

Why is it that...?

Een kwalitatief onderzoek naar de hulpvragen van jongeren in Bolgatanga in relatie tot seksualiteit en reproductieve gezondheid



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SUMMARY

One student from the Netherlands has executed her Bachelor research in Bolgatanga, Ghana. She is studying Social Work at Hogeschool Inholland. By order of Jolien van der Geugten and Youth Harvest Foundation Ghana she has researched the following research question: which problems does the youth of Bolgatanga experience and which problems do they share with professionals regarding to their sexual and reproductive health?

The three sub questions are:

- I. Which problems does the youth of Bolgatanga experience regarding to sexual and reproductive health?
- II. Which problems does youth of Bolgatanga share with professionals during counseling regarding to their sexual and reproductive health?
- III. Which advice can be given to improve the sexual education of the Youth Harvest Foundation Ghana, according to the answers on the sub questions I and II.

Youth Harvest Foundation Ghana is a non-governmental organization (NGO) with this main office in the capital of the Upper East Region, Bolgatanga. Since it is founded in 2002 it has delivered many successful projects. The vision of the foundation is creating self-reliant and self-sufficient youth in healthy communities. Its mission is to identify unfulfilled needs of young people and to develop, implement and fund breakthrough solutions that have lasting impact. (Youth Harvest Foundation Ghana)

All over the World people encounter negative consequences of unsafe and (unwanted) sexual actions, like sexual transmitted diseases (STD'S), unwanted pregnancies and traumatisation. Sexual education turned out to be an important method to prevent the problems. Ghana is facing these problems as well. The research took place in Bolgatanga, Upper East Region. This region is one of the poorest regions in Ghana. (Van der Geugten, 2010)

This research is based on qualitative research methods, which consist of a theoretical framework and open interviews. The target group is the youth of the age of 14 up to 18. The respondents consist of the Islamic, Christian and Traditional youth as well and some professionals from different organizations. The first sub question was answered by interviewing six young people. The second sub question was answered by interviewing a nurse, two Social Workers, a Pastor and an Elder from a Mosque.

Conclusion

The results on research question I shows that the youth experience some difficulties to differentiate what is true and what isn't true about what they hear from their peers in relation to sexuality and reproductive health. The youth indicated that they don't know a place where they can go to with their questions about sexuality and reproductive health. As last, the youth indicated that they want to know how to get over the shyness that stops them from going to a professional. The results on research question II are similar, expect for the following problem. The youth experience problems with the different expectation between the upcoming modern culture and the traditional Ghanaian culture. They don't know how to handle in between those two cultures

Recommendations

The youth indicated that they don't know a place where to go to with their questions about sexuality and reproductive health. Therefore the recommendation to enlarge the awareness of the Youth Harvest Foundation Ghana by the youth and adults as well. Making contact and enter into partnership with other welfare organizations is another recommendation to enlarge their awareness.

The professionals indicated the problems youth experience with the different expectations between the upcoming modern culture and the traditional Ghanaian culture. Therefore the recommendation to notice this during the sexual education and consults. Every year the Youth Harvest Foundation Ghana welcomes Dutch volunteers. They give the sexual education. To increase the quality of those lessons, the student researcher advises to develop a course that the volunteers can attend before they start working for the Youth Harvest Foundation Ghana. Before the course can be developed, a research should take place.

At last the recommendation to set up a briefing for Social Workers to inform them about the problems youth experience regarding to their sexual en reproductive health. In this way they can adapt their help to the needs of the youth of Bolgatanga.