HEALTH INFORMATION SEEKING - BEHAVIORS AMONG WOMEN WHO USE THE INTERNET; A CASE STUDY OF THE ROAD AUTHORITIES IN NAIROBI, KENYA

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ABSTRACT

Increasingly, more women are engaging in health information seeking via the internet. This is because the internet has emerged as a significant resource for women negotiating various health questions that arise in their everyday lives. Considering the communication perspective, the internet offers widespread access to health information among many other advantages it has over the other forms of media. However, there are challenges regarding access to the internet and its use due to its numerous design features and the quality of online health information. On the theoretical perspective, the uses and gratification theory has been discussed in detail in relation to the study.

This study derived its objectives and research questions from the factors that affect the behavior of women in seeking health information on the internet. For instance the frequency of using the internet, how demographic characteristics affect access and use of the health information from the internet, health information frequently sought by the women, how the health information sought from the internet is put into use and the challenges encountered in seeking health information from the internet.

The findings of the study give an insight into the behavior of women in seeking health information on the internet. It came out clearly that most of the socially privileged women have turned to the online resources for health information. This is for self-gratification as well as to as to perform the fully informed patient's role and still rely on the medical practitioner's assistance.