

Rural-Urban Drift: Labour Migration, Health-Seeking Behaviour Disparity in the Urban Slum of Madina, Ghana

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Abstract : Purpose - The health challenges that characterises most of the migrants' urban slums raise a lot of concern for their well-being. Health-seeking behaviour becomes an important step towards maintaining a healthy life. The importance of contextual issues is necessary to help meet specific community health needs and programmes. Therefore, this study aims to bridge the knowledge gap by investigating health-seeking behaviour disparity among rural-urban labour migrant slum dwellers before and after migration to the urban slums of Madina in the Greater Accra Region, Ghana. Design/methodology/approach - The author used explanatory sequential approach of research investigation. Questionnaire and interview guides were used to collect data from the respondents; however, in the absence of an existing reliable sampling frame, the various communities were selected by the use of cluster sampling proportional to size. At the second stage, a simple random sampling was used to select the various household heads. A total of 241 questionnaires were retrieved from the respondents representing a response rate of 100%. The author used the purposive sampling technique to conduct eight in-depth interviews and six key informants' interviews. Findings - The author found various discrepancies in many of the activities that could fulfill substantial health-seeking behaviour in the slum as compared to migrant's places of origin. The reason for coming to the slum amidst many settlements needs and low education background are the factors that accounted for this. This study, therefore, contradicts the proposition held by the health belief model. It is, therefore, important to note that contextual issues are key, in this case, rural-urban migrant slums present a different dynamic that must be taken into account when designing health programmes for such settings. Originality/value - Many, if not all the, studies on health-seeking behaviour have focused on urban slums without taking into account urban migrants' slums. Such a failure to take into account the variations of the health needs of migrants' urban slum settings can eventually lead to a mismatch of health programmes meant to address their challenges. Therefore, this study brings to the fore such variations that must be taken into account when designing health programmes. The study also indicates that even with the same people, there were disparities in terms of health-seeking behaviour in the slum and at places of origin.

Keywords : health-seeking behaviour, rural-urban migration, urban slums, health belief model

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