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UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH: OPINIONS OF URBAN YOUNG ADULTS

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Background:

Many surveys had shown that sexual activities amongst young people are not uncommon.

Material & Methods:

A study was conducted to explore opinions of a group of young adults on their understanding of the meaning of reproductive health, its importance and ways to access reproductive health services. Four focus group discussions (FGDs) were conducted among urban youths between the ages of 18-24.

Results:

The majority of the respondents did not have clear knowledge of reproductive health services and on why it is important for them to access such services. They did not know the range of reproductive health services available except for the treatment of sexually transmitted infections. Most did say that healthcare facilities are not their first choice for seeking treatment if they do have any reproductive health problems. Traditional methods or seeking advice from friends or internet surfing are their first line of choices when facing such problems. They were also not sure of the methods, techniques and services that contributed to health and well-being by preventing and solving reproductive health problems. In this study, they did mention that education modules related to reproductive health topics were given during their secondary school but they admitted not taking them seriously. They were aware of the various programmes such as PProSTAR and the National Service which offer opportunities for increasing reproductive health knowledge but not everybody are directly involved in such programmes.

Conclusion:

Even though the respondents have access to health care facilities, information and awareness on access to reproductive health services did not reach them well.

Key words:

access, reproductive health services, young adults, qualitative approach