

Demand and supply of adolescents and youth sexual and reproductive health services (AYSRHS) during Covid-19 in SSA: A scoping review

Abstract

Study Background: The covid-19 pandemic and its attendant containment strategies impacted the logistics for sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services for adolescents & youths. It is important to understand the overarching effect of the Covid-19 on sexual behaviour, demand and supply of SRH among young people in SSA. The scoping review is therefore an attempt to synthesize evidence on the impact of Covid-19 on young people SRH behaviour and services.

Research Methods: A scoping review, which focuses on sexual health of adolescent and young people during Covid-19, will be conducted. The study selection will use Arksey and O' Malley (2005), and will conform to Joanna Briggs Institute Reviewers' Manual (2020) Methodology for JBI. We will search (from January 2020 onwards) Web of Science, MEDLINE, Africa-Wide via EBSCOHOST, Social Science Database, Gender Studies Database, WHO Covid-19 Library, Academic Search Complete (EBSCO), Google Scholar, Sociological Abstract and Middle East & Africa Database (via ProQuest).

Expected Findings: Urgent research is needed to mitigate the risk covid-19 imposed on demand and supply of SRH faced by adolescent and young adults (AYA). The planned scoping review will help address this gap.

Extended Abstract

Study Background: The covid-19 pandemic and its attendant containment strategies like lockdowns, border closure, and export restrictions, led to drastic reduction in supply of sexual and reproductive health services. Conversely, the lockdowns and restriction of movement also affected the demand for personalized sexual and reproductive health services like access to contraceptives, pregnancy care, and safe abortion.

At the wake of the pandemic, more concentration was given to covid 19 response at the expense of other health care services (Togun, Kampmann, Stoker, & Lipman, 2020); (*Mmeje, Coleman, & Chang, 2020*). Essential services like sexual and reproductive health therefore took second stage having a great toll on the overall mental and sexual wellbeing of the population of countries in SSA where 70-90% of their medical commodities are imported (AHBS, 2020). Hence, the disruptions in the supply chain of essential drugs relating to sexual and reproductive health like contraceptives, antibiotics and others created wide discrepancies between the demand and supply of sexual and reproductive services (Ahmed & Sonfield, 2020).

Adolescents and young adults (AYA) have peculiar sexual and reproductive health needs due to their development stage and adventurous sexual activities (Isiugo-Abanihe, 2005). Traditionally, there are widespread reported unmet needs for adolescents' access to sexual and reproductive health services in SSA (Okawa et al., 2018), which was exacerbated by the covid 19 lockdown.

There are a plethora of effects which the diversion of medical attention from SRH of AYA to Covid response could bring including reduction in percentage of birth attended to by skilled

health workers and antenatal coverage; increase in home delivery with its attendant risks; increased maternal mortality and morbidity. Other effects include reduced access to SRH information which could lead to exposure to STIs, teenage pregnancy and its associated health risks.

Research Questions

The review will be guided by questions that will facilitate evidence mapping and synthesis on the demand and supply of adolescents and youth sexual and reproductive health services in SSA during the Covid 19 pandemic. The specific objectives are as follows:

1. What factors were responsible for the discrepancies in the demand and supply for sexual and reproductive health of adolescents and young adults during the outbreak of Covid 19 in SSA (March 2020 to May 2021)?
2. What strategies were adopted by countries in SSA to mitigate the effects of the demand-supply gap for SRH among AYA between March 2020 and May 2021?
3. How can SSA countries build resilience in the supply chain for SRH services among AYA?

Research Methods

A scoping review which focuses on the sexual health of adolescent and young people will be conducted. The updated methodological Guidance by Joana Briggs (2020) for JBI scoping reviews will be adopted (Peters MDJ, 2020), in order to capture existing literature on the demand and Supply of Adolescents and Youth sexual and reproductive health services during Covid-19 in SSA. The study selection will use Arksey and O'Malley's (Arksey & O'Malley, 2005) five-stage standard procedure for conducting scoping review, and will conform to Joanna Briggs Institute Reviewers' Manual (2020) Methodology for JBI.

The reviewers will search (from January 2020 onwards) Web of Science, MEDLINE, Africa-Wide via EBSCOHOST, Social Science Database, Gender studies Database, WHO Covid-19 Library, Academic Search Complete (EBSCO), Google Scholar, Sociological Abstract and Middle East & Africa Database (ProQuest). In addition, a hand search of all literature will be performed to locate other relevant studies. Open Grey and Grey Literature will be obtained. Only English language, original studies will be screened, considered for inclusion following the JBI recommendations. Two reviewers will independently screen all citations, full-text articles, and abstract data. A narrative summary of findings will be conducted, synthesized and presented.

Inclusion criteria

The study will consider only literature in English language for inclusion. Published research (peer-reviewed and grey literature with primary and secondary data which investigate on sexual health and right of adolescent and youth during Covid-19 selected population in African countries; the settings and study design both quantitative and qualitative will be eligible for inclusion. There will be no restriction on region, gender and studies reported as conference paper will be included, only if there is no access to the full paper.

Exclusion criteria

Case report, correspondence, commentaries, opinion pieces, case series and editorial will be excluded. Case report and case series often contain relatively limited evidence that can be reviewed. Reviews such as systematic reviews and scoping reviews will be excluded. Governmental and other agencies guidelines will be excluded. Other studies relating to sexual and reproductive health of adolescent and young people before Covid-19 will also be excluded

Expected outcomes

The study findings will help address the logistic challenges in the provision of SRH for AYA in the event of future emergencies. Primary outcome will be how Covid-19 affect the demand for sexual and reproductive health services and to what extent SRHS supply meet the needs of the AYA. Further, the scoping review methodology will provide an opportunity to identify key concepts, types and sources of evidence to inform practice and policymaking.

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