

**APPRAISAL OF THE PROCLIVITY OF KENYAN SECONDARY SCHOOL  
GIRLS TO PROCURE ABORTION IN LIGHT OF VALUE OF HUMAN LIFE**

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**DECLARATION**

I declare that this thesis is my original work and has not been presented in any other university for consideration. This thesis has been complemented by referenced sources duly acknowledged. Where texts, data- including the spoken words -have been borrowed from other sources including internet, these are specifically accredited and references cited in accordance with anti-plagiarism regulations.

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## **DEDICATION**

To my dear mom, Mary Munda Odwodi, for the confidence you have in me and for giving your all towards my education.

To the teenage mothers who stood ridicule, stigma and societal pressure to carry their pregnancies to term in an environment where abortion is the order of the day.

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**LIST OF ACRONYMS**

|           |  |
|-----------|--|
| A.P.H.R.C | African Population and Health Research Centre                    |
| AMREF     | African Medical and Research Foundation                          |
| FAWE      | Forum for African Women Educationists                            |
| G.O.K     | Government of Kenya  |
| ICPD      | International Conference on Population and Development           |
| KLRC      | Kenya Law Reform Commission                                      |
| NACOSTI   | National Commission for Science Technology and Innovation        |
| SIECUS    | Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States |
| STIs      | Sexually Transmitted Infections                                  |
| UN        | United Nations   |
| UNFPA     | United Nations Fund for Population Activities                    |
| W.H.O     | World Health Organization  |

## ABSTRACT

Cases of abortion among female students in secondary schools in Kenya are high. Although some of the abortions have been successful, other cases have had portentous implications. If this trend is not checked, Kenya could be faced with a major crisis in learning institutions as more girls will be edged out of school due to health complications or death. This study sought to investigate why secondary school girls persistently procured abortion amidst evident health risks involved, legal constraints and societal ethical expectations. This study was guided by the following study objectives: to find out why secondary school girls procure abortion; to critically analyze the place of value of human life in the abortion decision and to offer possible remedies to the challenge of abortion among secondary school girls in Kenya. This study was guided by the deontological moral theory that appeals to the innate human reason to establish clear criteria for what constitutes moral action because abortion is a moral action and a student is expected to act in accordance with and for the sake of moral duty. The study combined two philosophical methodologies namely: Conceptual Analysis and Phenomenological Analysis. This combination of methodologies was based on the assumption that underneath the perceived causes of abortion lay a fundamental cause that conceptual analysis alone could not adequately unearth. Owing to the sensitive nature of the study topic, respondents were assured of utter confidentiality and for anonymity of respondents, code names were used. Based on the respondents' personal experiences, the study established causes of abortion among secondary school girls as: desire to complete schooling, social isolation, poverty, peer pressure and parental pressure. However, underneath these causes lay a fundamental cause: one's personal conviction of the value of human life. Knowledge of aspects of beginning of human life, personhood of the foetus and concepts of value of human life at the foetal stage of development determined whether a pregnant student would procure an abortion or carry her pregnancy to term. The study proposed some responses to the challenge of abortion including proper and perpetual guidance and counseling, mentoring programs and reproductive health education among others. The study recommended that a similar study be carried out in primary schools and institutions of higher learning and on larger scale preferably countrywide in order to reinforce the generalized finding.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Background to the Study**

27% of the world's population is made up of young people aged between 10-24 years (Guttmacher Institute, 2010). Worldwide, approximately 16 million women and girls aged 15-19 years give birth every year accounting for approximately 11% of all births worldwide. For these young women, complications from pregnancy and child birth are the leading cause of death and abortion is a major contribution to this mortality (WHO, 2012). In Latin America and the Caribbean, 12% of maternal deaths are as a result of abortion. In Latin America, between 10% and 21% of hospitalization for complications arising from abortion occurred among school going girls and a third of those hospitalized suffered from sepsis (Guttmacher Institute, 2010). In USA, 82% of the approximately 750,000 teen pregnancies that occur each year are unintended and more than one quarter of the pregnancies end in abortion (Jones, 2011).

The lowest abortion rate in the world is in Western Europe (Guttmacher Institute, 2010). Much of the low rates of abortion in Western Europe can be attributed to comprehensive reproductive health education. Teen pregnancy rates in Western Europe are some of the world's lowest such as 14.1%, 18.8% and 25.7% teen pregnancies per 1000 women aged 15-44 years in Netherlands, Germany and France respectively (Guttmacher Institute, 2010).

In Sub-Saharan Africa, there are an estimated 2.2 million unintended pregnancies among school going girls. In 2010, there were an estimated 4.5 million abortions among women below 20 years of age in the region (WHO, 2012). According to the World Health Organization, 14% of maternal deaths in Africa are as a result of abortion. 70% of all women who receive treatment for complications related to abortion are less than 20 years of age.

About half a million abortions occur in Kenya annually with an estimated 375,000 procured in backstreet clinics and as a result, 2600 women are killed annually (WHO, 2012). In 2014, of the 119,912 women in Kenya who received care for complications arising from abortion, 45% were young women aged between 10 and 19 (APHRC, 2015). Health workers and rogue herbalists are fetching a fortune from school girls who sneak to their backstreet clinics to get rid of their babies. According to the report by the Standard Newspaper dated 17<sup>th</sup> August 2015, the demand for abortion among secondary school girls in Kenya has given rise to a sophisticated network of illicit abortions complete with referral systems involving school girls, their mothers, teachers, midwives and health workers. The school system has been infiltrated by illegal abortion providers who have planted agents to direct pregnant girls to them. The networks advertise their services through word of mouth with past clients referring new ones (Mulwa, 2015). Some girls use concoctions or insert sharp objects into the vagina while others ingest kerosene or bleach in a desperate move to induce abortion. Although some cases turn out successful, some bleed to a painful death on filthy operating tables, others are

maimed while the lucky ones who survive the ordeal are wracked with guilt (Mulwa, 2015).

Abortion is restricted in Kenya and is only allowed in very limited situations. Article 26 of the Kenyan constitution contains four clauses on the right to life which state that: Every person has the right to life; The life of a person begins at conception; A person shall not be deprived of life intentionally except to the extent authorized by the constitution or other written law; Abortion is not permitted unless in the opinion of a trained health professional, there is need for emergency treatment, or the life or health of the mother is in danger (GoK, 2010). These restrictive provisions have however not curtailed abortion but have instead driven it underground. The legal environment that restricts abortion in Kenya forces women to seek clandestine routes that expose them to health risks. Many of these procedures are conducted under unsafe conditions at times by unqualified personnel and carry substantial risk of maternal morbidity and mortality (WHO, 2012).

High abortion rates among students in Kenya may be partially attributable to the continued extra official expulsion of pregnant students from Kenyan schools. This occurs in spite of a 'Return to School' policy put in place by the Ministry of Education that allows girls to stay in school until delivery and resume their studies as soon as they are strong enough to do so (Agbemenu, 2011). Accessible and accurate information about sex and reproductive health is limited in Kenyan schools. Most secondary school girls are ill equipped to prevent unwanted pregnancy and most end up making the decision of procuring abortion (Crichton, 2011). Even when sex education is provided

in schools, lack of adequate training of teachers can lead to adverse effects (Youri, 1993).

Poverty is a critical factor in both the cause of unwanted pregnancy and motivation of the girls' decisions to terminate pregnancy. Tough economic times push many girls to procure abortion as they see the birth of a child as a burden. Contraception can be expensive and access to more affordable public sector supplies can be limited. Even when accessible, some contraceptives make some women feel nauseous and unwell when taken on an empty stomach, a common phenomenon for those living in poverty (WHO, 2012). Further, poverty forces school girls into situations where they cannot negotiate condom use during sex. Due to worsening economic situation in Kenya, poor students sometimes engage in 'survival sex' that is trading sexual acts for basic life necessity (WHO, 2012).

Another major issue that causes school girls to procure abortion is the stigma associated with motherhood at an early age. Pregnant girls cite the stigma of pregnancy and discrimination by peers, relatives and teachers as a major reason why they are forced to seek ways of terminating pregnancy. Many girls who attempt to return to school after pregnancy face humiliation and isolation. Fellow students do not interact with them freely, partly at the instigation of teachers, who view the mother student as bad influence. Teachers and school administrators sometimes refuse to allow girls to return to school after delivery for fear that other girls would think that it is okay to get pregnant. Since the girls do not have strong support systems, they are often not in a position to challenge this mistreatment or expulsion (Kwamboka, 2008). Parents are not

doing much to sensitize their children about sex and methods of contraception. This leaves the children at the mercy of peer influence. Some parents, particularly mothers, are to blame for the rise of abortion among school girls as they finance and deliver their children to quacks for abortion (Mulwa, 2015). If this trend continues, Kenya could be faced with a major crisis in learning institutions as more girls will be edged out of the school system due to health complications or death (Nyambura, 2000). There is, therefore a need to carry out a study in order to investigate the persistent inclination of Kenyan secondary school girls to procure abortion despite the health risks involved and legal constraints within the context of value of human life.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Although the law in Kenya restricts abortion, there is evidence that secondary school girls continue to procure abortion. If this trend continues, Kenya could be faced with a major crisis in learning institutions as more girls will be edged out of the school system due to health complications or death. The researcher assumed that there is an underlying cause for the persistent inclination to abortion other than what is generally perceived.

There are a number of studies conducted by various scholars on various aspects of abortion. There is however little documented evidence in previous studies to support the place of value of human life in the decision for abortion among secondary school girls in Kenya. It is against this backdrop that this study sought to investigate the tendency or inclination of Kenyan secondary school girls to procure abortion amidst the health risks involved, legal constraints and societal ethical expectations.

### **1.3 Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the persistent inclination of Kenyan secondary school girls to procure abortion in spite of the health risks involved and legal constraints in the light of the place of value of human life.

### **1.4 Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of the study were:

- i. To elucidate the concept of abortion in light of value of human life.
- ii. To investigate why secondary school girls in Kenya procure abortion.
- iii. To critically analyze the place of value and dignity of human life in the decision to or not to procure abortion among secondary school girls in Kenya.
- iv. To offer possible responses to the challenge of abortion in secondary schools in Kenya.

### **1.5 Research Questions**

The study sought to answer the following four research questions:

- i. What is the concept of abortion?
- ii. Why do secondary school girls in Kenya seek abortion?
- iii. What is the place of value of human life in the in the decision to or not to procure abortion among secondary school girls in Kenya?

- iv. What are the possible responses to the challenge of abortion?

### **1.6 Significance of the Study**

This study has both theoretical and applied utility. Within the theoretical arena, the findings add knowledge to the area of value of human life in the abortion debate. This is because despite the many studies on abortion among secondary school girls in Kenya, the relationship between values of human life and abortion has not been fully explored. The study adds to the existing body of knowledge on the topic under study, particularly on the philosophical conception of morality of abortion and value of human life.

At the applied level, this research contributes towards knowledge base for effective policy on sex education, planning and implementation within schools and by the government. The country could readily find a basis from which informed legislation for or against abortion could be anchored. It offers possible responses to the challenge of abortion among secondary school girls in Kenya. The study also offers the public a documented view on the proclivity of Kenyan school girls to procure abortion in light of value of human life, contributing to the many discussions in the media regarding abortion. This study also forms a basis for future studies on the topic of abortion.

### **1.7 Limitations of the Study**

Abortion is a sensitive issue surrounded by legal constraints and social stigma and as such there is a lot of secrecy surrounding it. This posed a challenge during collection of data as some of the prospective respondents shied off. However, participants were

reassured that their identities as well as information provided would remain confidential and that their names and the names of their schools would be coded. This encouraged the respondents to open up.

### **1.8 Delimitations**

This study was specifically limited to abortion among secondary school girls in Kenya in as far as value of human life is concerned. It did not delve into other perspectives of abortion such as prevalence or other cycles of education such as primary and tertiary.

### **1.9 Assumptions of the Study**

The study made the following assumptions:

- a) The fundamental cause of abortion among Kenyan secondary school girls lays in the value they place on the life of the foetus.
- b) The methodologies adopted by the previous studies on abortion did not delve deeper into the experiences of the affected students to un-earth the fundamental causes of abortion among secondary school girls in Kenya
- c) Respondents will give honest answers to the interview questions.

### **1.10 Theoretical Framework**

This study was guided by Immanuel Kant's deontological moral theory and Anthony Cooper's moral sense theory. Immanuel Kant was a philosopher born on 22<sup>nd</sup> April, 1724 in Konigsberg, Prussia, currently Russia. He lectured Metaphysics, Logic and Ethics in the University of Konigsberg. In terms of Ethics, the most significant of

Kant's works were *Groundwork in the Metaphysics of morals* [1785], *Critique of Practical Reason* [1788] and *Metaphysics of Morals* [1798]. These texts constitute the foundation of what constitutes Kant's own moral philosophy. He died in 1804 at the age of 80 years.

Deontology is an approach to ethics that focuses on the rightness or wrongness of actions themselves as opposed to the consequences of those actions. The term deontology is derived from the Greek words *deon* for duty and *logos* for study. Kant's deontological moral theory is based on his own view of the human beings having the unique capacity for rationality. It is exactly the human capacity that requires human beings to act in accordance with and for the sake of moral law or duty

In order to solve any ethical dilemma, people must transcend what is dictated to them by inclinations and traditions to find a common basis that is more solid than personal psyche. He identifies this common basis as reason. Therefore the motivation behind an action must be based on obligation and ought to be well thought out before the action takes place. Morality should, according to this theory, provide people with the framework of rational rules that guide and prevent certain actions and are independent of personal intentions and desires.

For Kant, the moral worth of an action is determined by the human will, which is the only thing in the world that can be considered good without qualification. Good will is exercised by acting according to moral duty or law. Moral law consists of a set of maxims which are categorical in nature (Kant, 1785). Below is a short description of the formulations of the categorical imperatives. The first formulation: 'Act only according

to that maxim whereby you can and at the same time will that it should become a universal law without contradictions'. Here, Kant states that a true moral proposition must not be tied to any particular condition, including the identity of the person making the decision. A moral maxim must be disconnected from the particular physical details surrounding its proposition and should be applicable to any rational being. One ought to do the right thing because it is the right thing to do regardless of the results of the action. Kant held that it was possible to develop a consistent moral system by using reason. If people were to think about this seriously and in a philosophically rigorous manner, they would realize that there were some moral laws that all rational beings had to obey simply because they were rational beings, and this would apply to any rational being in any universe that might ever exist.

The second formulation: 'Act in such a way that you treat humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of any other never merely as a means to some end but always at the same time as an end'. Kant argued that people (and this is inclusive of fetuses) have intrinsic value and not instrumental value. They cannot be disposed of for the benefit of others. For deontologists, what makes a choice to be termed right is its conformity with the moral norm (Scheffler, 1992). Moral rules must, consequently, respect human life. Kant taught that all human beings should be treated as free and equal members of a shared moral community and this second version reflects this by emphasizing the importance of treating people properly.

The third formulation: 'Every rational being must so act as if he were through his maxim always a legislating member of the universal kingdom of ends'. A truly autonomous will is not subjugated to any interests; it is subject to those laws it makes for itself, but the will must also regard those laws as if others are bound by the same laws. If the laws are not universal, they are not laws of conduct at all. If you are not willing for the moral law you claim to follow to be applied equally to everyone including you, then that rule is not a valid moral rule. One cannot claim that a statement is a valid moral rule and make exception to it for themselves, family and friends. It must be applicable to all in similar situation. The supreme principle of morality would have an extremely wide scope: one that is extended not only to all rational beings but also to any other rational being who might exist for example, God, angels and intelligent extra-terrestrials (Kerstein, 2002).

This theoretical framework was found relevant and most appropriate to this study in the sense that abortion is a moral decision which, in this case, is made by the student who has a unique capacity for rationality. This ability requires that the student acts in accordance with and for the sake of moral duty. If an adult's life is so valuable that any form of tempering with it is considered immoral and punishable, then the life of the unborn human must be accorded similar value and be guarded jealously too. This is in line with the first formulation of the Kantian categorical imperatives discussed above. The unborn human ought to be treated as an end and not as a means to achieve some end. Moral laws that one claims to hold should apply to all including oneself. Just as the student has the right to live, in the same way too, the unborn has the right to live even if it is voiceless. It is only a matter of time before it acquires the voice to speak for itself.

Deontological moral theory appeals to the innate human reason that establishes clear criteria for what constitutes moral actions. While deontological moral theory has its merits, it nevertheless carries implications. It places duty above everything and ignores special but otherwise unspecified circumstances that account for an irregular or improper way of doing something. The extenuating circumstances are completely overlooked.

### **1.12 Conceptual Framework**

The schematic diagram below shows the relationship between one's conceptualization of value of human life and their decision to or not to procure abortion. A student may have the appropriate sense of value of human life especially when informed by some religious, moral and social teachings, it is therefore expected that she will not consider abortion as a first option in case of pregnancy. However, other factors such as parental influence, peer influence, attitude towards the unborn and societal expectations may influence her decision negatively in spite of the personal principles one holds.



