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Need of unique attention on young & new sex worker –In HIV prevention

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Back ground: Targeted interventions are a major strategy to prevent HIV among sex workers. HIV prevention service uptake by young sex workers is a major challenge. Almost half of all new HIV infections in the world are among people under 25. Estimates show that more than 7,400 people become infected with HIV daily, 3,300 of who are young people. Globally, 5.4 million young people are living with HIV. Young women under age 25 are at an even greater risk for HIV infection and comprise 57.4% of infected youth.

Objectives: To analyze gap in HIV prevention service accessibility by Young sex workers and to provide an opportunity to re think of HIV prevention strategies for Young sex workers

Methodology: A cohort study has conducted on service accessibility in 12 months period among 9007 female sex workers. Sample selected from 3 Targeted interventions. Services like HIV test, and Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI's) and syphilis taken indicators.

Results/Findings: 9% (815) of sex workers are from the age group of 16 and 24. Service accessibility is observed in different age group, below 24 years, 25-30 years, 31-35 years, 36-40 years, 41-45 years and above 45 years. 54% of the population never accessed HIV test in 12 months period are from the age below 24 years when compare to each age group on accessed HIV test twice in a year, lowest is among the age below 24 years which is 14% and highest is 18% between age group of 25-30. Never accessed clinic services is high (33%) among the age group of below 24 years when compared to age group of 40 and above that is varied between 6 to 14%. Accessed clinic service 3 times regularly in a year is very low among age below 24 years that is 23%. Highest is 39% among the age group of 25-30, 36-40 and 40 and above. 59% of the population never accessed Syphilis test in 12 months period are from the age below 24 years when compare to each age group on accessed Syphilis test twice in a year, lowest is among the age below 24 years which is 10% and highest is 14% between age group of 25-30.

Conclusion: Meeting the young sex workers and providing information on HIV prevention may not be sufficient to change the behavior of young sex workers in order to increase utilization HIV prevention services. We can also think why they have selected the profession, the key drivers, and the key priorities for Young Sex Workers. Have limited access to health may be due to many reasons like lack of spotlight on Young Sex Workers, societal factors such as social and cultural norms, practices, beliefs and laws that stigmatize and disempowered act as barriers to essential HIV-prevention messages. So it is important to have new strategies to address young sex workers and studies to understand non sexual health needs of Young Sex worker in order to increase the accessibility of HIV/AIDS services.

Biography

Syam Ratnakar Gunturu is a Ph.D. scholar from Andhra University. Completed his Masters in Social Work from Andhra University, Post-Graduation Diploma in Public Health Service Management from Public Health Foundation of India. Program Officer for India Health Action Trust (IHAT) is a Technical support Unit of Nation AIDS Control Organization (NACO) for Karnataka State. Associated as Regional Manager for HIV programs for Karnataka Health Promotion Trust (KHPT). Member of National Master Trainers of Link workers Scheme under UNICEF with LEPR. He has been associated with HIV prevention and care programs for last 15 years. He has published papers in international journals.

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