

| SUMMARY |

Worldwide, people encounter negative consequences of unsafe and unwanted sexual practices, like Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (Aids), and other sexually transmitted diseases (STD's). Africa is a continent that carries the burden of incurable and often life threatening diseases on her shoulders. Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) programs strive and contribute to diminish suffering of unsafe and irresponsible sex within the population, and reduces the consequences of HIV/aids, STD's, unwanted pregnancies, (illegal) abortion and traumatisation.

Therefore, sexual education plays an important role in the future of the young and coming generations. During puberty the adolescent goes through sexual development, with physical, psychological, social, emotional and cultural dimensions. These dimensions combined form the identity of the adolescent, influenced by socioeconomic and cultural contexts. In this phase of their life, the adolescent is eager for information about sexuality. Lack of knowledge and education, often coupled with peer education from family and friends leave the adolescent with different and contradictory answers. This leads to confusion. Moreover, with globalisation of internet, which exposes young people to western media, video clips and pornography, this only adds to the confusion with an unrealistic image about sexuality and sex.

Unfortunately, Ghana like many other nations of the African continent, faces her own uphill struggle confronting consequences of unsafe and unwanted sexual practices. Sexual education is an important method to reduce and limit HIV/aids, STD's and unwanted pregnancies. In the Upper East Region (UER) of northern Ghana, the Youth Harvest Foundation Ghana (YHFG) developed a sex education program that provides the youth with the necessary information and knowledge with which the youth learn how to make their own informed and responsible choices concerning sex, having children and their future. In the Bolgatanga district the YHFG started the Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) project, which gives young adolescent the chance to attend school and get sexual health education lessons. However, the YHFG has its reservations whether the SRH program, in order to gain most desired results, is focused enough for its target group with its options. Whereby, raising concerns whether the sexual education program in its current form serves as a positive influence on the general intake of knowledge based information, attitude and behaviour of the young adolescents.

Thus, my research focuses on the organization and effectiveness of the SRH program and gives an answer to the following:

“In which way can the YHFG re-structure and organize its sexual education program, in order to effectively educate and bring awareness to the youth of the Bolgatanga district, in dealing with their sexuality in particular, and sex in general.”

Overall, the answer of the research question lies in the methods of the program and its implementation. In order to make recommendations to the YHFG it needs to be clear what the components of success and failure are of the SRHR program. The research goal is to improve the current YHFG program and make it more effective in its goals toward the knowledge, attitude and behaviour of youth in the Bolgatanga district. .

This research is based on qualitative research methods, which consist of:

- 1) Desktop research; a study and analysis of three SRHR programs in Africa: The World Starts With Me (WSWM), Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health (ASRH) Project Manual, and the YHFG Sexual Education Program. This research also includes a semi autobiographical graphic-novel, Aya uit Youpogon, which can be used for education.
- 2) Field research; interviews with experts and developers of SRHR programs and experienced YHFG teachers.
- 3) Literature research; theoretical framework on SRHR and the organization of education programs.

These three stages combined will answer the research question.

Conclusion

The results show it is unrealistic to think that a SRHR program alone can solve the problems the youth face. The Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) learns intention provides the best indication of the actual executing of behaviour. Intentions grow on motivation, which can be stimulated by knowledge, a positive self-image, attitude, self-efficacy and social norm. External values and nonmotivational factors influence those elements. Actual behaviour change occurs when the right combination of knowledge, knowhow, opportunities, skills and the will to change is established.

SRHR programs can have a positive influence on knowledge, attitude and behaviour of young adolescent. Its success depends on different components such as its set-up, approach, (learning) environment, learning methods and skills and values of the teacher.

- Set-up:

The program has a logical sequence of issues; starting with the adolescent and building up to topics about sexual intercourse and its risks. The contents need to be trustworthy, flexible and convincing for student and teacher. It should have a detailed description of each lesson, including themes, work forms and objectives.

- Approach:

The program must have a comprehensive approach. This is a form of sexual education that focuses on the whole package; behaviour, attitude, values, skills and creating an own identity during puberty. To make sure that everything learned stays, repeat and summarise the most important knowledge and skills every two weeks.

- (inter)Active learning:

Young people learn by example, experience and each other. The students need to take an active part in their own education. Use teaching methods that require movement, discussions and reflection. With an interactive teaching approach the youth also learns different skills that they can use in the future.

- Environment:

In order to have an open and two way communication there needs to be a safe environment, trust and respect among the students and teachers. Create that environment.

- Teacher:

Teachers need to be educated more strongly in how the program works. The implementation of a program is as vital as its contents. Without good teaching and training skills every program will lose its effectiveness.

The implementation of the program criteria needs to focus on raising knowledge and understanding, explaining and clarifying feelings, values and attitudes, improving and

developing skills, and risk avoidance. A good program facilitates, repeats, reflects and summarizes.

Besides the components above, the influence of the community is important as well. Students need to feel supported by their environment e.g.,: church, parents, friends and peer educators. This can be established by involving the community in the first and last lesson of the program. Evaluation shows it reduces taboo and creates awareness among the older generations. Before the first lesson starts, show them what the program is about and what their children will learn. At the last lesson let the students show their family and community what they have learned and created.

With all the components combined and executed properly they make a program more effective.