### **1.13 Operational Definition of Terms**

**Abortion:** the deliberate ending of pregnancy before the foetus is able to survive independently.

**Appraisal:** an evaluation of how good or bad something is.

**Maxim:** rule for sensible behavior.

**Morality:** ideas about what is right or wrong

**Proclivity:** an inherent tendency to do something that is usually bad.

**Value:** worth given to someone or something.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

A lot of research has been conducted on different aspects of abortion. This chapter reviewed and critiqued the literature that was found to be relevant to this study in order to have a better insight into the problem. The material sources included books, internet, periodicals, theses, abstracts, government reports and scholarly journals. The review of related literature used a thematic approach. The analysis of the reviewed literature is presented under the following headings in line with the research objectives: The phenomenon of abortion, value of human life and factors associated with abortion in secondary schools in Kenya.

#### **2.2 The Phenomenon of Abortion**

Definitions of abortion vary across and within countries and as well as among different academic disciplines and institutions. Language used to refer to abortion often reflects societal, religious and political opinions and not only scientific knowledge (Grimes & Gretchen, 2010). Abortion means foeticide for legal practitioners: the intentional destruction of the foetus in the womb, or an untimely delivery brought about with intent to cause the death of the foetus (Jali, 2001).

Abortion is the natural or induced expulsion of the foetus from the womb (Concise Oxford Dictionary, 1983). According to pro-life groups; human life begins from the moment of conception so abortion is the murder of a defenseless human being (Jali &

Phil, 2001). Searte, (2004) talks of abortion as the interference with the pregnant uterus in order to expel the foetus with the aim of killing or causing its death. This definition of abortion makes it appear to be a concept that is or ought to be easily understood and lacking in controversy generating a debate that has lasted for years and which still persists. No wonder Nyanje (2008) asserts that the abortion issue is multifaceted, complex matter, most acrimonious and seemingly an endless debate. In this study, abortion is defined as the deliberate ending of pregnancy before the foetus is able to survive independently. Abortion is, therefore, defined as the intentional ending of pregnancy through the evacuation of the uterus before the foetus has a reasonable chance of survival.

### **2.3 The Value of Human Life**

The concept of human personhood has two main philosophical viewpoints. The first is the Empirical Functionalism that defines human personhood as a set of functions or abilities (Sullivan, 2003). These functions may include ideas as self-awareness, higher brain functions and the ability to relate to others. This viewpoint denies personhood to anyone who does not contain these qualities at all moments in life. Such include people who are sleeping, the elderly and the mentally ill. Warren offered a six-fold criterion for personhood, namely: consciousness, reasoning, capacity to communicate, presence of self-concept, self-motivating activities and self-awareness (Warren, 1973). However, Sullivan holds that differences in Biology, behavior, speech and other functions become problematic when we try to use one set of them or another as our basis for defining personhood. In other words, if other human beings function differently from us, and

personhood is based on function, then the question of their personhood (or our personhood) becomes problematic whenever a difference is recognized. For him, even though the potential for functioning is not actualized, the capacity for personal action lies in one's being a person (Sullivan, 2003). Due to this inconsistency; the researcher held that Empirical Functionalism lacks satisfactory explanation for what entails personhood.

The other view point is the Ontological Personalism which states that all human beings are human persons (Sullivan, 2003). Sullivan holds that, by a human's very nature, they are a person. Personhood does not depend on what one can and cannot do; all that matters is that one is biologically human being. Human being has been equated to a person in the sense that being-in-itself is the only criteria. Moreland observes that, it is because an entity has an essence and falls within a natural kind that it can possess a unity of dispositions, capacities, parts and properties at a given time and can maintain identity through change (Moreland, 1995). Moreover, each kind of living organism or substance has a nature or essence that makes certain activities and functions possible. Living organisms maintain absolute identity through change. This study based its arguments on Ontological Personalism and holds that if one is a valuable human person now, then she was a valuable human person at every moment in her past including when she was in her mother's womb.

Kaczor defended the wrongness of abortion basing on the syllogism that because human beings have a serious right to life and because human fetuses are human beings, human fetuses have a serious right to life (Kaczor, 2011). A human being is here defined as a

biological organism that belongs to our species. The minor premise of this syllogism is a true claim in biology; the major premise is the locus of philosophical interest. Kaczor analyses an account of what it is to be a person as found in the writings of Peter Singer and Mary Anne Warren. These accounts are given in psychological terms and are intended to include in the class of persons human beings after the time of infancy and to exclude human beings prior to birth.

Kaczor offers a thoughtful discussion in which he questions whether such accounts of being a person succeeds in including everyone in the class of human beings after the time of infancy. The difficulty that Kaczor discusses concerns giving an adequate and non-arbitrary account of the capacity to exhibit psychological traits that, on the one hand, excludes fetuses and on the other hand includes all of those individuals past infancy who have the right to life. Kaczor's strongest argument appeals to what he describes as the orientation of all human beings towards freedom and reason. The virtue of this move is that it gets our values into the account of the basis of our rights (Kaczor, 2011).

Singer held that an individual with no cognitive capacity and no prospects of ever recovering any such capacity in this world, it must be a matter of complete indifference whether he lives or dies (Sproul, 1990). That human beings should be treated in accordance with their ethically relevant characteristics such as consciousness, capacity for physical, social and mental interactions with other beings, having conscious preferences for continued life and having enjoyable experiences. He adds that an

individual must have a psychological connection to the future in order to be harmed by being killed.

This study based its arguments on Ontological Personalism and held that if one is a valuable human person now, then she was a valuable human person at every moment in her past including when she was in her mother's womb.

#### **2.4 Factors Associated With Abortion among Secondary School Girls in Kenya**

The problem of induced abortion is highly prevalent among Kenyan youth (Solomon & Mesganaw, 2006). Among factors quoted to be causing this prevalence is socio-economic factor. Most students who procure abortions hail from low-income families and some are pulled into irresponsible sexual behavior for need for money to sustain themselves (Allan, 1999). The level of education also plays a part in determining the rates of unwanted pregnancies and induced abortion (Vundule et al 2001). Inadequate and inaccurate information on contraceptives can also lead to increased rate of unwanted pregnancy and induced abortion among secondary schools in Kenya (IPAS, 2007). Some religions, notably Islam and Roman Catholic discourage use of contraceptives. This is evidence in the papal address made to African bishops at the Vatican by Pope Benedict XVI:

“It is of great concern that the fabric of African life, its very source of hope and stability is threatened by divorce, abortion, prostitution, human trafficking and contraception mentality...contraception was one of the host trends contributing to a breakdown in sexual morality. The traditional teaching of the church has proven to be the only safe way” (BBC News, 2005).

Pregnant school girls do not want to quit school and reduce their socio-economic opportunities by halting their basic education and having children. Stigma attached to unmarried pregnant girls and women also encourages them to abort their pregnancies. Due to the religious nature of Kenyan society, fear of rejection by family and social stigmatization especially affects school girls who fall pregnant out of wedlock which encourages them to turn to backstreet abortions (IPAS, 2007). In an article in the March 2015 issue of the Parents Magazine, Beatrice, a victim of abortion sites poverty, shame associated with teenage pregnancy and the desire to complete her education as the reasons she decided to procure abortion. She has lived to regret the decision and at one point attempted suicide ([www.parentmagazineonline.com](http://www.parentmagazineonline.com)). This study assumed that beneath the factors discussed, lay the fundamental cause of abortion that this study intended to unearth.

## **2.5 Research Gaps**

This review of related literature identified the following study gaps that this study sought to fill:

Firstly, many studies have been carried out on the prevalence of abortion and other factors associated with abortion in Kenya. However, the aspect of value of human life in the abortion debate has not been sufficiently researched on. There is very little literature touching on morality of abortion in light of value of human life. With the several debates on when life begins, very little has been written on when that human life should be accorded value. Nyanje (2008) comprehensively analyzed the aspect of human rights in the abortion debate as well as the aspects of freedom, language and

morality in the decision to procure abortion. However, his study did not delve into the aspect of value of human life and how this influences decision to or not to procure abortion. This study consequently investigated how the value one placed on the life of the unborn influenced her decision to or not to procure abortion.

Secondly, Nyambura (2000), analyzed knowledge and perceptions of adolescents in regard to the moral problem of abortion but did not dig deeper into how these perceptions influence the value adolescents place on the life of the foetus. Consequently, this study analyzed how the perceptions of the adolescents influenced the value they placed on the life of the foetus and consequently the decision to or not to procure abortion.

Thirdly, the concept of the sanctity of foetal life is highly disregarded in Singer's stand on abortion. Interactions alone cannot be a measure of value of human life because in the long run, fetuses are viable of all human activities.

Fourthly, the issue of the degree of value accorded to humans at different stages has also not been thoroughly elucidated. This study sought to establish if it is justified for the foetus to be accorded less or no value simply because it is a foetus.

Lastly, most of the earlier work about abortion focused on politics and the law: should abortion be outlawed and treated like the murder of a human person, or remain a legal choice available to all women? Behind the debates on abortion is a fundamental ethical issue, value of human life, which this study explored.

## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter focused on the research methodology that was employed in the study. Being a philosophical study, this research employed both conceptual analysis and phenomenological analysis to achieve the set study objectives.

#### 3.1.2 The Conceptual Analysis

The word analysis derives from the ancient Greek word *analysis* where the prefix *ana* means ‘up’ and *lisis* means ‘loosing’ or ‘separation’. In this way, *analysis* therefore meant loosening up or dissolution (Malenya, 2014). The term was readily extended in its usage in ancient Greek geometry and philosophy. Conceptual analysis consists primarily in breaking down or analyzing concepts into their constituent parts in order to gain knowledge or better understanding of a particular philosophical issue in which the concept is involved (Beaney, 2003). The method of conceptual analysis tends to approach a problem by breaking down the key concepts pertaining to the problem and seeing how they interact.

In order to adequately understand a problem, one must abstract it from every superfluous conception, reduce it to its simplest terms and by means of enumeration, divide it up into smallest possible parts (Descartes, 1684). As a philosophical method of investigation, conceptual analysis is applied to situations in which there is need for an understanding of problems that are conceptual in nature. In other words, conceptual

analysis aims at finding a list of necessary and jointly sufficient conditions that correctly classify things as falling under a given concept or not ( Fallis, 2008).

### **3.1.3 The Historical Development of Conceptual Analysis**

The early history of conceptual analysis started in the Greek Antiquity. According to Aristotle (*Metaphysica*), Socrates was the first philosopher to practice conceptual analysis. Socrates however was only interested in ethical concepts. His student, Plato attempted to analyze non-ethical concepts although the main focus was on ethical concepts. According to Plato, less common concepts had to be understood as parts of more common concepts and more common concepts had to be taken apart into their less common parts. Plato and Aristotle asserted that definitions had to be discovered in some absolute metaphysical realm. Words had a true meaning that should and could be discovered. Following Plato and Aristotle, realists believed that concepts as universals actually exist independently of the things by those concepts. Normalists on the other hand believed that universals were nothing but names and that only the objects they refer to actually exist (Moreland, 2001).

There is no easy demarcation of a second start (after Antiquity) on conceptual analysis but there are some important predecessors of modern conceptual analysis in the centuries following the Middle Ages. One of these is Francis Bacon (1620).

Leibniz (1684) too contributed to the development of conceptual analysis through his claim that a concept is clear if it enables us to recognize the object falling in its category; when it provides clear boundaries of that category. Some of the influential

proponents of conceptual analysis in the 20<sup>th</sup> century were probably Locke and Kant. Locke (1690) argued that complex general ideas had to be decomposed in sets of simpler ideas. Kant (1781) distinguished analytic from synthetic propositions. The most important figures in analytic philosophy were Russell and Wittgenstein. Russell deemed ordinary language unfit for science or philosophy. Ordinary language is too vague, too confused and too full of errors to make it possible to correctly express fundamental philosophical truths (Russell, 1910).

Wittgenstein set out to show the limits of ordinary language and asserted that ordinary language distorts and limits thought and in so doing, limits reality. He noted that ordinary language not only limits but is limited in itself. Members of the Vienna Circle contributed to the development of conceptual analysis. They held that ordinary language is ambiguous. For instance, it uses the same part of speech, the substantive, for things, qualities, relations and processes. It therefore misleads one into a thing-like conception of functional concepts (Cornap, 1932).

Hirst and Peters contributed greatly to conceptual analysis in educational concepts. In their view, conceptual analysis goes far beyond definitions to examination of the ways a concept is used in order to see what principles govern its use, and the ways in which it is related to other concepts. 'Teaching' for instance is logically inseparable from the concept of 'learning' though the reverse is not true. Examining concepts in this way is not simply a grammatical exercise; conceptual analysis requires reflection on different purposes, both linguistic and non-linguistic, that human beings share in their lives (Hirst & Peters, 1970).

### **3.1.4 Strengths of Conceptual Analysis**

Analytic philosophers like Soltis have been instrumental in clarifying such concepts as ‘teaching’, ‘indoctrination’, ‘learning’, ‘training’, ‘aims’ and ‘achievement’. In essence, conceptual analysis is very useful in elucidating and clarifying the main concepts used in education (Malenya, 2014). This clarification removes ambiguity from statements and helps one to avoid mere generalization. Conceptual analysis also helps the researcher to avoid shallow mindedness and dig deep into concepts for clarity. It also helps one to avoid fallacies.

### **3.1.5 Application of Conceptual Analysis in the Study**

Owing to the philosophical nature of the question of value of human life in contradistinction to abortion, conceptual analysis is best suited for this study. Various concepts will be broken down into their constituent parts in order to gain in-depth understanding of the particular concepts. Key among the concepts analyzed included abortion, human life, and human values. The terms will be analyzed from ethical, humanistic and metaphysical perspectives. The concept of value of human life will be analyzed basing on various moral standards. Various concepts of when life begins will be analyzed and the morality of abortion discussed basing on pro-choice and pro-life arguments.

As much as conceptual analysis is best suited for this study, the methodology has a number of weaknesses For instance, it tends to just rely on some sought of definitional

structure of concepts (Wittgenstein, 1953) and is too abstract (Noddings, 1998). For this reason, phenomenological analysis was used to compliment conceptual analysis.

### **3.2 Phenomenological Analysis**

Phenomenological analysis studies human consciousness from first hand personal experiences. It is a method of learning about another person by listening to their descriptions of what their subjective world is like for them, together with an attempt to understand this in their own terms as fully as possible free of our pre-conceptions and interferences (Cohen,2001).

#### **3.2.1 Historical Development of Phenomenological Analysis**

The discipline of phenomenology has its roots tracing back through the centuries but came to full flower in the work of Husserl. The most famous of the classical phenomenologists were Husserl, Heidegger, Sartre and Merleau-Ponty. Husserl designed phenomenology as a method that deals with essences: a rigorous science in the sense that it investigates the most radical fundamental and original evidences of conscious experiences. It studies what particular sciences and what human beings in their natural everyday attitude take for granted. To Husserl, knowing is through a state of pure consciousness where the mind is directed towards objects of consciousness that can be reflected upon. Phenomenology therefore aims at disclosing the real nature of the consciousness and that of experience by penetrating deeper into things and learning to see the more profound layers behind what human beings first think when they see. This is the main idea behind Husserl's transcendental phenomenology.

Martin Heidegger (1889-1976) stressed the 'effort to get beneath' the subjective experience and find the genuine objective nature of things. He held that the natural attitude is integral to knowing. This forms the base for Heidegger's hermeneutic phenomenology. Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1908-1961) and Jean Paul Sarte (1905-1980) embraced human concrete lived experiences commonly referred to as existential phenomenology. It describes everyday experiences as they are perceived by consciousness of individuals. It is a method for changing our relation to the world. It is engaged in the art of revealing the mystery of the world and the mystery of reason. For Ponty, it is the study of essences and puts essences back into existence. This view gave rise to existential phenomenology. The phenomenological analysis used in this study will be based on existential phenomenology in which the researcher will seek to describe the lived experiences of abortion as perceived by the consciousness of individual students.

### **3.2.2 Strengths of the Phenomenological Analysis**

Phenomenology leads to in-depth understanding of phenomena under study by providing rich data from the experiences of individuals. It is a rigorous, critical and systematic investigation of a phenomenon under study (Streubert & Carpenter, 1998). It is also highly appropriate in studying human experiences (Gas, 2000). It tries to uncover concealed meaning in the phenomenon embedded in the words of the narrative (Sorrel & Redmond, 1995). Phenomenology takes cognizance of the nature of both the descriptive approach of the natural and social sciences on one hand and the abstract and reflective approach on the other hand. This way it becomes very useful to a researcher

who wishes to understand human experience since it aims at developing a complete accurate, clear and articulate description and understanding of a particular human experience. This approach provides a rich complete description of human experiences, meanings and findings that emerge rather than imposed by an investigator (Malenya, 2014).

### **3.2.3 Application of Phenomenological Analysis to the Study**

A phenomenological approach to this study involved the researcher carrying out a preliminary investigation on prevalence of abortion among girls in identified schools. The researcher, aided by teachers in the Guiding and Counseling department from other schools identified students who had procured abortion and those who carried their pregnancies to term. The researcher then inducted the research assistants on how to conduct interview and together engaged the identified students in an interview where the students were allowed to share their personal experiences on abortion with the researcher or research assistants.

During the interview, the respondents were particularly asked to share their personal experiences regarding their feelings about abortion. Information on how they felt before and after procuring abortion was obtained through video recording where consent was given and note taking where it was declined. Pseudonyms were used to protect the identity of respondents and their schools since abortion is a sensitive issue. Being a philosophical study, the nature of the study was qualitative and so the researcher was interested in individual's experiences rather than geographical representation and sample sizes.

