

The Utilization of Healthcare by African Migrants: The Lived Experiences of Unaccompanied Adolescent Migrants in South Africa

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Abstract : Numerous countries are faced with challenges such as disease, poverty and other social ills and inadequate government support to meet the needs of the entire population. In developing countries, the concept of child-headed households has become a ubiquitous phenomenon and lived experience. As such, migration of children is common in these countries. This study aims to explore the lived experiences of unaccompanied adolescent migrant, with regards to the utilization of health care in South Africa. The objectives of the study are to examine the lived experiences of health care utilization by unaccompanied adolescent migrants; examine the predisposing, enabling and need factors influencing utilization of health care among unaccompanied adolescent migrants; examine the social and cultural influences on health care utilization among unaccompanied adolescent migrants; and identify the health system barriers to utilization of health care by unaccompanied adolescent migrants. Andersen and Newman's Model of Health Care Utilization (1995) which explains factors determining the utilization of healthcare will provide the theoretical framework for the empirical investigation of this study. The target population for this study is unaccompanied adolescent migrants, seeking to access services from migrant service organizations in four provinces in South Africa (Limpopo, KwaZulu-Natal, Free State, and Gauteng). Participants will be selected using a purposive sampling procedure. A qualitative research approach utilizing a descriptive phenomenological epistemology will be utilized in this study. Data will be collected through conducting in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with unaccompanied migrant adolescents, to explore their lived experiences related to access and utilization of health care, as an unaccompanied migrant in SA. The qualitative data will be analysed using Tech's (1990) thematic analytical approach.

Keywords : health care utilisation, unaccompanied migrant youth, South Africa, lived experiences

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