

**ROLE OF INTER – PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION IN
MANAGEMENT OF CHILD ABUSE: A STUDY OF UASIN GISHU
COUNTY - KENYA**

BY



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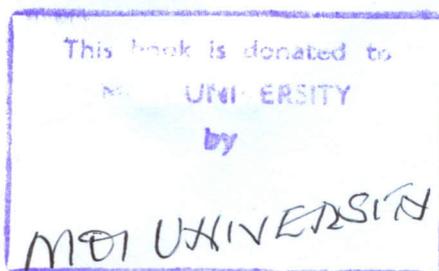
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ABSTRACT

Child abuse can be defined as situation whereby the fundamental human rights of a child are tampered with and in most cases the child is exposed to unnecessary hardships and odds in life. Child abuse remains a rampant problem worldwide; hence there is an urgent need to come up with suitable ways of solving the problem. One of the traditional ways of addressing the issue of child abuse in Kenya and elsewhere entails communication by relevant professionals to disseminate information aimed at preventing and/or managing cases of child abuse. However, the extent to which the professional communication achieves this dissemination and management is not clear. Hence, this study investigated the role of communication between various professionals (inter-professional communication) in management of child abuse in Kenya. The study was conducted in Uasin Gishu County in Kenya. The objectives of the study were: to determine the nature of communication between various professionals involved in management of child abuse; to establish the effects of the communication between the professionals on the management of child abuse and to identify the barriers experienced by professionals in the communication of information on child abuse. Data was collected from five groups of professionals: doctors, police officers, lawyers, social workers and children officers. The data was analyzed by descriptive statistics and presented in percentages, tables and figures. The study revealed that the communication between the professionals involved several channels and media with varied levels of effectiveness; while information disseminated by the professionals was useful in solving problems of child abuse, there were several factors that constrained access to child abuse information such as cultural beliefs, educational background, economic levels as well as social background. This study recommends that the relevant government ministries need to establish mechanisms that will enable professionals to communicate regularly and disseminate the information promptly. This study contributes knowledge to the field of communication studies, especially in terms of potential barriers to inter-professional communication and is useful to all professionals, particularly those concerned with management of child abuse.