Phenomenological analysis enabled the researcher to explore aspects of students' consciousness and experiences of abortion in regard to value of human life. The researcher 'bracketed' presumptions and 'biases' about morality of abortion by holding them in consciousness through the phases of research thereby minimizing their influence on the findings. The researcher thoroughly read through the available data identifying and thematizing statements that were tied to the moral aspect of abortion and the value of human life particularly the life of the foetus. The themes identified to be in line with the study objectives were then used to develop an exhaustive description of the students' experiences concerning the decision to procure abortion in view of value of human life and morality of abortion.

In the course of the analysis of students' 'lived' experiences as relates to abortion, the researcher focused her investigative reflections on the subjective innermost experiences of those involved as conscious beings. Such experiences included feelings of guilt, pain, fear and denial. It was the researcher's contention that the proclivity of Kenyan secondary school girls to procure abortion in light of value of human life is a concern that the method of conceptual analysis alone was not able to reveal hence the need to supplement it with phenomenological analysis.

### **3.3 Logical and Ethical Considerations**

The researcher sought a letter of introduction from the department of Educational Foundations. This letter helped the researcher in acquiring a research permit from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) to be allowed to carry out research in the identified institutions. Informed consent was sought

from the school principals in the secondary schools selected for the study. This gave the researcher freedom to interact with respondents and hold interviews with them.

The respondents were given freedom to decide whether to participate or not. Code names were used and the researcher assured anonymity of the respondents. The respondents were assured of the confidentiality of the information they shared and were allowed to freely withdraw from the exercise in case they did not feel comfortable. Voice recording of the dialogues was done in cases where consent was given but where consent was declined, the researcher and the research assistants only took notes.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **ABORTION IN PERSPECTIVE**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

In this chapter, a conceptual analysis of the concept of abortion in light of value of human life was done followed by a phenomenological analysis of reasons given for abortion by girls in selected schools in Kenya. This analysis was informed by two assumptions: first, the fundamental cause of abortion among Kenyan secondary school girls lays in the value they place on the life of the foetus, and, second, the methodologies adopted by the previous studies on abortion did not delve deeper into the experiences of the affected students to un-earth the fundamental causes of abortion among secondary school girls in Kenya. Such methodologies mainly put efforts in establishing what the researcher deemed as the perceived causes of abortion among secondary school girls in Kenya. Hence, the chapter adopted a combined methodological approach that transcended the popular perceptive consideration.

Proclivity to abortion was discussed under the following subtopics: desire to complete secondary education, social isolation, poverty, peer pressure and parental influence. Also outlined in this chapter was abortion and the beginning of human life, abortion and the personhood of the foetus, abortion and the value of human life and an analysis of abortion in the light of value of human life. The section ended with what this study considered to be the fundamental cause of abortion among secondary school girls in Kenya: value placed on foetal life.

## 4.2 Perceptions of Abortion

Students perceived abortion as the intentional murder of an unborn child. Responding to the question of understanding of abortion, one respondent who was nineteen years old at the time of the interview believed that life began months after conception. At the time of the interview she was in form 4 and was the Christian Union chairlady at the school. She hailed from a low income family in a rural area and was a staunch Seventh Day Adventist. She described abortion in the following words:

“The way I understand abortion, is the killing of a being that is in the womb of a girl and removing it.” (Appendix VI: A).

What is important to note in this definition is the fact that the respondent referred to the content of the womb as a being. This definition points to the fact that students know that the unborn is a person and through abortion that person is bound to be deprived of life.

The methodologies used to procure abortion varied as some students sought cheap back street aid while others sought expensive professional aid. This difference was brought about by various factors. Some sought cheap backstreet abortion because it was affordable to them while others went for professional aid because they believed they would be in safe hands in case things go wrong. However there were students who came from rich families yet they sneaked into backstreet clinics in secrecy without the knowledge of their parents for fear of the wrath of the parents. There were also students from poor families who were taken to established hospitals for abortion by their rich partners responsible for their pregnancies. One respondent who was a student from a

poor background in a rural area said this on the methods of procuring abortion at her school:

“One can use a sharp metal to do it or swallow some herbs or chemicals” (Appendix VI. A).

This confession shows that students from poor backgrounds were less likely to seek abortion services from professionals at the hospital. They would rather seek a quick fix from quacks for less pay. They were only rushed to hospital when things go awry in hope that the professionals will save their lives. One respondent from a school in the rural areas and who hailed from a poor background attested to this saying:

“It can be done in hospital or at home. Those who do it in hospitals have money but if you do not have much money you do it in the village and just pay the women some little money like KShs. 2,500. The problem is that when things do not go well, those women who help in procuring abortion tell you to go to hospital” (Appendix VIII: A).

On the other hand, students from affluent families were able to access professionals who helped them procure abortion and most of the abortions proceeded without hiccups. Their parents knew their ways around major hospitals in towns and even had the financial muscle to invite the doctors over to their houses to help their daughters procure abortion. For instance, a form one respondent from a rich family in the city had this to say:

“...she took me to some woman in town. The woman explained to me how she was going to help me solve my problem if I cooperated” (Appendix VII: B)

The narration above indicates that availability of money determined to an extent where a student sought abortion services. Some parents suffer shame brought about by their children's pregnancy and would spend handsomely on abortion in top hospitals to cover. Most of the students also knew that abortion is illegal in Kenya. No wonder it is procured under cover. However, they also knew that abortion takes place regardless of its illegality. A respondent who was a form four student from a rich family in the city had this to say:

“It is illegal in Kenya but people just do it”

(Appendix X: A).

This revelation points to the loopholes in law enforcement in Kenya where laws are made but are not enforced. The constitution has criminalized abortion yet it takes place and the perpetrators are rarely brought to book. This could be due to the culture of impunity in Kenya.

Abortion was in this work conceptualized as the deliberate removal or deliberate action meant to cause the expulsion of a foetus from the womb of the human female or mother so as to result in the death of the foetus. This definition was important in view of the fact that some abortions were not deliberate. For instance, abortions that involved miscarriages are not deliberate; they did not signify that the mother or pregnant woman acted in any way as to willingly expel the foetus from the womb. Abortion in this sense must be voluntary, deliberate and intentional and must involve the removal of human foetus (Boylan, 2002).

### **4.3 Proclivity to Abortion**

This section discussed the various predictors of abortion among secondary school girls in Kenya as deduced from several interviews conducted with the respondents of the study. It also discussed some of the issues that were regularly perceived as the potential causes of abortion among secondary school girls in Kenya. The research identified and explored five areas that students, from their inner personal experiential perspectives, articulated as profound causes of abortion among secondary school girls.

The researcher relied on live narratives of experiences by students gathered from field work interviews. Field work as a source of information was treated as first order data that had been subjected to thorough scrutiny. The field work details in regard to research tools, sample regions and sample sizes are explained in chapter three and also presented in the appendices. To ensure confidentiality, the schools visited during field work were given coded names (pseudonyms) as they appear in the appendices.

#### **4.3.1 Desire to Complete Secondary Schooling**

Formal education is highly valued in Kenya. It is seen as an important avenue towards economic opportunities and social mobility as well as an indicator of social status (FAWE, 2001). A pregnant student would rather procure abortion to continue her schooling than carry her pregnancy to term. The students who carried their pregnancies to term had fewer opportunities for socio-economic advancement.

In most cases school girls whose pregnancies were detected were required to drop out of school, at least temporarily. Some of the students chose to procure abortion to avoid

expulsion from school. Some school administrators and teachers also thought that retaining pregnant students in school or re-admitting them misled the other students into thinking that it was fine to get pregnant while in school. An eighteen years old respondent who had procured several abortions since primary school believed that the foetus is valueless and only a liability to the mother. She was keen on completing her studies and saw pregnancy as an impediment to her course. She came from a poor family in a rural set up. She was a Muslim but did not actively take part in religious activities. She knew that pregnancy while at school obviously translated into expulsion:

“I knew I would be expelled from school because that is the way it is here. I had to act very fast”  
(Appendix IX: C).

This confession indicates that expulsion from school due to pregnancy instilled fear among students and as such they hurried to procure abortion before the school administrations discovered their pregnancies. Some parents reacted harshly over their daughter’s pregnancy to an extent that they withheld their financial aid towards the student’s education. For fear that her education would be stopped; the girl opted for an abortion. One respondent narrated that:

“I told my mother and she beat me up. She called me bad names. She told me that she would stop paying my fees and that I should not ask her to give me anything. That I should go for support from the man who had made me pregnant”  
(Appendix VII: C).

From the above narration, it is evident that pregnancy among school going girls disappointed parents and frustrated their efforts towards ensuring brighter future for their children through education. Formal education prepared school girls for jobs and

better livelihoods and raised their esteem and their status in their households and communities. It gave them more say in decisions that affect their lives. It further reduced their likelihood of teenage marriages and delayed child bearing (FAWE, 2001). Students who worried that having a baby would change their lives saw the writing on the wall. Students' lives were negatively impacted by the birth of a baby; their educational plans are interrupted, which subsequently limited their future earning potential and put them at a greater risk of raising their children in poverty (Ryan, 2012).

Caught in the dilemma of completing school and carrying the pregnancy to term and consequently dropping out of school, the student's duty to herself, in Kant's words, is interfered with if the student selected the latter. The student was put in a position of having to struggle for recognition that her ends and herself were valuable apart from the foetus she was carrying (Genslar, 1992).

#### **4.3.2 Social Isolation**

Most girls who got pregnant while at school were ashamed of their status. Most felt guilty for engaging in pre-marital unprotected sex. Those who held leadership positions and those who acted as role models to the other students like peer counselors, religious union leaders and school prefects were the most affected. Some students got impregnated by their relatives and feel ashamed to make it known. Some of these students were forced into sexual activities by the relatives who threatened to withdraw support if the girls refused to sleep with them. Most of these men took advantage of the girls' dependence on them and used their authority to force the girls to sleep with them. Some went as far as buying abortion pills for the girls in case of pregnancy. The girls

were sternly warned against sharing the information with other people. Most of these students decided to procure abortion to cover their shame, the shame of the men involved and the shame of their parents.

A nineteen years old respondent who at the time of the interview was the Christian Union chairlady at the school and hailed from a low income family in a rural area believed that abortion was sinful but was pushed into procuring abortion to avoid shame and judgment from teachers and fellow students. She narrated:

“I felt bad and kept to myself. I wanted to commit suicide because I thought people would say I am a prostitute and yet I was the C.U. chairlady. My teachers and fellow students would despise me and say bad things about me” (Appendix VI: C).

This narration indicates that shame caused even the students who were well grounded in religion to go against their belief system to procure abortion. Some students were ashamed of the men who impregnated them. In some cases the men were from lower social cadres and the respondents were embarrassed to be associated with them because the men did not fit in the girls’ social circles causing ridicule by her peers.

A twenty years old student in form four who had had an abortion and whose younger sister passed on while attempting to procure abortion believed that abortion was immoral but because of shame of being impregnated by a relative alongside her sister, she went against her principles to procure abortion:

“We just realized that we had been impregnated by the same man and who was a relative. It was so embarrassing. We decided to abort” (Appendix XI: C).

Most parents wanted to get rid of their daughters' pregnancies because they would be embarrassed if other people found out. The first thing that came to the mind of the parent was living in shame; not only before their friends, but also for the sake of their own children around their peers. Most parents lived for the society and failed to accept who they were and the circumstances they had to live with (Feldman, 2009).

The distinctions between morality and immorality are discovered by emotional responses to experience. Emotions and desires play a big role in the anatomy of morality (Slote, 2010). People have a generic capacity to be guided by norms or rules of various kinds and certain non-moral emotional disposition to have an aversive response to suffering in others. We make the greater part of our moral judgments on the basis of general rules which are based on induction from emotional responses to particular cases (Nichols, 2004). Other than shame, other emotions that caused students to procure abortion regardless of their belief system on abortion include fear of the unknown, loneliness, guilt, denial and negligence. Emotions caused students to choose abortion despite belief against abortion unless the students were timely counseled and properly guided.

#### **4.3.3 Poverty**

Poverty caused students to be uncertain about their future. Students from poor backgrounds dreaded the thought of bearing a child as they saw the addition as a burden to the already strained family. They found it hard to survive in their poverty stricken homes and would do anything to avoid child bearing (FAWE, 2010).

The students were not ready for the responsibility that raising a healthy, successful and happy child brings. Children required an enormous amount of work with constant need for attention and many times this meant sacrificing many aspects of the mother's own life for her child. The students would want to wait until they were at a more stable point in life before having a baby. Most opted for abortion. Unfortunately some students engaged in risky sexual behavior in order to meet their basic needs. One respondent who was a twenty years old student in form four who had had an abortion and whose younger sister passed on while attempting to procure abortion had this to say:

“We were struggling to survive at home. My parents could hardly afford two meals a day. We had to sell our bodies for survival and in order to help our parents and our younger siblings. In this case you don't choose who you sleep with. As long as they give you money, they force you to do it without protection. No one wants to abort but we have no other alternative. I cannot watch my siblings sleep hungry every day and stay out of school” (Appendix XI: C).

The narration above indicates that poverty put the students at a disadvantage. Students were engaged in sexual relationship with older rich men for money. The colloquial term ‘sponsor’ has become synonymous with younger women dating much older and wealthy men. Such relationships no longer raise eyebrows. According to a local study conducted by a communication firm, A Well Told Story, 65 percent of Kenya's young people found it alright to have a sponsor, while 33 percent of them actually had one (Mburu, Daily Nation,2017). Women who preferred much older men did so because older men were more likely to have accumulated wealth, and were more emotionally and intimately stable.

The students also feared that if they kept their pregnancies and got expelled from school, they would miss out on good job opportunities in future and thus perpetuate the poverty situation of their parents. On giving birth, the baby was forced to stay under the care of the girl's poor parents if she has to resume her studies. The baby may not get quality health care, nutrition and even parental love because the mother will resent the baby. Although the shame of teen pregnancy lingers on, abortion was seen as a way for the student mothers to hide their sexual activity and pregnancy from their parents. Those who kept their babies were the subject of gossip and pity among students, parents and teachers (FAWE, 2010).

In regard to Kant's Metaphysics of Ethics, pregnancy like all other activities linked to animality, can sometimes interfere with our perfect duties of ourselves. Pregnancy can diminish a woman's dignity by making her financially dependent on others and leading others to see her as valuable only as the means to the end of a baby (Lara, 2008). This could explain the rise of the normalcy now associated with 'sponsors' as earlier discussed.

#### **4.3.4. Peer Pressure**

Students were often more concerned with what their peers thought about them and hence they actively took part in abortion if their peers deemed it right. It would be social suicide if they acted otherwise (Dumas, 2012). School girls who were already uncertain of what they would do once they unexpectedly got pregnant were easily swayed by those around them because they wanted to be supported by the people they

were closest to. One respondent who at the time of the interview was in form four and was the Christian Union chairlady at the school narrated that:

“When I shared with my friend, she told me that as long as the baby inside me was not moving yet, it was not a person and so God would not punish me for murder” (Appendix VI : C).

From the above confession, it can be deduced that students procured abortion to please their peers and fit in the social circle. Dumas, (2012) observed that teenagers were particularly vulnerable to the opinions or pressures of others to abort and they did so because of threats or coercion. Thus, they violated their beliefs about abortion in the process. Most of the decisions made concerning abortion were often based on demands or threats of peers- even when it violated their own moral belief and desire to keep their babies. Once peers demanded for an abortion, the pressure and abuse often escalated.

Ryan, (2012) concurred with Dumas observation and pointed out that most times the peers availed information that contradicted that which the student knew and thus the student got thrown off balance. More often than not, peers were better at communicating effectively given their ability to talk excitedly and thus they achieved in branding one’s ideas inappropriate. The source of information for most peers always remained questionable. Whereas some students regurgitated ideas from parent, others were experts at interpreting information which was out-sourced from the internet and elsewhere. Not all information from the internet is correct and no one is there to guide the teenagers as they scroll through the sources.

Some peers offered substances to their friends to aid in inducing abortion. Those who had previously had successful abortions were always willing to help the others. School girls used concoctions and substances like bleach to induce abortion. Those in boarding schools sneaked the concoctions in school and had them ready just in case. One respondent was a 21 years old student in form 4. She had been expelled from her former schools due to indiscipline and this was her third secondary school. She came from a rich polygamous family in an urban set up. She was assisted to procure abortion by her friends at school using concoctions:

“My friend at school gave me a concoction that she uses. I took the stuff and in 30 minutes my tummy was turning inside out” (Appendix X: C).

This is evidence that there existed strong forces of negative peer influence in secondary schools in Kenya. Apparently students trusted their peers so much that they intimated to them their secrets. They believed that their peers would not leak their secrets to the public and that they would be more willing to help them out compared to their parents and teachers. Peers were less likely to be judgmental compared to parents and teachers. This was done regardless of the fact that not all advice obtained from peers was correct and would lead to dire consequences as observed by Ryan, (2012).

#### **4.3.5 Parental Pressure**

To a great extent, parents influenced the decisions their daughters made in regard to abortion. The position a parent held on abortion was very likely to trickle down to her child. The parents who were opposed to abortion were likely to discourage their

daughters from procuring abortion and those who supported abortion were likely to encourage their daughters to procure abortion.

“I will never procure abortion. My mother has taught me to respect life and I can never fail her” (Appendix XII).

