Social Effectiveness of Online Preventative Care: An analysis of JovenSalud’s effectiveness though its users testimonials

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Introduction
• 21.7% of Costa Rican households live in poverty, and 7.2% in extreme poverty.
• There has been an increase in social tensions and criminality, associated especially with drug trafficking and organized crime.
• 16% of all births are among girls under 18, and in rural and coastal areas the rate rises to as much as 27%.
• Suicide has been on the rise with a documented 315 suicides per year.

Objective of the Study
To get a better understanding of the ways in which online platforms can be used as preventative care for teens.

Reflection
• I worked with fundraising, administration, content, promotion and social media in order to see how the NGO worked to gain resources and create content.
• I gathered testimonials from over 50 teens from high risk providences in Costa Rica.
• 92% of teens said that JovenSalud had helped them make better decisions.

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Work Profile
JovenSalud helps prevent and/or reduce 6 common risky behaviors:
• Self inflicted or accidental injuries
• Tobacco use
• Alcohol and drug use
• Risky sexual behaviors that often lead to HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases and adolescent pregnancy
• Lack of physical exercise
• Poor nutritional habits

This summer I learned the importance of giving teens a tool that can help them gain the knowledge they need about themselves and their environment.

JovenSalud works with graduate students and healthcare professionals to run the online tool Conselloria which offers a 24/7 counseling service.

Discussion
• The research found that overall teens are more than satisfied with the application.
• In Nicaragua, even though teens have less access to the internet, the platform has more users and about the same level of satisfaction.

Questions
• Considering internet accessibility is a barrier in Costa Rica, is it feasible to reach the at-risk youth the platform is intended for?
• Even though there is less internet accessibility in Nicaragua, the platform has more users. What could be a reason for this inconsistency?

Conclusion
• Based on the testimonials gathered, online preventative care platforms are a useful resource for at-risk teens.

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“I am the youngest of five and my parents are farm workers. When I was 9, I started working in the fields because of our financial situation, but honestly, it wasn’t what I wanted for myself and so one afternoon I cried and I asked God to guide me into something better. Soon after, I found JovenSalud which has enriched me and helped me through complicated times. I have become more aware of developing my social conscience and of contributing to society. I want to make the world a better place by promoting positive values and making better decisions. Since then, I have gone on to graduate school and now I have a scholarship to study industrial engineering. I am also an active JovenSalud volunteer.”

Zacarias
19 years old