

INVESTIGATING USER-FRIENDLINESS OF THE SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH SERVICES AMONG YOUTH IN BOTSWANA

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Abstract. The objectives of this study were to investigate the extent of user-friendliness of sexual reproductive health services offered in Botswana. A cross-sectional study was conducted among 110 youth. A self-administered questionnaire was used to assess the friendliness of the health providers, health facility and program design using a 5-point Likert scale. The mean age of the participants was 22.1 (SD = 3.5) years. A third (33%) of participants perceived the referral system as not being youth-friendly and/or not adequate. The majority of participants (84.2%) agreed or strongly agreed that the health providers greeted youth receiving sexual and reproductive health services in a polite manner with 89.2% either agreeing or strongly agreeing that health providers told youth to return if they had concerns and 91.9% encouraging them to ask questions. More than a quarter (26%) indicated the health providers had no respect for youth; 27% of the response variables were rated lowest among the variables used to assess the friendliness of the health facility. Almost two-thirds (64%) of respondents indicated the waiting time was excessive. Fifty percent felt the sex and reproductive health services had inadequate publicity. Health provider attitudes had the greatest impact on youth perceptions (Odd ratio = 11.81; $p < 0.05$). Although the sexual and reproductive health service in Botswana is doing well, there are still some few weaknesses that need to be addressed, particularly working hours, and publicity of the sexual reproductive health services and information.

Keywords: sexual and reproductive health services, user-friendliness, Botswana

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