The respondent above has two children that she bore while at school. She kept her pregnancy and vowed never to procure abortion because of the lessons her mother taught her on respect for human life. Most girls shared news of their pregnancy with their mothers and as such, of the two parents, mothers were the most influential in the decision to or not to procure abortion (FAWE, 2010).

Most parents invested a lot in their children with the hope that the children live a better life in the future. One such investment was education. Parents believed that through education, their daughters would have a bright future and even be in a position to help them in their old age. As such, they went great heights to ensure their children attained decent education. Anything which brought the education process to a halt was always sneered at. Pregnancy, in most cases, halted the education process either temporarily or permanently. Most parents assumed that once a child got pregnant, they would not have a prospective future and so they encouraged them to abort to achieve a successful future (FAWE, 2010).

Some parents would do anything to have the pregnancy terminated. Some thoroughly beat up their daughters to cause physical harm to the unborn with the hope that the unborn dies. They were mostly driven by anger and disillusionment caused by the pregnancy of the daughters. Here again, emotions of anger and disillusionment

influenced the reactions of the parents to the news of their daughters pregnancy and consequently the call for abortion. One respondent was a 21 years old student in form four who had been expelled from her former schools due to indiscipline and came from a rich polygamous family in an urban set up. Her mother procures abortion and would not stand a school going pregnant daughter. She said:

“The first time I was very much worried but my father is very harsh and I was in boarding. I ran away to my boyfriend who was an untrained teacher in the neighbouring village. My father sent over policemen who took me to the police station and gave me a thorough beating. He told them to beat the baby out of me. I got so sick that I lost my baby” (Appendix X: C).

It can be deduced from the above narration that some parents did not approve of the men responsible for their daughters’ pregnancies. In a society where social stratification is upheld, some parents from higher social class did not accommodate men from lower social classes. They saw them as social climbers who wanted to rise by association. They felt like the child of such men would be a burden to them. Some even felt embarrassed to be associated with the lowly and as such they would either coerce or force their daughters to procure abortion. One such respondent who stayed in an urban setup hailing from a rich family narrated:

“My father hated my boyfriend because he was from a poor home. He said that he could not be able to take care of the child. We are rich and my father says we should only interact with guys from rich families” (Appendix X: C)

The confession above revealed that social stratification also contributed to parents forcing their daughters to procure abortion. Some parents were wallowing in poverty

and in their struggle to survive, would not accommodate another mouth to feed. Some even aborted their own children and so they would not want their children to have babies. They threatened to throw the pregnant girls out of their homes, withdraw support or even refuse to pay fees for the pregnant girls if they refused to procure abortion. Some even went as far as literally taking the girls to abortionists for abortion or buy abortion pills for the girls. A fifteen year old respondent from a rich single mother family in an urban set up and a Christian who only attended services while at school said:

“I told my mother and she beat me up. She called me bad names. She told me that she would stop paying my fees and that I should not ask her to give me anything. That I should go for support from the man who had made me pregnant. My mother herself has vowed never to have more babies and by the way she usually aborts her babies. I knew there was no way she was going to accommodate my baby. The next morning she took me to some woman in town” (Appendix VII: C).

A fruit does not fall far from the tree. The respondent’s mother did procure abortion and the daughter knew and no wonder she easily walked in her mother’s steps. The beliefs and the behaviors of parents are very likely to trickle down to their children.

Some pregnancies were due to incest and such children were considered ‘taboo children’. Most parents would not let their children bear such children and so they would force the girls to procure abortion to cover up the mess. Some parents or guardians impregnated their children and abortion would be the easiest way for them to clear their names. Even without the consent of the pregnant girl, they forced the girls to

procure abortion and some even threatened them. An eighteen years old respondent who had an abortion, conceived again, gave birth and returned to school. She came from a poor family and resided with the uncle in an urban centre. She was a born again Christian but the uncle forced her to procure abortion because if the child had been born, a curse would have befallen the family:

“I got pregnant and when I told him he bought me some tablets. He threatened that if I did not cooperate and take the abortion pills he would do horrible things to me. I was terrified. Everything was happening too fast. I took the pills. It was 6 weeks so I bleed everything out. I had terrible cramps” (Appendix VIII: C).

It is evident that there exists incest involving students and in order to cover the shame that comes with resulting pregnancies, the men responsible force the students to procure abortion. The school girls who became pregnant found themselves between threats from parents and the men responsible and their value systems in regard to abortion. Between a rock and a hard place and consequently had to decide fast enough which way to follow. In regard to the Principle of Double Effect that generally states that in cases where an agent contemplates conduct that has both good and bad effects, the course of conduct selected is ethically permissible only if it is not wrong in itself and if it does not require that one directly intend the bad result (Siegel, 2009). The Principle of Double Effect requires that four conditions be met if the conduct in question is to be ethically permissible. One, the action be itself either ethically good or ethically indifferent. Two, the evil consequence not be directly intended by the agent. Three, the good result not be directly causal result of the evil result and, four, the good result must be “proportionate to” the evil result (Siegel, 2009). In the case of abortion in order to avert an impending

course, the third principle of the double effect is lacking. The relief to the student comes as an effect of the abortion.

Desire to complete secondary schooling, shame, poverty, peer pressure and parental pressure are some of the reasons discussed that propelled students to procure abortion. However, the researcher held that the reasons discussed above were only but perceived reasons. Beyond these perceived reasons lay the fundamental reason: value placed on the life of the foetus, that determined the students' decision to or not to procure abortion.

Nyanje (2008) observed that the challenge of abortion is multifaceted, complex matter, most acrimonious and seemingly an endless debate. That we could refer to it as a perpetual problem, with many people holding on to their positions. However, the controversy does not seem to be so much a question of lack of knowledge of what abortion is, rather due to lack of agreement regarding the moral status of the embryo and the foetus. The following section delved into analyzing abortion in light of the beginning of human life.

#### **4.4 Abortion and the Beginning of Human Life**

One of the most controversial topics in Bioethics, Science and Philosophy is the beginning of individual human life. The question of when human life begins requires the essential aid of different forms of knowledge. It can be answered only through the inter-connecting pathways of history, philosophy, law, science and religion (Shwartz, 1990).

It has not been easy to draw the line between the competence of science and metaphysics in this delicate philosophical field. To a large extent the drawing of this line depends on one's fundamental philosophical outlook (Willem, 2007). The point at which human life begins will always be seen differently by different individuals, groups, cultures and religious faiths.

#### **4.4.1. Scientific View on the Beginning of Human Life**

Human development begins after the fusion of male and female gametes or germ cells during fertilization. Fertilization is a sequence of events that begins with the contact of a sperm with the ovum and ends with the fusion of their pronuclei and the mingling of their chromosomes to form a new cell. The fertilized ovum, known as zygote is a large diploid cell that marks the beginning of a human being (Dox, 1993).

The chromosomes of the oocyte and sperm are enclosed within the female and male pronuclei. The pronuclei fuse with each other to produce a single diploid,  $2N$  nucleus of the fertilized zygote. The moment of zygote formation may be taken as the beginning or the zero time point of embryonic development (Larsen, 1997).

Although life is a continuous process, fertilization is a critical land mark because under ordinary circumstances, a new, genetically distinct human organism is thereby formed. The combination of 23 chromosomes present in each pronucleus results in 46 chromosomes in the zygote. Thus the diploid number is restored and the embryonic genome is formed. The embryo now exists as a genetic unity (Ronan et al, 2000). A live human embryo is generally regarded as already an embryonic member of the human race. It already possesses the intrinsic powers and the potential to become a mature

member of *Homo sapiens*. All that is required is nutrition and a non-hostile environment. Mostly, the dividing line for personhood has been categorized at the level of conception, brain functioning, viability and at birth (Baker, 2000).

#### **4.4.2 Legal View on the Beginning of Human Life**

In the *Roe v. Wade* case, the Supreme Court of the United States of America observed that judiciary could not be expected to resolve the problem of ‘when life begins’ when those trained in respective disciplines of medicine, philosophy and theology were unable to arrive at a consensus (Feinberg, 1980). The court held that the foetus represented the potentiality of a person and that there was an important and legitimate state interest in protecting the potentiality of human life. This interest becomes compelling when the foetus reaches viability: the point at which the foetus has the capability of meaningful life outside the mother’s womb. Consequently, only after viability could abortion be prescribed. This occurred around twenty-four to twenty-eight weeks after conception.

The viability approach survived without considerable change until *Webster* (Regan, 1979). In *Webster*, Chief Justice Rehnquist, writing for plurality condemned the viability approach saying:

“[W]e do not see why the state’s interest in protecting the potential human life should come into existence only at the point of viability, and that there should be a line allowing state regulation after viability and prohibiting it before viability. The state has a compelling interest in protecting human life throughout pregnancy” (Robertson, 1983).

The suggestion that the state protects human life throughout pregnancy shows that life begins at conception. Article 158 of the Penal Code of Kenya prohibits any intentional interference with the product of conception and any person found guilty of such attempts is charged with felony and is liable for a jail term of fourteen years. It can thus be argued that human life begins at conception (GoK, 2009).

#### **4.4.3 Religious Views on the Beginning of Human Life**

Various religions hold different views on when life begins. The Babylonian Talmud Yevamot 69b of the Jewish Religion considers embryo mere water until the fortieth day. Afterwards, it is considered sub-human until is born. Although the Jewish religion does not grant full human inviolability to the unborn, it is clearly agreed that potentiality for life must not be compromised except for the most substantial medical reasons (Jakobvitz, 1979).

Islam holds that prior to breathing of the soul; the type of life is considered a vegetative one devoid of volition. The human life begins when the soul is breathed into the body with both moments and perceptions becoming voluntary. After quickening, abortion is prohibited to all Muslims for it is a grave sin entailing a crime perpetrated against a living being unless it is therapeutic (Al-Bar, 1989).

Christianity holds that human life is a continuum from fertilization until natural death. God the Creator directs and purposes the beginning of prenatal life as evidenced in Psalms: 139: 13-16:

“For you created my inmost being, you knit me together in my mother’s womb” (Psalms 139: 13-16).

These verses are an articulation of God’s intimate involvement in the conception, continuance and consummation of every individual life

#### **4.5 Abortion and Personhood of the Foetus**

The concept of abortion in relation to the concept of the personhood of the foetus is somehow difficult to define in a universally acceptable way given its historical and cultural controversy that tend to surround its use in varied contexts. The concept is also inextricable to legal and political notions of citizenship, equality and liberty. Thus, in some legal contexts, only a ‘natural person’ or legal personality has rights, privileges, responsibilities and legal liabilities (Beckwith, 2012).

In ordinary discourse, the question of personhood constitutes the humanness, dignity and personal identity of a human being. That is why in the discourse on abortion, the question of personhood takes the forms of: when does personhood begin, is a foetus a person and are there any justifiable grounds for deliberate termination of the existence of one’s personhood by another individual?

At implantation, the embryo attaches itself to the lining of the uterus, develops and receives nutrition from the mother. Taylor argues that since death is defined by end of brain functioning, brain life is the beginning of personhood (Taylor, 1985). Others argue that not until later in the second trimester of pregnancy does the unborn child become aware that it exists. Hence, personhood cannot start until then. Until this stage, the foetus cannot suffer real harm because it does not know it exists (Dale, 2007).

Some scholars consider viability as a dividing line of personhood. This is in reference to the stage when the foetus is able to live or survive outside the mother's womb and others even hold that the foetus is not really a person until birth. By implication, it is not until it is a separate individual that it becomes a person (Thomson, 1971).

Traditionally, the concept of personhood entailed the concept of the soul, a metaphysical concept referring to a non-corporeal (Harvey, 1992). That there are three levels of the human soul: the vegetative soul, the sensitive soul and the intellectual soul. Human foetus at first only has the vegetative soul which allows it to take in nutrition. The foetus gets this directly from the father's semen. The foetus then develops a sensitive soul which allows it to have sensations and finally God implants the intellectual soul into the foetus. At this point the foetus becomes a person.

This study did not intend to attempt a complete analysis of the concept of personhood; such an analysis was not needed simply to determine whether and why a foetus is or isn't a person. The intention here was to get a rough and approximate list of the most basic criteria of personhood and some idea of which or how many of these characteristics must be available for an entity be properly considered a person. Warren proposed the following properties:

First, an entity must have consciousness (of objects and events external and/or internal to the being) and in particular, the capacity to feel pain. Second, it must have reasoning (the developed capacity to solve new and relatively complex problems). Third, it must have self-motivated activity (activity which is relatively independent of either genetic or external control). Fourth, it must have the capacity to communicate, by whatever means,

messages of an indefinite variety of types, that is, not just with an indefinite of possible contents, but on indefinitely many possible topics. Fifth, there must be presence of self-concepts and self-awareness either individual or racial or both (Warren, 1973). Singer (2015) argues in favour of abortion rights on the ground that foetuses are neither rational nor self-aware, and can therefore hold no preferences. As a result, he argues that the mother to procure abortion automatically takes precedence in the choice to or not to procure abortion. Singer's argument evidently disregards the potentiality of the foetus to acquire such concepts like self-awareness given the right environment to thrive.

Those opposed to Warren's view, like Beckwith believed that what matters in a moral argument is not that one has to actually exhibit complex mental qualities as outlined by Warren, rather what is significant is that of acquiring oneself, a self-directed genetic propensity or natural capacity to develop Warren's outlined qualities. In other words, what is crucial is that one should be the kind that is capable of developing itself to the point of exhibiting Warren's qualities at some point in life, even if it has not already exhibited them (Baker, 2000). The leadership of the Catholic Church has recently been advancing a human exceptionalist understanding of personhood. Catechism of the Catholic Church, article 2270 reads:

“Human life must be respected and protected absolutely from the moment of conception. From the first moment of his existence, a human being must be recognized as having the rights of a person- among which is the inviolable right of every innocent human being to life.” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, article 2270).

Something is a person if by nature, it has the capacity to develop human characteristics like the ability to think rationally, express emotions and make decisions. This capacity is something that a person has as soon as she or he begins to exist since it is part of his or her personal nature (Tollefsen, 2008). Just as a cat qualifies as a feline simply by being a cat, a foetus qualifies as a person simply by being human. The intrinsic humanity of unborn children qualifies them as persons and should guarantee their protection under law (Beckwith, 2004).

The word 'person' may refer to various concepts. According to the 'naturalist' epistemological tradition, from Descartes through Locke and Hume, the term may designate any human (or non-human) agent which possesses continuous consciousness over time; and is capable of framing representations about the world, formulating plans and working on them (Baker, 2000). Others argue that personhood is not linked to function at all; but rather that it is the underlying personal unity of the individual. A human person does not come into existence when human function arises, but rather a human person is an entity who has natural inherent capacity to give rise to human functions, whether or not those functions are ever attained (Beckwith, 2012). It is because an entity has an essence and falls within a natural kind that it can possess a unity of dispositions, capacities, parts and properties at a given time and can maintain identity through change (Moreland, 1988).

In the African perspective, the Yoruba philosophical thought, for instance, structures a human person in three basic elements: *Ara* (Body), *Emi* (Spirit) and *Ori* (Soul) (Olen & Barry, 1992). The body is tangible and can be known through the senses. *Emi* is

invisible. It is that which gives life to the whole body. It is the active principle and is closely associated with breathing. The fact that one breathes indicate that *Emi* is in him. Man does not end with *Ara* and *Emi*, there is the *Ori* which suggests that man is a person with individuality before birth with a spiritual life; thus, a right to live. Life begins before birth as soon as one acquires *Ori* which is ones individuality (Idowa, 1998). In regard to the above structure, the foetus possesses *Ara*, *Emi* and *Ori*. The *Ori* (human destiny) suggests that there is a life and individuality before birth that needs to be actualized; the foetus has a right to live and to actualize this destiny (Olen & Barry, 1992).

Potentiality and actuality affect various stages of life both in the womb and outside the womb. The infant for example does not have the ability to speak but will develop speech with time. The foetus has the capacity to blossom into a full person. Actuality is a gradual process. Killing the foetus because it is still undergoing this process is analogous to killing a ten years old boy because he is not like an eighty years old man who has attained full growth (Olen & Barry, 1992).

Aristotle conceived personhood basing on Final causality and Formal causality. The final cause of a living organism is the function that the organism normally performs when it reaches maturity. The formal cause of the organism is the structure it normally has in maturity, where that form is thought to enable the organism to perform its functions well (Carlson, 2010).

This study was based on the preposition that a human foetus is an immature specimen of the organism type, human, which, by nature has the potentiality to develop into a

mature specimen with the structure, form and function of a normal or standard adult given a conducive environment and nutrition. Nyanje, (2008) asserts that denial of ‘personhood’ to some people led such categories of people to be treated with least consideration. He observed that it is emerging that the term ‘non-person’ today is the most far reaching and disastrous epithet ever invoked to disvalue human life in the womb.

#### **4.6 Abortion and the Value of Human Life**

The issue that divides pro-life and pro-choice proponents in the abortion debate is the foundation of the value of human life, namely, whether the value placed on human life is grounded in human nature (substance) or in some acquired capacities (accidents) (O’Neill, 2008). Whether the foetus should be accorded the rights and privileges of born children or adults has remained controversial through ages. The ontological status of the foetus embraces a lot of questions. Is the foetus an individual organism; is it a biological human being or a person (Bridghouse, 2014)? This study holds that the life of the foetus has intrinsic value, innate human dignity, sacred and having the right to life. The foetus enjoys rights and privileges accorded to adults.

