESCENT GIRLS LIVING IN INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS: A CASE OF KIBRA, NAIROBI COUNTY

Reference is made to your ERB application reference no. 120220-01 dated 12th February 2020 in which you requested for ethical approval of your proposal by Daystar University Ethics Review Board.


We are pleased to inform you that Daystar University Ethics Review Board has reviewed and approved your above research proposal. Your application approval number is **DU-ERB-000400**. The approval period for the research is between **17th February 2020 to 16th February 2021** after which the ethical approval lapses. Should you wish to continue with the research after the lapse you will be required to apply for an extension from DU-ERB at half the review charges.

This approval is subject to compliance with the following requirements:

- Only approved documents including (informed consents, study instruments, MTA) will be used.
- All changes including (amendments, deviations, and violations) are submitted for review and approval by Daystar University Ethics Review Board.
- Death and life threatening problems and serious adverse events or unexpected adverse events whether related or unrelated to the study must be reported to Daystar University Ethics Review Board within 72 hours of notification.
- Any changes anticipated or otherwise that may increase the risks or affected safety or welfare of study participants and others or affect the integrity of the research must be reported to Daystar University Ethics Review Board within 72 hours.
- Clearance for export of biological specimens must be obtained from relevant institutions.
- Submission of a request for renewal of approval at least 60 days prior to expiry of the approval period. Attach a comprehensive progress report to support the renewal.
- Submission of a signed one page executive summary report and a closure report within 90 days upon completion of the study to Daystar University Ethics Review Board via email [duerb@daystar.ac.ke].

Prior to commencing your study, you will be expected to obtain a research license from National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) <https://oris.nacosti.go.ke> and other clearances needed.


Yours sincerely,


Mrs. Purity Kiambi,
Secretary, Daystar University Ethics Review Board


Encl. Review Report

will the day dawn and the daystar
rise in your hearts?
2 Peter 1:19 KJV

Appendix E: Research Permit



REPUBLIC OF KENYA




**NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR
SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION**

Ref No: 507553

Date of Issue: 19/March/2020

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This is to Certify that Ms. Imelda Mutindi Mwanu of Daystar University, has been licensed to conduct research in Nairobi on the topic: AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO SEXUAL DEBUT AMONG ADOLESCENT GIRLS LIVING IN INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS : A CASE OF KIBRA, NAIROBI COUNTY for the period ending : 19/March/2021.

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Appendix: F: Plagiarism Report

Imelda Mwau thesis - 20th October 2021

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