

THE INFLUENCE OF MASS MEDIA IN SHAPING HIV AND AIDS RISK
PERCEPTIONS: THE CASE OF SECONDARY SCHOOL YOUTHS IN KISUMU EAST
DISTRICT

by

Mercy Chiyumba Khasiani

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Mercy Chiyumba Khasiani

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

Date:

Prof. Michael Bowen, PhD, Supervisor

Dr. Rosemary Nyaole, PhD, Reader

Dr. Rahab Nyaga, PhD,
HoD Department of Communication

Prof. Levi Obonyo, PhD,
Dean, School of Communication, Language
and Performing Arts

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

Signed: _____
Mercy Chiyumba Khasiani

Date: _____

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Abstract

The Kenya Demographic Health Survey of 2008/09 reveals that, Nyanza Province has the highest infection prevalence in Kenya with a prevalence of 8% among youth in the age bracket of 15-24 years compared to the national prevalence of 6.3%.

The purpose of this study was to find out the influence of the mass media in shaping HIV and AIDS risk perceptions among the youth and understand how these perceptions inform their behavior with respect to sexual choices. This study was carried out in schools within Kisumu East District which has a student population of 14,140 youth in the age bracket of 15-19 years. A sample size of 375 students was selected. The study sought theoretical support from the prospect theory and health belief model to understand why young people behave the way they do with regard to sexual behaviour. To define and describe data and characteristics about the population being studied, both quantitative and qualitative data was collected using a structured questionnaire. The relationship between communication of information on HIV and AIDS, correct risk assessment and the likelihood of indulging in potentially risky sexual behaviors was examined.

The findings revealed that there were significantly low perceptions of risk of contracting HIV among the youth in Kisumu East District and that there is lack of comprehensive knowledge on HIV and AIDS. Further to this findings the study also established that the Mass Media did influence the shaping of risk perceptions with television and radio being the most popular sources of HIV and AIDS information among the youth compared to the Internet and Newspapers.

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Dedication

I dedicate this work to:

My Mother, Lady Justice Sarah Chibai Ondeyo-Omolo, My children Cyril, Jayden, Grace, Judge and Diana, My husband Oscar Omoke Ochola and my brother, Leonard Alusiola Khasiani. Without your presence and encouragement I would not have made it this far.

The youth of Kenya, you are the answer to an HIV free generation and to a society with Zero new infections, Zero new deaths and Zero discrimination.

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