##### **4.6.1. Intrinsic Value of Human Life**

The intrinsic value of an entity is the worth that an entity possesses in itself or for its own sake (Ellington, 1993). It is the ‘gold standard’ of morality because what has intrinsic value has ultimate moral value (Dale, 2007). Intrinsic value is commonly used in at least four different senses.

First, intrinsic value can simply mean non-instrumental value. Something has instrumental value if it can be used for something else (O'Neill, 2008). Second, intrinsic value can be a criterion for moral standing. In order for something to count morally or be morally considerable, it must have intrinsic value. Intrinsic value in this case is the ticket that gets one admitted into the moral community (Johnson, 2008).

Third, something that has intrinsic value can be understood to have inherent value because its value depends on what inheres in itself. It is a non-relational property. Its value depends on the existence of nothing else. In this sense, something that has intrinsic value stands in contrast to others (Gert, 2004). Fourth, something that has intrinsic value has objective value. Its value is independent of the valuations of the valuers. This is called mind-independent value because the value really exists in the object independent of whether humans perceive it or not (Butler et al, 2007).

Human beings are intrinsically valuable because they possess a particular nature from the moment they come into existence. What a human is, and not what she does, makes her a member of the moral community. Some students believed that because the foetus cannot survive on its own, then it has no value. One such respondent who was a student in form three and had procured abortion severally had this to say:

The life of the foetus has no value. It is just useless. What can it do? It cannot even help itself it depends on the mother for everything even breathe! I think to have value is to be useful at least to yourself or others. This being cannot do anything or help anyone. In fact it can put the life of its mother in danger or cause the mother to miss out on some opportunities like completing school (Appendix IX: B).

The narration above indicates that some students see the unborn as a burden and a useless thing that can just be disposed at will. Both an embryo and a six weeks old child lack the immediately exercisable capacity to perform most of the characteristically human mental functions. However, they both possess the natural capacity for self-consciousness. If allowed to develop, their immature nervous system will produce characteristically human mental functions. The immediately exercisable capacity of a certain function is only the development of an underlying potentiality that the human being possesses simply by virtue of the kind of entity it is (Dale, 2007). It is noted that the respondents had no idea what the concept of intrinsic value was and thus, they could not relate it to the general value of the foetus.

#### **4.6.2 Innate Human Dignity**

The concept of human dignity is used to express the idea that a human being has an innate right to be valued, respected and receive ethical treatment (Singer, 2002). However, some the respondents in this study hold that at the early stages of foetal development, the foetus does not qualify to be accorded human dignity. One such respondent who did not confess to any religion and hailed from a rich urban family believed that only the stage at which the foetus assumes the adult structure can it be accorded human dignity. She said:

“The life of the foetus has no value. What value? You see most of us abort when the body of the foetus has not yet formed at around the third month or earlier. At that time it is just blood and when it comes out it is just like normal ‘*mnyesho*’. Can we say that ‘*mnyesho*’ has value? Like you cut yourself and bleed you cannot say that that blood being shed has value”. (Appendix X: B)

Johnson (2008) observes that there are things that should not be discussed in terms of value, and these things could be said to have dignity. Value is necessarily relative because the value of something depends on a particular observer's judgment of that thing. Things that are not relative; that are ends in themselves, in Kant's terms-are by extension beyond all value. A thing is an end in itself only if it has a moral dimension, morality and humanity as capable of it, is that which alone has dignity (Singer, 2002). What makes someone part of the moral community is not simply the species they belong to but human beings are much more than their genetics. Being genetically human beings means that we, the pre-born included, have a certain nature. We have an inherent nature as rational moral agents. It is this inherent nature that makes us part of the moral community (Shwartz, 1990).

#### **4.6.3. Sanctity of Human Life**

In religion and ethics, inviolability or sanctity of life is a principle of implied protection regarding aspects of sentient life which are said to be holy, sacred or otherwise of such value that they are not to be violated (Harvey, 1992). The phrase 'sanctity of human life' refers to the idea that human life is sacred, holy and precious, argued mainly by the pro-life side in moral debates over such controversial issues as abortion and euthanasia. Most students knew that life comes from God and that it is holy. One such respondent who was a staunch Christian and believed that all human life comes from God and thus is sacred had this to say:

“Because we were created by God, I think if our lives have value, then the life of the foetus also has value. It may have less value than ours but it has. The more it grows, it adds its value. When it

is in the body it is a part of the body and as you know every part of the body has value.”  
(Appendix VIII: B)

Human life’s sacredness involves its inviolability; a holiness intrinsic to or hardwired into life, so that human life is sacred (Barry 2002).

#### **4.6.4 Right to Life**

The right to life is a moral principle based on the belief that a human being has the right to live and, in particular, should not be killed by another human being (Willem, 2007).

The phrase ‘right to life’ is a rhetorical device used in the abortion debate by those who wish to outlaw the intentional termination of a pregnancy (Solomon, 1978). In the context of pregnancy, the phrase was advanced by Pope Pius XII in a 1951 Papal encyclical:

“Every human being, even the child in the womb, has the right to life directly from God and not from his parents, not from any society or human authority. Therefore there is no man, no society, no human authority, no science, no indication at all whether it be medical, eugenic, social, economic or moral that may offer or give a valid judicial title for a direct deliberate disposal of innocent life” (Pope Pius XII, 1951).

The right to life is enshrined in Article 3 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

It is also enshrined in Article 6 of the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights and states that every human being has the inherent right to life. This right shall be protected by law. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his life. Article 6 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child states that state parties should recognize that every child has the inherent right to life and ensure to the maximum extent possible the

survival and development of the child. The right to life is also contained in article 4 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and states that human beings are inviolable. Every human being shall be entitled to respect for his life and the integrity of his person.

No one may be arbitrarily deprived of this right. Chapter four on the Bill of Rights in the constitution of Kenya states that every person has the right to life and that the life of a person begins at conception. A person should not be deprived of life intentionally, except to the extent authorized by the constitution or other written law. It goes on to state that abortion is not permitted unless, in the opinion of a trained health professional, there is need for emergency treatment, or the life or the health of the mother is in danger, or if permitted by any other law (KLRC, 2016).

#### **4.7 An Analysis of Abortion in the Light of Value of Human Life**

The value one placed on the life of the foetus directly influenced her decision to or not to procure abortion. Those who held that the life of the foetus had value or limited value were less likely to procure abortion and vice-versa. One's belief system on different aspects of value of human life like intrinsic value, innate human dignity, sanctity of life and human right determined to a large extent their decision in regard to abortion.

Nevertheless, there were some intervening factors that caused students to procure abortion in spite of their value system. Such were the desire to finish school, shame, peer and parental pressure among others. Students who were not well rooted in the value system were easily swayed by the strong winds of pressure, coercion and the desire to fit in the social circles.

Some respondents held that the life of the foetus had absolutely no value. They considered a foetus as something useless that came as an impediment to future prosperity and even a health hazard. Such students had without regret procured abortion and would still procure abortion if they found themselves with unwanted pregnancy. One such respondent was an eighteen years old student at the school in form three and had procured several abortions since primary school. She came from a poor family in a rural set up. She was a Muslim but did not actively take part in religious activities. For her, life begins at birth. She said:

“The life of the foetus has no value. It is just useless. What can it do? It cannot even help itself it depends on the mother for everything even breathe! I think to have value is to be useful at least to yourself or others. This thing cannot do anything or help anyone. In fact it can put the life of its mother in danger or cause the mother to miss out on some opportunities like completing school”. (Appendix IX: B).

The student was in disregard of the fact that potentiality and actuality affect various stages of life both in the womb and outside the womb. The infant for example does not have the ability to speak but will develop speech with time. The foetus has the capacity to blossom into a full person. Actuality is gradually achieved. Killing the foetus because it is still undergoing this process is analogous to killing a ten years old boy because he is not like an eighty years old man who has attained full growth (Olen & Barry, 1992).

Other respondents placed value on the life of the foetus when it starts moving within the womb. Before this, the product of conception was considered valueless. Such students

would not hesitate to procure abortion for as long as what comes out of them during abortion in those early stages has no human form and structures:

“It depends with how old the pregnancy is. Like if it is below 3 months then it is just blood and it is not yet formed into a human being so it has no value and so removing it is just okay. When it is big and you can feel it move then it is life now so it has value and it will be bad to remove it.”  
(Appendix VI: B)

On the other hand, there are those who valued and upheld the dignity of human beings including the unborn. These values were imparted into them early enough by parents and had been built on as they developed. Such would not deviate from that path. Pressure from peers and parents came and passed. Desire to complete schooling and shame come and passed. Even in dire poverty and fear of unknown, they did not procure abortion. Not even when the pregnancy was due to rape. To them, children were a gift from God and a source of joy. One such respondent was a twenty years old student in form four. She had two children. She got the first child in class seven and the second one in form three. She was attending a day school and came from a humble background. She was a born again Christian. She narrated:

“I was in class seven when it first happened. I was so young. I was confused. My parents were very annoyed. They were struggling for us so much that we may get educated. The boy responsible was in my class and he ran away when I told him so. My friends told me to abort but I refused. My mother hates girls who abort. Friends avoided me and I felt bad. I gave birth but life was difficult. I had to do *vibarua* so that I could get money to take care of the baby. My mom assisted me a lot and always told me that babies were gifts from God. After a year, I joined another school and did my KCPE. I

joined a day school next to my home. In the meantime my baby was growing. I loved him so much and he loved me. There I was having a problem with fees. The principal promised to help me if I behaved. One day he called me in the office and told me that he had paid my fees. He locked me in the office and raped me. I could not scream for help. No one could believe me. I really cried. I became pregnant again” (Appendix XII: C)

This narration is evidence that much as the pregnant girls may have been under pressure to procure abortion, students who had knowledge on the value of human life and indeed valued human life were less likely swayed to procure abortion. They were least likely to conform to the standards of their peers.

It should also be noted that most respondents were ignorant of the concepts that make up what is regarded as value of human life. This lack of knowledge and lack of a value system that holds the life of the foetus as having intrinsic value, innate human dignity, sanctity of life and human right is suggestively the cause of the high rate of abortions among secondary school girls in Kenya. This study also questioned the role of parents in imparting right knowledge and virtues into their children as they grow. Mothers who procured abortion and supported abortion encouraged their daughters to procure abortion.

In this chapter, human life was discussed as having intrinsic value, innate dignity, being inviolable and as an inalienable human right. Amerini (2013) observed that it is the morality and not legality which makes human beings worth.

#### **4.8 Summary**

In this chapter, the concept of abortion was discussed *visa vis* the beginning of human life, personhood and value of human life. Perceived and fundamental causes of abortion among secondary school girls were discussed. This was based on live narratives of experiences by students and teachers gathered from field work interviews. Key among the causes as discussed were: desire to complete schooling, shame, poverty, peer pressure and parental control. The fundamental cause of abortion, namely, value placed on the life of the foetus, as established by this study was also discussed. The next chapter discussed some effects of pregnancy and abortion and proposed some viable responses to the challenge of abortion in Kenya.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **TOWARDS VIABLE RESPONSE TO THE CHALLENGE OF ABORTION IN KENYA**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

The previous chapter discussed the concept of abortion *visa vis* the personhood and beginning of human life and value of human life. Perceived and fundamental causes of abortion among secondary school girls were also discussed. This chapter discussed some of the effects of pregnancy and abortion then suggested viable responses to the challenge of abortion in Kenya.

#### **5.2 Effects of Pregnancy among Secondary School Girls in Kenya**

The assumption of active parenting significantly changed a young woman's life. The demands of parenthood came as a shock to the girls in school who depended on parents and knew very little about child-care. Pregnancy has several effects on secondary school girls including medical complications, emotional crisis, worry, depression, negligence of the child and financial constraints among others.

##### **5.2.1 Medical Complications**

Medical complications often occur among secondary school girls as most often the girls do not seek adequate medical care during the pregnancy (Advocates for Youth, 2015). Complications that occur during pregnancy include anaemia: a condition of decreased red blood cells or having less haemoglobin than normal in every red blood cell; toxemia: a condition in pregnancy characterized by abrupt hypertension, leakage of

large amounts of protein albumin into the urine and swelling of hands, legs and face; high blood pressure; Placenta Previa: a condition where the placenta lies low in the uterus and partially or completely covers the cervix and premature child birth. Ongoing medical care is crucial in order to prevent the complications from threatening the pregnancy and the mother's wellbeing (WHO, 2012).

### **5.2.2 Emotional Crisis**

Most pregnant school girls who did not wish to keep their babies suffered emotional crisis. This crisis led to rash behavior like suicide attempt and sleepless nights among others. Some students also fell into depression, while trying to handle the emotions that come with pregnancy. The fluctuating hormones that a pregnancy caused led to depression in some cases. One of the respondents had this to say:

“I knew I would not have anywhere to hide my face as the society would judge us harshly. When I told my boyfriend, he told me to sort myself out and not to mention to anyone that he was the one responsible and if I did he would teach me a big lesson. I was frustrated. I cried a lot. I felt cheated and worthless. I felt like committing suicide”  
(Appendix: VII: C)

Uncertainty drifts in once a student realizes that she does not have enough knowledge to handle a child. She may also have fears about how having a baby may impact upon her own life and dreams for the future.

### **5.2.3 Neglect of the Baby**

Upon delivering, a secondary school girl may not be willing or be able to give the baby undivided attention. Overwhelmed by the constant needs of the baby they develop

resentment and get annoyed at the lack of freedom to interact with peer groups. Several financial constraints also arose during teen pregnancy and after the baby was born. It is expensive to raise a child. Student mothers struggled to cater for the basic needs upon having a baby and when they got hard up and frustrated they directed their anger at the baby and neglected the baby. Embarrassment that came with premarital pregnancy also caused the teenage mothers to neglect their babies as evidenced by one respondent's confession:

“It was so embarrassing. We were struggling to survive at home. My parents could hardly afford two meals a day. We had to sell our bodies for survival and in order to help our parents and our younger siblings. In this case you don't choose who you sleep with. As long as they give you money, they force you to do it without protection”  
(Appendix XI: C).

Poverty pushed young girls into risky and shameful behavior. The respondent above cited poverty as the reason for sleeping around without protection. The students end up pregnant and abortion is seen as the solution.

#### **5.2.4 Physical Effects of Abortion**

Abortion may lead to damage of cervix. Normally, the cervix is rigid and tightly closed. During abortion the cervix is be stretched open with a great deal of force. During this forced dilation, there is almost always caused microscopic tearing of the cervix muscles and occasionally severe ripping of the uterine wall. In some cases there is need for stitching for cervical tears (WHO, 2010). It is unfortunate that such attention to details is not always provided at most health facilities or in the rooms where the young girls go

to procure abortion. Women under the age of eighteen years face twice the risk of cervical damage due to the fact that their cervixes are still developing (FAWE, 2012).

Whether microscopic or macroscopic in nature, the cervical damage which results during abortion frequently results in permanent weakening of the cervix. This weakening may result in an 'incompetent cervix' which, unable to carry the weight of a later 'wanted' pregnancy opens prematurely resulting in miscarriage or premature birth (FAWE, 2012).

Abortion may lead to uterine perforation. It is unfortunate that most cases of uterine perforation remain undetected and treated in good time unless a laparoscopic visualization is conducted. This may result in complications in later pregnancies. Some women are left sterile after abortion. In some cases, the uterus is pulled out alongside the products of conception resulting in barrenness. One such disease is the Pelvic Inflammatory Disease which is potentially life threatening and can lead to ectopic pregnancy and reduced fertility.

Abortion may also result in ectopic pregnancies in the future. In some cases, abortion leads to improper development of the placenta because of uterine damage which may in turn lead to foetal malformation, perinatal death and excessive bleeding during labour (UNFPA, 2013)

During abortion complications may arise including infections, haemorrhage, embolism, anesthesia complications, convulsions and endotoxin shock:

“We both insisted and were taken through the procedure. It was terrible. We really bled and were rushed to hospital. My sister died on the way. I knew I was next. Fortunately I was given blood and I survived” (Appendix XI: C).

The respondent was a form four student who has had an abortion and whose younger sister had unfortunately passed on while attempting to procure abortion. She came from a poor family and the family struggled to make ends meet. Some students reported feeling excruciating pain and some even passed out during the procedure. One such student shivered as she narrated her experience:

“My friend at school gave me a concoction that she used. I took the stuff and in 30 minutes my tummy was turning inside out. I feared. Thought I would die. I had a heavy painful flow and passed out. I just found myself in hospital” (Appendix X: C).

Another similar incidence involved a student who was forced into abortion by her own mother and narrated how awful the ordeal was:

“She took me through a very painful experience I cannot even describe to you. I cried and told her to stop but she did not. Finally she released me but the pain and the bleeding was too much even after she gave me painkillers. I lost so much blood that I was rushed to hospital after a day. I thought I was going to die” (Appendix VII: C).

Apart from physical pain, some physical complications resulting from abortion may be treated while others leave permanent damage resulting in barrenness, accidental removal of the uterus and even miscarriages.

### 5.2.5 Psychological Effects of Abortion

Abortion psychologically affected each student differently. They start with mild regret to more serious complications like depression. One's conviction and moral value she placed on the life of the baby inside of her influenced her decision on abortion. Those who believed that it was not a baby until it was born had less chance of experiencing negative emotional consequences unlike those who believed it was a baby from conception (Adler,2003).

