



# Public Health Campaigns and Handwashing Practices Among Urban Youth in Kenya,

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## Abstract

Public health campaigns have been implemented in various settings to promote hygiene practices such as handwashing among urban youth. In Kenya, these campaigns often target young adults aged 18-25 who are at a critical stage of developing personal habits and social norms. This qualitative study employed semi-structured interviews with 50 participants aged between 18 to 25 years who had been exposed to public health campaigns targeting handwashing. Data analysis involved thematic coding and content analysis to identify key themes related to campaign impact and participant experiences. Analysis revealed that while initial engagement was high, there was a notable decline in consistent handwashing practices over time among participants. Themes included varying levels of personal motivation and the influence of peer pressure on adherence to hygiene habits. Public health campaigns initiated for youth in Kenya have shown mixed results; they initially encouraged behaviour change but failed to sustain these changes effectively, particularly when compared to other community-based interventions. Future public health initiatives should focus on reinforcing initial campaign messages through sustained engagement and addressing the social determinants of hygiene habits such as peer influence and personal motivation. Community partnerships could also enhance long-term impact. public health campaigns, urban youth, handwashing practices, qualitative study, Kenya

**Keywords:** *Kenya, urbanization, qualitative research, youth engagement, cultural norms, behaviour change theories, anthropological perspectives*

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