

The Influence of Breast Cancer Messages on Women's Perceptions
and Subsequent Health Behavior in Kisumu County, Kenya

by

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SIGNATURE PAGE

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WOMEN'S PERCEPTIONS AND SUBSEQUENT HEALTH
BEHAVIOUR IN KISUMU COUNTY, KENYA

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

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THE INFLUENCE OF BREAST CANCER MESSAGES ON
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by

Alago A. Sabina

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

Signed: _____

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DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to all women participants

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ABSTRACT

Health messages emphasize either on potential losses or gains associated with the behaviour being advocated. Demographic factors are possible reference points when assessing such messages, partly explaining possibilities of discrepancies in perceptions and subsequent health behaviour. The degree to which a message is persuasive can be measured through change in perceptions and behaviour. Guided by Prospect Theory and Precaution Adoption Process Model, this study sought to investigate the influence that breast cancer messages have had on women's perceptions and subsequent health behaviour. The research assumed both qualitative and quantitative research designs. An open ended questionnaire was the principal data collection tool administered to 403 women participants aged between 20 and 64 years. Findings revealed that (a) television, radio and health facility personnel were the most preferred sources of information; (b) breast cancer messages are framed in three ways

- gain, loss and mixed framing; (c) message frames largely elicit desired effects on perceptions and subsequent health behaviour; (d) information deficiencies in deed is also worrying factor that need to be addressed accordingly. Consequently, It is prudent for the women to voluntarily seek the right breast cancer information, if they are to move from intention stage to maintenance stage of the Precaution Adoption Process Model. In addition, risk communicators need to develop breast cancer frames that revolve around symptoms and causes accordingly, if voluntariness amongst

women in taking up non-risky behaviour is to be witnessed. The risk communicators could use the most preferred channels side by side to reinforce strengths associated with each when communicating to the women. Internet and television (especially among the rural women) are of low use, calling for the Government and other development partners, including the women to boost the level of their usage.

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