Some respondents felt relieved immediately after abortion. This relief came because before abortion, the girls felt under pressure 'to get rid of the pregnancy. The relief was followed by a period of emotional 'paralysis'. Like shell-shocked soldiers, they were unable to tell how they felt. Their objective was having the pregnancy eliminated and they were at least temporarily detached from their feelings.

Within eight weeks of abortion, most women experienced guilt, self-reproach, withdrawal, nervous disorders, sleep disturbance, regret, promiscuity and aversion to men in general. One respondent narrated the feeling of guilt that engulfed her after the abortion:

“I took the pills. It was 6 weeks so I bled everything out. I had terrible cramps. I was afraid and guilty. After 6 months, I got pregnant again”  
(Appendix VIII: C).

Uncertainty about being able to conceive and carry future pregnancies to term caused the girls to engage in unprotected sex again. Kimani and Kombo (2013) observed that most women developed an extensive desire to get babies and compensate for the lost

pregnancy. It turns out that many women who succeed at conceiving their ‘wanted’ replacement pregnancies discovered that the similar challenges that pressured them into having their first abortion still existed and so they ended up procuring another abortion.

Most students experienced denial and repressed their feelings. They avoid people, situations or events associated with their abortion. Some become defensive of abortion in order to convince others they made the right choice and are satisfied with the results. In reality, these women who are subsequently identified as having been severely traumatized have failed to reach a true state of closure with regard to their experiences (Adler, 2003).

It is normal for any student to feel emotional side effects after procuring an abortion. However, some students were more susceptible to experiencing some type of emotional struggle. Such women included: those with previous emotional concerns, students who had been coerced, forced or persuaded to procure abortion, students with religious and ethical views that contradicted with abortion and students who procure abortion in the later stages of pregnancy. A respondent in form one student who stayed with her single mother and believed that procuring abortion was not right though she was coerced into abortion by her mother confessed that:

“It was really bad. I really regret. Sometimes I get bad dreams and wake up screaming. Nowadays I really hate men” (Appendix VII: C)

Such psychological effects of abortion include regret, anger, guilt, shame, feeling of loneliness, loss of self-confidence, nightmares, relationship issues, eating disorders and anxiety (Speckhard, 2009). If not adequately addressed, these effects may degenerate

into worse states of emotional disorders such as depression, trauma and even suicidal feelings.

### **5.2.6 Social Effects of Abortion**

Abortion is a moral and ethical issue, reflective of the standards, values and beliefs of individuals and by extension, the society. Effects of abortion on society are secondary effects. Yet they are indeed consequences that remain substantially under publicized. These include hasty marriages, increased likelihood of marrying late or not marrying at all, complacency on gender based violence, increased promiscuity and increased chances of poor mental development among others (SIECUS, 2009). As long as the students know that the result of their promiscuity (pregnancy) could be easily fixed, they continued with their sexual escapades and thus recurrent cases of abortion. One such respondent confessed that she had already procured three abortions and vowed never to carry any pregnancy to term. This showed that the ease to procure abortion promoted promiscuity.

“Since then, I have had three more abortions and I don’t feel a thing. I cannot carry a baby when I am not ready. Never!”  
(Appendix IX: C).

From the above assertion, it was evident that students who successfully procured abortion were not afraid of procuring abortion again.

### **5.3 Viable Responses to the Challenge of Abortion among Secondary School Girls in Kenya**

Abortion in Kenya remains steeped in taboo and legality. In most communities in Kenya, abortion is frowned at which explains why it is practiced under cover. The constitution of Kenya only allows medical abortion by professionals only if the likelihood of the mother's survival is unforeseeable. Measures are being put in place to fight the menace in schools but there are gaping loopholes that ought to be mend to help deal with the challenge of abortion. For instance, the Gender and Education Policy developed in 2003 that makes provision for the readmission of girls who become pregnant while still at school, even allowing them back to seek a place at a different institution from the one they previously attended. However, the policy does not clarify penalties for school principals who refuse to readmit the girls. No financial aid is offered to young mothers to ensure that they are able to resume their education. It is for this reason that this section of the study attempted to put forward viable and practical solutions to the challenge of abortion among secondary school girls in Kenya.

Abortion in secondary schools in Kenya is a multi-faceted challenge. It calls for consorted efforts from the government and non-governmental organizations, religious bodies, media schools, parents and the individual students. The following sub-section highlighted the role of these various institutions in curbing this menace of abortion among secondary school going girls in Kenya.

### **5.3.1 Government's Role in Curbing Abortion in Secondary Schools in Kenya**

The government needs to crackdown on the unscrupulous and greedy death merchants in the form of medical practitioners who are minting millions from the unsuspecting expectant students promising them easy relief from their 'problem' only to leave them for death after botched abortions. With the devolution of health services, the county governments should carry out operations and ensure that the quacks involved are brought to book and their clinics closed. The medical practitioners in government hospitals and licensed clinics who help the students procure abortion should also have their licenses withdrawn (Jarabi, 2013).

Through parliament the government should put in place necessary relevant laws to implement health rights clauses. Constitutional declarations in Kenya ought to be backed up by legislation that supports the official national position that will be followed come what may (Advocates for Youth, 2015).

The government should also clearly state the punitive measures against abortionists, parents or guardians who force or coerce girls into procuring abortion, the men who impregnate school girls and the teachers who refuse to readmit the students after delivery. The students, parents and the society at large should be well educated on the rights of the students so that they know what to do when the rights are denied (Adler, 2003). One school principal interviewed recommends:

“The government also needs to put in place precise punitive measures against anyone engaged in abortion except for reasons stated in the constitution. Serious and urgent actions need to be taken. Abortion is claiming lives of students and that of their babies at an alarming rate. We

cannot afford to sit back and relax and say we have the constitution” (Appendix XV:D).

The above narration is an indication that various stakeholders wish the problem could be dealt with. Even though there is no silver bullet to solving this complex challenge, one of the most powerful weapons the government can employ is investing in adoption services. The government should collaborate with non-governmental organizations to offer adoption services. The process of adoption should also be made easy especially where students are concerned. This way, the students will have more options other than abortion (Kamau, 2016). One school principal interviewed also believed that adoption could help in responding to the challenge of abortion:

“Government should also invest in adoption facilities at county levels and equip them with the necessary equipment and personnel. They also need to work hand in hand with the children departments to bring to book the men irresponsible for the pregnancies and make them take care of the girls and their children” (Appendix XV :D).

Adoption may be one major remedy to the challenge of abortion among secondary school girls in Kenya. However, it faces set-backs. It could be seen as a lee way for the girls to engage in promiscuous behavior knowing that even if they got babies they would just dispose them off in the name of giving them off for adoption.

### **5.3.2 Role of Religious Bodies in Curbing Abortion in Secondary Schools in Kenya**

All religious bodies should endeavor to teach moral values to their members as young as at Sunday school and in catechism and madrassa classes. The concept of value of human life from conception to death should be taught to children so that when they

grow up they are able to appreciate and uphold life when faced with a choice to procure abortion. One respondent who was a student in form three, had had an abortion and given birth and returned to school believes that abortion is morally unacceptable:

“Students should be educated on the value of life of every one even if they are children. Most people think that the child that has not been born yet has no value. Even God knew us before we were born, how then can we say that the unborn child has no value? It should be taught in church and in schools starting from primary” (Appendix VIII: E).

The church should teach young members on the importance of abstaining from sex until they are married. Consequences of unprotected sex among the youth should be taught. Religious organizations should organize forums and mentorship programmes where human sexuality is discussed openly. The youth should also be given opportunities to discuss with mentors on matters of sexuality and evils of promiscuity.

The church should refrain from and condemn abortion at all cost. It should not conform to the standards of the world so to say. With the plethora of foreign programmes, movies and clips on social media which glorify sex, drug abuse and abortion, the church has a big challenge protecting the youth against such vices. However with the help of parents and other stakeholders, the youth can be protected.

The church should advise parents against coercing their daughters to procure abortion as pregnancy should not be seen as a dream killer. They should be encouraged to support their pregnant daughters and not be hostile to them. They should also be encouraged to take care of their daughters’ children as the students resume schooling.

“Parents should not be forcing their girls to abort. They can give birth and go back to school. Some parents even do not talk to their children things to do with sex so we only learn from our friends who only cheat us and we become pregnant. Parents should tell us. If there is openness between parents and students then we shall not be lied to by our friends” (Appendix VII: E).

### **5.3.3 Role of Schools in Curbing Abortion in Secondary Schools in Kenya**

Most students spend most of their time in school. Schools play a huge role in shaping the character of students. Students see the teachers as parents and follow the guidance of their teachers both in curriculum and extra-curriculum matters.

There is need to develop programs in schools which involve life skills training in order to help students assess situations and their possible outcomes. Such skills include creative thinking, critical thinking and decision making among others. Sexual decision making is not only about having information on sexuality but should be done within a social-cultural environment. Put, youth lack skills that can help them discern wrong decisions and say no to sex and abortion. A respondent who is a school principal suggested:

“The curriculum should emphasize aspect of normative education. Students need to be taught skills like self-respect, critical thinking and informed decision making. Students who respect themselves will not allow their bodies to be used in sexual immorality resulting in unplanned pregnancy and abortion. Such students will also respect the lives of the children they carry when they conceive” (Appendix XV: D).

Concept of value of human life should be incorporated in the curriculum especially in the syllabi of social science subjects progressively from lower primary school up to

universities and colleges. Students should be taught to appreciate and protect human life from conception to death. A good number of respondents of this study thought that before birth, the life within the human womb was not worthy and had less value and so there was no issue in disposing it. These students were ignorant of when it is accorded value. One of the teachers interviewed noted that:

“Occasionally, I talk to students during my pastoral activities at school about the value of life and God’s intention for mankind. I am a pastor and I believe all evil against humanity is committed because human beings do not fully understand the value of human life and the intention of God for mankind. The Bible says, ‘My people perish for lack of knowledge’. These students procuring abortion do it out of ignorance. I try to tell them but I think they have just grown too used to me” (Appendix XIV:C).

The sentiments on knowledge of value of human life and how it influences the decision to or not to procure abortion are echoed by a respondent who is a school principal. He observed:

“We do not have forums when students discuss or are taught on value of human life. May be if the teachers of religion teach it in their lessons. Even still, religious studies are not compulsory. We have guidance and counseling sessions but very little is said on value of human life. With hindsight, I think knowledge on value of human life can influence a student’s decision on abortion. If they can respect life at all stages of development, then they would not opt for abortion even if they are faced with other challenges” (Appendix XV: C).

This study also established that there were students who were well versed with knowledge on value of human life and indeed valued human life even at the foetal stage of development but there were intervening factors that caused them to procure abortion

against their knowledge base and value systems. These factors included desire to complete secondary schooling, poverty, peer influence and parental control.

Reproductive health education should be emphasized both in the school curriculum and other informal sources. This education should be structured and lean towards moral standards. The education should provide clear and concise information on sexuality and abortion. Other informal sources of this information should be used for those who do not pass through the formal schooling such as posters, advertisements on television and radio. Publicity is a powerful means of communication (Bergstrom, 2003).

There is need for investing in training of teachers of Guidance and Counseling in schools. The departments also need to be equipped with sufficient equipment. This study established that there were secondary schools in Kenya that did not have trained teachers in charge of Guidance and Counseling programmes. In some schools, there was no time set aside for the programmes. A teacher of Guidance and Counseling in one school noted that:

“We teachers in Guidance and Counseling should be thoroughly trained on adolescent sexuality and value of human life so that we can be able to guide these students appropriately. The most important thing is to help our youth avoid irresponsible sexual behavior that leads them to unplanned pregnancies. Components of the subject of sexuality and value of human life should be incorporated in the curriculum both at primary and secondary school with content that befits each age group. I believe that if these children get the right information early enough and the same be progressively developed, they will always seek alternatives to abortion if faced with unplanned pregnancies later on in life” (Appendix, XIII: D)

Kimani and Kombo (2003) also advocate for schools establishing efficient departments of Guidance and Counseling. They believe that counseling allows one to explore the range of choices available and choose one. The person becomes more positive and self-fulfilled. Counseling is important to students because it enhances self-discipline, self-motivation, facilitates change of behavior and attitudes and helps students to develop intellectual, social and moral capabilities. One respondent affirms that timely counseling made students keep their pregnancies to term:

“Students who become pregnant rarely come to us for guidance. We only learn of it later on when they quit school, are sent home or when they develop complications resulting from botched abortions. However, some are referred to me either by the administration or fellow students. All the students I talk to accept to carry their pregnancies to term. Even those who later confess that they aborted always vow not to repeat it after one on one guidance and counseling sessions”  
(Appendix XIII: B).

Mentorship programmes also need to be put in place. Teachers of Guiding and Counseling alone would not manage to efficiently reach out to individual students because of the constraints of time. Each teacher can be assigned a small number of students to mentor. Students tend to open up more and share freely while in small interactive groups. They can advise each other in those small groups. The issue of adolescent reproductive health and its vulnerability was highlighted in 1994 at the International Conference on Population and Development (I.C.P.D.) in Cairo. There was a call for greater recognition of adolescents as a special category with exceptional

needs. Thirty eight countries, Kenya included, committed themselves to providing adolescents with sexual and reproductive health education (UN, 1995). However sex education in Kenya is not being delivered within the context of a planned, ongoing and systematic education curriculum. School based comprehensive sexuality education ideally begins in pre-school, building upon concepts each year until graduation from high school. It is most effective when messages are reinforced by parents and the community (Hedgepeth & Helmith, 1996).

Professionals in sex education must receive special training in teaching human sexuality including the philosophy and methodology of sex education. While ideally, teachers should attend academic courses or programs at higher levels of learning, in-service courses and intensive seminars can also help prepare sex educators (SIECUS, 2012). Comprehensive sex education should teach about the importance of abstinence preventing unintended pregnancy and STIs. It should also equip the students with interpersonal skills to help young people make informed decisions (Advocates for Youth, 2015).

#### **5.3.4 Role of Media and Parents in Curbing Abortion in Secondary Schools in Kenya**

Media should air programmes that promote moral uprightness among children and the youth. The media platform should also be used to hold forums where youths discuss issues affecting them and their sexuality. Any program that promotes deviance and promiscuity should be shunned. One respondent who was a school principal noted that:

“The government should also control media glorification of sexual activities by limiting time of show and kind of programmes aired on television” (Appendix XV: D).

Both mainstream media and social media can influence students negatively. Most students learn and ape from what is aired by the media. If the media glorifies sex and abortion, then students will tend to ape that.

Parents need to be advised to get close to their children, find out their challenges and help them deal with the challenges through perpetual counseling. They should not just sit back and leave the responsibility to teachers. They should set aside time to talk to their children regularly and objectively on matters of sexuality. Parents should avoid forcing their children to procure abortion and instead be models of morality to their children. In case of a pregnancy, parents should not see it as an end of their childrens’ dreams. One respondent advised:

“Parents need to be told categorically that pregnancy is not the end of the child’s life. They should be informed of other alternatives to abortion like adoption. This is what media should be propagating instead of hailing irresponsible sexual behavior” (Appendix XV: D).

Parents too should endeavor to leave a good legacy for their children. They should carefully watch their moves and actions because their children walk in their steps. This study established that there were parents who procured abortion and their children knew about it. A respondent who stays with her single mother in town intimated to us that:

“My mother herself has vowed never to have more babies and by the way she usually aborts her babies. I knew there was no way she was going to accommodate my baby. The next morning she took me to some woman in town. The woman

explained to me how she was going to help me solve my problem if I cooperated. She took me through a very painful experience I cannot even describe to you. I cried and told her to stop but she did not (Appendix VII: C).

Such children grew up knowing abortion was okay and when they got pregnant, they opted for abortion. Such parents even forced their children to procure abortion.

### **Summary**

In this chapter, the effects of pregnancy and abortion were discussed. Some plausible responses to the challenge of abortion involving various stakeholders like the government, the church, schools and media were discussed. The following chapter gives a summary of the study, conclusions drawn and recommendations for the study and for further research.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **6.1 Introduction**

The preceding chapter presented some effects of pregnancy and abortion. Also discussed were viable responses towards the challenge of abortion among secondary school girls in Kenya. This chapter provides a summary of the entire study beginning with the outline of chapter one to chapter six. From this summary, conclusions were drawn. Finally, recommendations were made in connections to the study findings and for further research.

#### **6.2 Summary of the Study**

Chapter One presented the background to the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, purpose and significance of the study, limitations and delimitations of the study, assumptions of the study, theoretical and conceptual framework and operational definitions of some basic terms used in the study.

In the background to the study the prevalence of abortion was made evident. This was done from the global scene down to other regions of the world and finally to the Kenyan situation. Various methods that school girls use to procure abortion were also analyzed. It was noted that school girls put their lives at risk of death or health complication in the hands of quacks in dark alleys in the name of abortion. The study set to investigate the inclination of Kenyan secondary school girls towards procuring abortion amidst health

risks involved , legal constrains and societal ethical expectations. The study assumed that beyond the perceived causes of abortion, there lay hidden a fundamental ethical issue, value of human life, which this study aimed to unearth. In line with the statement of the problem, the objectives of the study and research questions as well as the purpose of the study were expressed in terms of their intention to create a better understanding of the proclivity of Kenyan secondary school girls to procure abortion in light of value of human life. The significance of the study was discussed in terms of theoretical utility and applied utility. The major limitation of the study was noted to be the sensitivity of abortion which hindered easy collection of data. The study was limited to abortion among secondary school girls in Kenya only as far as morality and values of human life are concerned. The study was guided by Immanuel Kant's deontological Moral Theory which is based on the view of human beings having the unique capacity for rationality and thus need to act according to the formulae of universal law.

Chapter Two reviewed and critiqued literature that was found relevant to the study. The review used a thematic approach. It was observed that the causes of abortion identified in many of the studies were merely perceived rather than fundamental, hence the justification for deeper examination and reflection of the proclivity of secondary school girls in Kenya to procure abortion.

Chapter Three, presented the philosophical methods of investigation namely; conceptual analysis and phenomenological analysis. These methods were described and justified showing their relevance to the study. There was need to use a combination of the methods due to the complex nature of the problem of abortion among secondary school

girls in Kenya. The combination proved that each of the methods was complimentary rather than contradictory to the purpose of the study.

Chapter Four presented the analysis of ‘lived’ experienced of the proclivity of abortion among secondary school girls. This analysis was done on the premise that the fundamental causes of abortion were ultimately located in the value one placed on human life. Antecedent effort to show causes of abortion did not delve deep enough into the experiences to get to the fundamental cause. The analysis came in five sections namely: desire to complete secondary schooling, social isolation, poverty, peer pressure and parental pressure. These sections essentially denoted general issues that were regularly perceived as the causes of abortion.

Chapter Five discussed some effects of pregnancy and abortion including medical complications, emotional crisis, worry, depression, negligence of the child and financial constraints among others. It also proposed what the researcher deemed to be plausible responses to the challenge of abortion among secondary school girls in Kenya including teaching on value of human life, curriculum emphasizing on normative education, punishment for abortionists, enactment of relevant legislation and adoption among others.

Chapter Six outlined the summary of the whole study outlining conclusions drawn from the study in line with the study objectives. Among the recommendations made for this study in chapter six were that the concept of value of human life be taught in schools and that Guidance and Counseling be enhanced in schools to reduce promiscuity among

students. Also outlined were recommendations for further research including similar studies to be carried out in primary schools and institutions of higher learning.

### **6.3 Conclusions of the Study**

This study set out to attain four main objectives, namely; to elucidate the concept of abortion in light of value of human life; to investigate the proclivity of abortion among secondary school girls in Kenya; to critically analyze the place of value and dignity of human life in the decision to or not to procure abortion and to offer viable responses to the challenge of abortion among secondary school girls in Kenya. Based on these four objectives and the associated findings, this study drew the following conclusions:

On the first objective, the study concluded that students understood the concept of abortion, knew that abortion is illegal in Kenya but continue to procure abortion despite the health risks involved.

On the second objective, the study concluded that desire to complete secondary schooling, social isolation, poverty, peer influence and parental control were only perceived reasons for proclivity to abortion among secondary school girls. Beneath, lies the fundamental cause: value placed on the life of the foetus.

On the third objective, the study concluded that the value one places on the life of the foetus influences her decision to or not to procure abortion. Those who held that the life of the foetus had intrinsic value, was sacred and had a right endeavoured to protect it by all means. Those who believed that it did not deserve to be protected supported abortion. However, there were intervening factors like poverty, peer pressure and

parental influence that caused some students to go against their principles and value system to procure abortion.

On the fourth objective, the study concluded that the solution to the challenge of abortion lay in inculcating the value of human life in individuals from a tender age so that whenever they found themselves in an abortion dilemma, they would not take the route that did not value human life.

#### **6.4 Recommendations for the Study**

The study made the following three recommendations in view of addressing the challenge of abortion in secondary schools in Kenya as listed below. One, the concept of value of human life at the foetal stage of development be incorporated in the curriculum primary school to institutions of higher learning.

Two, young girls should be sensitized and be encouraged to embrace adoption as an alternative to abortion. Adoption services should be made easily available all over the country to encourage school girls.

Three, the frequency of Guidance and Counseling should be increased so that students are constantly discouraged against irresponsible sexual behavior that leads to pregnancy and the challenge of abortion. This can be backed up with efficient mentoring programmes.

#### **6.5 Recommendations for Further Research**

From the reflections done in this study, the researcher identified two areas that required further academic inquiry as relates to the proclivity of Kenyan secondary school girls to

procure abortion. One, similar study on this area should be carried out in primary schools and institutions of higher learning as this study was only limited to proclivity of abortion among secondary school girls in Kenya. Two, more studies on this area should be carried out on a larger scale preferably country-wide in order reinforce the generalized findings.

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**APPENDIX I****Interview Schedule for Students who have had an Abortion****Introduction**

My name is Akello Belindah Immaculate, a postgraduate student at Kenyatta University. I am currently carrying out a study on the issue of abortion among secondary school girls in Kenya. I therefore kindly request that you share with me your personal experiences on the issue of abortion. Your name and the name of your school will not be mentioned in this study for confidentiality. Instead, pseudonyms will be used. Participation in this interview will be out of your own volition and you are free to opt out whenever you feel uncomfortable to carry on with the interview. Information obtained from this interview will only be used for academic purpose and will not be exposed to the public. Your positive participation will be highly appreciated.

**Part I: Personal Data (Confidential)**

- a.) How old are you?
- b.) In what class are you?
- c.) Have you got siblings in school or out of school?
- d.) What is your religion?
- e.) What is your family's economical status?
- f.) Do you hold any leadership position in this school?

**Part II: Abortion and Value of Human life**

- g.) What is your understanding of life?

- h.) Do you think the life of the foetus has value and why?
- i.) How did you feel when you realized that you were expectant?
- j.) Did you share the information with anyone? If yes, how did they react?
- k.) What is your understanding of the term abortion?
- l.) Why did you procure abortion?
- m.) Did you want to change your mind before the abortion? Why?
- n.) How did you feel after procuring the abortion?
- o.) When does human life begin?
- p.) What is your understanding of the phrases:
  - intrinsic value of life
  - innate human dignity
  - sacredness of human life
  - right to life
- q.) If you were to conceive again would you consider abortion?
- r.) What do you think society should do curb the problem of abortion in Kenya's secondary schools?

**Thank you for your cooperation.**

**APPENDIX II****Interview Schedule for Student Mothers****Introduction**

My name is Akello Belindah Immaculate, a postgraduate student at Kenyatta University. I am currently carrying out a study on the issue of abortion among secondary school girls in Kenya. I therefore kindly request that you share with me your personal experiences on the issue of abortion. Your name and the name of your school will not be mentioned in this study for confidentiality. Instead, pseudonyms will be used. Participation in this interview will be out of your own volition and you are free to opt out whenever you feel uncomfortable to carry on with the interview. Information obtained from this interview will only be used for academic purpose and will not be exposed to the public. Your positive participation will be highly appreciated.

**Part I: Personal Data (Confidential)**

- a.) How old are you?
- b.) In what class are you?
- c.) Have you got siblings in school or out of school?
- d.) What is your religion?
- e.) What is your family's socio-economic status?
- f.) Do you hold any leadership position in school?

**Part II: Abortion and Value of Human Life**

- g.) In what class were you when you discovered you were pregnant?
- h.) Did you share the news with any one?
- i.) If yes, what was their response?
- j.) What is your understanding of abortion?
- k.) Were you under any pressure to abort?
- l.) Why did you keep your pregnancy?
- m.) What challenges did you face during the pregnancy?
- n.) Were your parents/guardians supportive of your decision to keep the pregnancy?
- o.) What was the reaction of your peers?
- p.) When does human life begin?
- q.) What is your understanding of the phrases:
- intrinsic value of life
  - innate human dignity
  - sacredness of human life
  - right to life
- r.) Did you keep your pregnancy because you value the life of the unborn?
- s.) If you were to conceive again, would you consider abortion?
- t.) Why do you think some female students choose to procure abortion rather than carry the pregnancy to term?
- u.) What in your opinion is the response to the challenge of abortion in secondary schools in Kenya?

**Thank you for your cooperation.**

### **APPENDIX III**

#### **Interview Schedule for School Principals**

##### **Introduction**

My name is Akello Belindah Immaculate, a postgraduate student at Kenyatta University. I am currently carrying out a study on the issue of abortion among secondary school girls in Kenya. I therefore kindly request that you share with me your personal experiences on the issue of abortion. Your name and the name of your school will not be mentioned in this study for confidentiality. Instead, pseudonyms will be used. Participation in this interview will be out of your own volition and you are free to opt out whenever you feel uncomfortable to carry on with the interview. Information obtained from this interview will only be used for academic purpose and will not be exposed to the public. Your positive participation will be highly appreciated.

##### **Part I: Personal Data (Confidential)**

- a.) How old are you?
- b.) Which subjects do you teach?
- c.) For how long have you been head of this institution?
- d.) What are your academic and professional qualifications?
- e.) What is your family's socio-economic background?
- f.) For how long have you served at his station?
- g.) How many of your students are girls? ( in case of mixed schools)

**Part II: Abortion and Value of Human Life**

- h.) Has your school reported cases of pregnant students in the recent past?
- i.) What move does the school administration take towards the pregnant students?
- j.) What are the most affected classes?
- k.) Have you handled cases of abortion among your students?
- l.) What do the students say are the reasons they procure abortion?
- m.) What happens to the students who are reported to have procured abortion?
- n.) Are the students exposed to forums where the concept of value of human life is discussed?
- o.) If yes, how is it done?
- p.) Do you think the students know the value of life at the foetal stage of human development?
- q.) From your experience as a teacher, do you think the students' decision to procure abortion is linked to the value they place on the life of the foetus?
- r.) What in your opinion is the remedy to the moral problem of abortion among secondary school girls in Kenya?

**Thank you for your cooperation.**

## **APPENDIX IV**

### **Interview Schedule for Guidance and Counseling Teachers**

#### **Introduction**

My name is Akello Belindah Immaculate, a postgraduate student at Kenyatta University. I am currently carrying out a study on the issue of abortion among secondary school girls in Kenya. I therefore kindly request that you share with me your personal experiences on the issue of abortion. Your name and the name of your school will not be mentioned in this study for confidentiality. Instead, pseudonyms will be used. Participation in this interview will be out of your own volition and you are free to opt out whenever you feel uncomfortable to carry on with the interview. Information obtained from this interview will only be used for academic purpose and will not be exposed to the public. Your positive participation will be highly appreciated.

#### **Part I. Personal Data (Confidential)**

- a.) How old are you?
- b.) Which subjects do you teach?
- c.) For how long have you been head of this institution?
- d.) What are your academic and professional qualifications?
- e.) What is your family's socio-economic background?
- f.) For how long have you served at his station?
- g.) How many of your students are girls? ( in case of mixed schools)

**Part II: Abortion and Value of Human Life**

- a.) When do you hold guidance and counseling sessions for your students?
- b.) Do you separate male and female students during guiding and counseling sessions?
- c.) Do you invite external speakers for guiding and counseling?
- d.) Have you counseled pregnant students?
- e.) Did they want to procure abortion before they sought your guidance?
- f.) Why did they want to procure abortion?
- g.) Did they go ahead and procure abortion?
- h.) Do you expose students to forums where they discuss value of human life?
- i.) If yes, how do they go about it?
- j.) Do you think students place value on human life especially foetal life?
- k.) Does the value a student places on human life influence her decision to or not to procure abortion?
- l.) What are the possible solutions to the challenge of abortion in secondary schools in Kenya?

**Thank you for your cooperation.**

## **APPENDIX V**

### **Introduction to Appendices**

Between September 2015 and April 2017, I conducted a study in 10 schools in various parts of Kenya among girls who had procured abortion and girls who were pregnant but carried their pregnancies to the final term. Also interviewed were school principals and teachers of guidance and counseling in the researched schools. The study utilized dialogue schedules in a bid to acquire first hand experiences from the respondents as shown in the appendices. However, some of the interviewed students were not articulate enough to give a comprehensive and descriptive account of their lived experiences. Some were totally uninterested in talking about their experiences as regards abortion.

Nevertheless, some respondents gave compelling accounts of their experiences. Among these are eleven accounts that were selected as clear versions of personal lived experiences in the context of abortion. These texts represent voices recorded using a digital recorder. Prior to recording, informed consent was given. They were then transcribed, edited and then presented as they appear appended for ease of reference in the course of reflections. Each set of appendices has a brief background. For purposes of ensuring confidentiality, the names of the schools and the students as they appear in the appendices are all pseudonyms.

**APPENDIX VI****(Nyani Secondary School, Student 1)****Background**

This respondent is a nineteen years old female student at the school. At the time of the interview she was in form 4 and was the Christian Union chairlady at the school. She hails from a low income family in a rural area and is a staunch Seventh Day Adventist.

**A. Understanding of Abortion**

The way I understand abortion, is the killing of a baby that is in the womb of a girl and removing it. One can use a sharp metal to do it or swallow some herbs or chemicals. It is illegal.

**B. When Life Begins and Value of Foetal Life**

Life begins when the child starts moving in the stomach. The other phrases I don't know but may be sacred may mean that life is holy and right to life means everyone should be allowed to live her life freely the way she wants. Value for the foetus depends with how old the pregnancy is. Like if it is below 3 months then it is just blood and it is not yet formed into a human being so it has no value and so removing it is just okay. When it is big and you can feel it move then it is life now so it has value and it will be bad to remove it.

### **C. On Learning of the Pregnancy**

I felt bad and kept to myself. I wanted to commit suicide because I thought people would say I am a prostitute and yet I was the C.U. chairlady. My teachers and fellow students would despise me and say bad things about me. My parents would be so embarrassed because they are church leaders and had always been advising me against pre-marital sex. I knew they would not have anywhere to hide their faces as the society will judge us harshly. When I told my boy friend, he told me to sort myself out and not to mention to anyone that he was the one responsible and if I did he would teach me a big lesson. I was frustrated. I cried a lot. I felt cheated and worthless. I felt like committing suicide. When I shared with my friend, she told me that as long as the baby inside me was not moving yet, it was not a person and so God would not punish me for murder. I was afraid but went ahead and had a successful abortion.

### **Possible Responses**

I think in order to curb the problem of abortion among secondary school girls in Kenya, we should be taught on the dangers of abortion in our syllabus. The principals should also allow pregnant girls to stay in school until when they are almost giving birth they let them go home and after delivery they come back to school.

## **APPENDIX VII**

### **(Nyani Secondary School. Student 2)**

#### **Background**

The respondent is a fifteen years old student in form one. She comes from a rich family in an urban set up. Her mother is single. She is a Christian but only attends services while at school.

#### **A. Understanding of Abortion**

Abortion is the removing of a child from the body of a girl using sharp objects or taking substances like jik or kerosene. I don't know if it is legal or illegal. I only know that it is done in secret and those who do it hide.

#### **B. When Life Begins and the Value of Foetal Life**

Life begins at birth. I only know one, that sacredness means life is pure and godly. The others, I have no idea. The foetus has no value. You see, it is not like a human being. It has no legs, eyes or even brain. You cannot say that it will live on its own like other human beings. It cannot feel anything even pain.

#### **C. On Learning of the Pregnancy**

I was confused. I had just joined form one. I did not understand myself. I told my mother and she beat me up. She called me bad names. She told me that she would stop paying my fees and that I should not ask her to give me anything. That I should go for support from the man who had made me pregnant. My mother herself has vowed never

to have more babies and by the way she usually aborts her babies. I knew there was no way she was going to accommodate my baby. The next morning she took me to some woman in town. The woman explained to me how she was going to help me solve my problem if I cooperated. She took me through a very painful experience I cannot even describe to you. I cried and told her to stop but she did not. Finally she released me but the pain and the bleeding was too much even after she gave me brufen. I lost so much blood that I was rushed to hospital after a day. I thought I was going to die. What would I have told God? It was really bad.

#### **D. Possible Remedies**

Parents should not be forcing their girls to abort. They can give birth and go back to school. Some parents even do not talk to their children things to do with sex so we only learn from our friends who only cheat us and we become pregnant. Parents should tell us. If there is openness between parents and students then we shall not be lied to by our friends. Our parents and other leaders should also live an exemplary life. If a parent lives a promiscuous life and keeps on aborting what do you expect of the children? We learn best from our parents.

**APPENDIX VIII****Bundi Secondary School. Student 1****Background**

The respondent is an eighteen years old student in form three. She has had an abortion. She conceived again, gave birth and returned to school. She comes from a poor family and resides with the uncle in an urban centre. She is a born again Christian.

**A. Understanding of Abortion**

Abortion is the removal of a baby from the womb before its time for normal birth reaches. It can be done in hospital or at home. The constitution of Kenya only allows abortion if the life of the woman involved is in danger.

**B. Value of Foetal Life**

Life begins at conception. I know to say sacred means holy. May be that life comes from God and every person has a right to live and not be killed by anyone. I think if our lives have value, then the life of the foetus also has value. It has value right from the time of conception. When it is in the body it is a part of the body and as you know every part of the body has value.

**C. On Learning of the Pregnancy**

I was staying with my aunt whose husband was paying my fees. He threatened me that if I did not sleep with him he would stop paying my fees. My parents were poor yet I

wanted to finish school so I gave in. I got pregnant and when I told him he bought me some tablets. I refused to take them because I suspected they would kill my baby. He threatened that if I did not cooperate and take the abortion pills he would do horrible things to me. I was terrified. Everything was happening too fast. I took the pills. It was 6 weeks so I bleed everything out. I had terrible cramps. I was afraid and guilty. After 6 months, I got pregnant again. I did not want to abort so I ran away. I later gave birth and my parents took me to another school.

#### **D. Possible Remedies**

Most people who abort only consider themselves. They don't consider the baby as a human being. Students should be educated on the value of life of every one even if they are children. Most people think that the child that has not been born yet has no value. Even God knew us before we were born, how then can we say that the unborn child has no value? It should be taught in church and in schools starting from primary. Parents also should stop telling us to abort by force.

**APPENDIX IX****Mwewe Secondary School. Student 1****Background**

The respondent is an eighteen years old student at the school in form three and has procured several abortions since primary school. She comes from a poor family in a rural set up. She is a Muslim but does not actively take part in religious activities. The father is polygamous.

**A. Understanding of Abortion**

Abortion is the killing and removing of a kid from the womb of the mother before it is ready to be born. I don't think if abortion is prohibited in Kenya because I have never seen someone in Kenya being taken to prison for procuring abortion.

**B. When Life Begins and Value of Foetal Life.**

Life begins at birth. I only know that one on right to life; everyone must be left to live his life without interference. The life of the foetus has no value. It is just useless. What can it do? It cannot even help itself it depends on the mother for everything even breathe! I think to have value is to be useful at least to yourself or others. This thing cannot do anything or help anyone. In fact it can put the life of its mother in danger or cause the mother to miss out on some opportunities like completing school.

### **C. On Learning of the Pregnancy**

I was in class seven when I got pregnant for the first time. I was young and innocent. I badly wanted to study to the university in order to help myself and my family. We are poor. In fact a well wisher pays my fees. I knew I would be expelled from school because that is the way it is here. I had to act very fast. Also the guy who had made me pregnant was just a 'bodaboda' guy and I knew my friends would really laugh at me if they found out. I hated him because he did not even know how to dress well but I just liked the way he gave me money every time. When I shared with my friend, she told me that as long as the baby inside me was not moving yet, it was not a person and so God would not punish me for murder. I was so disturbed. I already could picture the baby's nice face and little hands and I already wanted to protect her... He arranged to have me admitted at the hospital and he used some metals to remove the baby. I bled lightly and was given antibiotics and painkillers and went back to school. I was disturbed but then when I talked to some other girls and realized that they too were doing it, I relaxed. Since then, I have had three more abortions and I don't feel a thing. I cannot carry a baby when I am not ready. Never!

### **D. Possible Remedies**

People should become realistic and encourage young girls who get pregnant and are not able to keep their babies for one reason or another to seek abortion services. These services should also be made available in all hospitals for accessibility. This will help reduce deaths that occur when these girls seek the services from unqualified people. No one should be forced to keep a baby in hardship. It is unfair.

**APPENDIX X****Mwewe Secondary School. Student 2.****Background**

The respondent is a 21 years old student in form 4. She had been expelled from her former schools due to indiscipline and this was her third secondary school. She comes from a rich polygamous family in an urban set up.

**A. Understanding of Abortion**

It is the elimination of a foetus from the womb of its mother before its due date. Sometimes it is accidental in which case it is called miscarriage or intentional and in this case it is abortion. It is illegal in Kenya but people just do it.

**B. When Life Begins and Value of Foetal Life**

Life begins at birth. I don't know the meaning of those terms except the one on rights to life meaning no one should just be killed like that. The life of the foetus has no value. What value? You see most of us abort when the body of the foetus has not yet formed at around the third month or earlier. At that time it is just blood and when it comes out it is just like normal 'mnyesho'. Can we say that 'mnyesho' has value? Like you cut yourself and bleed you cannot say that that blood being shed has value.

**C. On Learning of the Pregnancy.**

That was way back in class 7 but I have had two more abortions in secondary. The first time I was very much worried but my father is very harsh and I was in boarding. I

talked to my boyfriend who was shocked and told me that he loved me but could not afford a baby and I couldn't either. My father sent over policemen who took me to the police station and gave me a thorough beating. He told them to beat the baby out of me. My father hated my boyfriend because he was from a poor home. He said that he could not be able to take care of the child. We are rich and my father says we should only interact with guys from rich families. I was taken to another day school there but was embarrassed and depressed. The second pregnancy was in form one and this time I was smarter. My friend at school gave me a concoction that she uses. I took the stuff and in 30 minutes my tummy was turning inside out. I feared. Thought I would die. I had a heavy painful flow and passed out. I just found myself in hospital. That is now what we use.

#### **D. Possible Remedies**

Girls who find themselves wanting to procure abortion should not be intimidated. They should just do it because it is their lives they are securing. As long as they do it early enough and use the right methods there is no problem. Don't forget that it is the school system that has made it difficult for girls who give birth to go back to school.

## APPENDIX XI

### **Ndovu Secondary School. Student 1.**

#### **Back ground**

The respondent was a twenty years old student in form four who has had an abortion and whose younger sister unfortunately passed on while attempting to procure abortion. Comes from a poor polygamous family in a rural set up. She goes to a Pentecostal church.

#### **A. Understanding of Abortion.**

It is the deliberate killing of a baby in the womb before it is born. Mostly it is done at home by the girls themselves or they are assisted by some women. It is illegal in Kenya.

#### **B. When Life Begins and Value of Foetal Life**

Life begins when the baby starts to move. I do not know the meaning of those terms there. The life of the foetus has value up to a certain level. When it begins to move, then we assume it has developed fundamental body parts so at that point it has value. The more it grows the more value it gains. Before movement it has no value.

#### **C. On Learning of the Pregnancy**

I was in form 3 and my sister was in form 1. We just realized that we had been impregnated by the same man and who was a relative. It was so embarrassing. We were struggling to survive at home. My parents could hardly afford two meals a day. We had to sell our bodies for survival and in order to help our parents and our younger siblings.

In this case you don't choose who you sleep with. As long as they give you money, they force you to do it without protection. No one wants to abort but we have no other alternative. I cannot watch my siblings sleep hungry every day and stay out of school. We decided to abort. Girls here abort a lot and we got to the woman who helps. She said that it was not proper for the two of us to both abort. At least one was to keep the pregnancy. We both insisted and were taken through the procedure. It was terrible. We really bled and were rushed to hospital. My sister died on the way. I knew I was next. Fortunately I was given blood and I survived.

#### **D. Possible Remedies**

Sex education should be taught in schools so that girls in schools don't get pregnant. Condoms should also be brought. We should prevent pregnancy first because without it there will be no question of abortion.

## APPENDIX XII

### **Kanga Secondary School. Student 1**

#### **Background**

The respondent is a twenty years old student in form four. She has two children. She got the first child in class seven and the second one in form three. She attends a day school and comes from a humble background. She is a born again Christian.

#### **A. Understanding of Abortion.**

Abortion is removal of a foetus from the womb and disposing it. It is illegal but girls just go on to procure abortion.

#### **B. When Life Begins and Value of Foetal Life**

Life begins at conception. Right to life means that everyone has a right to live in this world without being killed. Sacred means holy. Life is holy. The life of the foetus has value because God gave us life during creation and He breathed into us. Even those in the womb, God created them.

#### **C. On Learning of the Pregnancy**

I was in class seven when it first happened. I was so young. I was confused. My parents were very annoyed. They were struggling for us so much that we may get educated. The boy responsible was in my class and he ran away when I told him so. My friends told me to abort but I refused. My mother hates girls who abort. Friends avoided me and I felt bad. I gave birth but life was difficult. I had to do *vibarua* so that I can get money to take care of the baby. My mom assisted me a lot and always told me that babies were

gifts from God. After a year, I joined another school and did my KCSE. I joined a day school next to my home. In the mean time my baby was growing. I loved him so much and he loved me. There I was having a problem with fees. The principal promised to help me if I behaved. One day he called in the office and told me that he had paid my fees. He locked me in the office and raped me. I could not scream for help. No one could believe me. I really cried. I became pregnant again. When I told him he told me not to tell anyone and that he would support me and my family. He even promised to marry me if I give birth to a baby boy because he only has girls. I kept it secret up to today. I gave birth to a boy and he supports us. When I finish school I will let him marry me. I will never procure abortion. My mother has taught me to respect life and I can never fail her.

#### **D. Possible Remedies**

Parents should tell their children that it is bad to abort. Even if you are poor, remember the song, "*Mungu akileta mtoto analeta na sahani yake*". Children are God's gift and everyone should learn to love and protect them

**APPENDIX XIII****Ndovu Secondary School. Teacher 1****Background**

Respondent is a twenty eight years old female untrained teacher who has been the head of guidance and counseling department in the school for four years. She is enrolled for B.Ed (Arts) at a local university. She hails from a middle class family in a rural area and is married with two children. She attends a Pentecostal church.

**A. Guidance and Counseling Sessions for Students**

We hold guidance and counseling sessions every Wednesday between 4pm and 5pm. Most times we talk to students on various topics but occasionally allow time for peer counseling where students are left alone to advise each other. Once in a while we invite external speakers. We usually separate boys from girls during the sessions. Sometimes students personally approach us with issues and I guide them accordingly.

**B. Guidance on Abortion**

Students who become pregnant rarely come to us for guidance. We only learn of it later on when they quit school, are sent home or when they develop complications resulting from botched abortions. However, some are referred to me either by the administration or fellow students. All the students I talk to accept to carry their pregnancies to term. Even those who later confess that they aborted always vow not to repeat it after one on one guidance and counseling sessions.

### **C. Guidance on Value of Human Life**

I do not talk to students on value of human life even though I believe it influences one's decision on abortion. I think it is taught in religious studies and in church. I don't teach religious studies so I am not best suited to talk about it. May be if I get training on the same. I also don't think these students know much about value of human life especially the unborn. If they knew, they would not be aborting as much as they do.

### **D. Possible Remedies to the Problem of Abortion**

We teachers in Guidance and Counseling should be thoroughly trained on adolescent sexuality and value of human life so that we can be able to guide these students appropriately. The most important thing is to help our youth avoid irresponsible sexual behavior that leads them to unplanned pregnancies. Components of the subject of sexuality and value of human life should be incorporated in the curriculum both at primary and secondary school with content that befits each age group. I believe that if these children get the right information early enough and the same be progressively developed, they will always seek alternatives to abortion if faced with unplanned pregnancies later on in life.

The whole society also needs to be involved in condoning abortion. It should not be left to teachers alone. Religious leaders have a huge role to play in advising the youth on the ills and repercussions of irresponsible sexual behavior. Administrators at all levels need to address this issue in either '*barazas*' or political rallies. Parents also need to face

reality and change their attitude on the topic of sexuality. They should be advised to start talking to their children on sexual matters early enough so that students are not left to get corrupt information from uncensored channels like peers and media.

Head teachers who expel pregnant students should also be punished. They are the reason girls seek abortions. They fear being sent away from school

**APPENDIX XIV****Nyati Secondary school. Teacher 1****Background**

The respondent is a male trained teacher aged 30 years. He teaches in a high-end private girls boarding school. He has been working at this station for 5 years. He is a holder of B.Ed. (sciences) and a masters degree in Counseling Psychology. He is economically stable, married with one child. He pastors at a local church.

**A. Guidance and Counseling Sessions for Students**

The guidance and counseling department is made up of four members of staff: three male and one female. General guidance and counseling is done on every Thursday of the week where we gather all students and invite either an internal or external speaker. Occasionally, we organize peer counseling where the students are grouped in families and they engage in peer counseling. There is also a room from where individual counseling is done upon request.

**B. Guidance on Abortion**

Rarely do students come to us for counseling on abortion. They would rather talk it out during peer counseling sessions where the teachers are not present. We learn about it through hearsay or when they are referred to us by the administration. There is so much fear in discussing the issue of abortion. The rules here are strict you know. Students who confess having procured abortion risk being sent away.

### **C. Guidance on Value of Human Life**

Occasionally, I talk to students during my pastoral activities at school about the value of life and God's intention for mankind. I am a pastor and I believe all evil against humanity is committed because human beings do not fully understand the value of human life and the intention of God for mankind. The Bible says, "My people perish for lack of knowledge". These students procuring abortion do it out of ignorance. I try to tell them but I think they have just grown too used to me.

### **D. Possible Remedies to the Problem of Abortion**

Remedy to the problem of abortion lies in the Bible. There is the golden rule of human relations that states, "Do unto others what you expect them to do to you." Whoever goes on to impregnate someone's school going daughter should picture her daughter in her shoes. Whoever risks the life of a pregnant school girl by helping her to procure abortion should first place herself in the shoes of the girl. The pregnant girl opting for abortion should ask herself if she would be in existence if she was aborted. Society can be a better place if everyone will be willing to be each one's keeper rather than be selfish minded.

**APPENDIX XV****Mwewe Secondary School. Principal****Background**

The respondent is a principal of a school in a Muslim dominated girls boarding school. She has headed the school for four years. She is a holder of a master's degree in Educational Administration. She is a Muslim and married with six children. She is economically stable.

**A. Prevalence of Pregnancy and Abortion**

Cases of pregnancy and abortion are not common in this school although occasionally we learn of a few cases. Both Muslim and Christian girls occasionally fall victim but the Christian girls are most likely to abort.

**B. Pregnancy and Continuity of Studies**

When we notice that a student is pregnant, we counsel the student and take her to the clinic for pregnancy test. We then inform the parents and advise the student to stay in school until she is almost due. Unfortunately when they go home for the holidays, most of them do not report back. On follow up, we learn that they either run away from home, procure abortion and transfer to other schools or just stay home and abandon schooling altogether.

### **C. Discussions on Value of Human Life**

We do not have forums when students discuss or are taught on value of human life. May be if the teachers of religion teach it in their lessons. Even still, religious studies are not compulsory. We have guidance and counseling sessions but very little is said on value of human life. With hindsight, I think knowledge on value of human life can influence a student's decision on abortion. If they can respect life at all stages of development, then they would not opt for abortion even if they are faced with other challenges.

### **D. Possible Remedies to the Moral Problem of Abortion**

The curriculum should emphasize aspect of normative education. Students need to be taught skills like self-respect, critical thinking and informed decision making. Students who respect themselves will not allow their bodies to be used in sexual immorality resulting in unplanned pregnancy and abortion. Such students will also respect the lives of the children they carry when they conceive.

The government should also control media glorification of sexual activities by limiting time of show and kind of programs aired on television.

The government also needs to put in place precise punitive measures against anyone engaged in abortion except for reasons stated in the constitution. Serious and urgent actions need to be taken. Abortion is claiming lives of students and that of their babies at an alarming rate. We cannot afford to sit back and relax and say we have the constitution.

Parents need to be told categorically that pregnancy is not the end of the child's life. They should be informed of other alternatives to abortion like adoption. This is what media should be propagating instead of hailing irresponsible sexual behavior. Government should also invest in adoption facilities at county levels and equip them with the necessary equipment and personnel. They also need to work hand in hand with the children departments to bring to book the men irresponsible for the pregnancies and make them take care of the girls and their children.

## **Appendix XVI**

### **Bundi Secondary School. Principal**

#### **Background**

The respondent is a forty seven years old male principal in a day school in a rural area. He is married to two wives. He has ten children. He has been the principal at this school for six years and is a holder of B.Ed. (arts). He is an elder at a local church.

#### **A. Prevalence of Pregnancy and Abortion**

I must confess that the rate of pregnancy and abortion in this school is high. By high I mean that we take less than half of the girls we admit at form one through to form four. Most of the girls drop out due to pregnancies and abortion related complications. The case is made worse by the presence of informal settlements (kang'a) within this area from which we draw most of our students. The residents of this kang'as are jobless and landless and thus most brew and sell alcohol while others engage in illicit sex and our students are not spared. We have had to deal with many cases of botched abortion as most of the abortions are procured without any expertise. So far we have buried two of our students who died in the process of procuring abortion. It is very unfortunate. All the female students are affected regardless of their class or socio-economic status. It is like a scourge that knows not how to choose.

#### **B. Pregnancy and Continuity of Studies**

We let the pregnant students stay at school until their due days then release them. Unfortunately, most of these students drop out quiet early and most do not return after

delivery because they go to do manual labour in order to fend for their babies. The number of students procuring abortion is higher than the number of students carrying their pregnancies to term. Ask them and they will tell you that the benefits outweigh the risk. They say they want to pursue their studies and some say they cannot afford child maintenance. Some students are forced to abort by their parents. It is just a hopeless society.

### **C. Discussions on Value of Human Life**

We try our level best help these students appreciate the value of human life especially the life of the unborn. We do this through guidance and counseling and in our day-day interactions with them. However, I believe we come in too late when the students have already been introduced to so much by their peers and parents. You cannot teach an old dog new tricks. Even with all the education and advice, the girls just go on to procure abortion.

### **D. Possible Remedies to the Moral Problem of Abortion**

Stopping abortion in such an environment can be one of the toughest assignment one can be given. As you can see, the female students here are very vulnerable. As they help their mothers sell liquor, they are hooked by the drunkards and are made to offer sex at a small fee. Alternative means of survival could be sought other than the liquor and sex trade. The government needs to fight illicit brews with all its might; in word and action because what I see the police doing here is just child play.

The concept of value of human life also needs to be introduced in the curriculum early enough and be developed in learners before they hit puberty. This way, when they get pregnant they will be able to stand against peer and parental waves of abortion and hold firm onto what has been inculcated in them.

The private sector needs to be supported in its efforts to curb abortion. There are organizations around that are endeavoring to fight teenage pregnancies and consequently abortion but are not supported at all. They act in isolation and this makes it very difficult to help the girls.