



Challenges of Young People Sexual and Reproductive Health and Right Services



**RIGHT HERE
RIGHT NOW**

Sexual and reproductive health and rights is not making any headlines but the reality is that the crisis will have a truly devastating impact on the futures of millions of girls and young women. Girls and young women faced significant barriers in accessing essential sexual and reproductive health information and services there is a real risk that these rights will move even further from reach. Gender equality is a central component to development yet Pakistan currently ranks the second lowest country in the world for gender equality, according to the Global Gender Gap Index. As the sixth most populated country in the world and with a very high fertility rate of 3.8 children per woman. The right to decide children's number, spacing and timing has a valuable influence on a woman's life. Yet, in Pakistan one in five married women who want to avoid pregnancy are unable to access effective methods to do so. The unmet need of the family planning raises the number of abortions, premature pregnancies and maternal mortality because most of them don't have safe access and facilities to health care services are far to reach. The strong need to address the unmet need for family planning by developing access to contraceptive care ,promoting comprehensive sexuality education in schools, working toward gender equality and empowerment of women and girls, ensuring a access to contraceptives and advocating for policies that better support family planning.

Moreover, A study by the United Nations found that 50% of married Pakistani women have experienced sexual harassment and 90% have been psychologically abused. Many are striving for peace regarding gender-based violence, Marital rape Well, In our culture we neglect capacity building. Our body is our right and Consent is important. NO consent means that women experience their bodies getting groped, abused, harassed, or violated. Consent not only talks about reproductive rights but also range of women's right issues, such as freedom to choose clothing, movement, love, sex and marriage. Women suffer from pervasive gender-based violence, from domestic abuse, honor killings, and sexual assault to institutional discrimination. This prohibit women from engaging meaningfully in educational and economic life outside of the household and from making informed choices about their sexual and reproductive lives. We are short of safe spaces. We don't have safe spaces where we can freely talk and talk whatever we want to. Even forced and early marriages are violence. Internationally, underage marriage is deemed as a illegal offense as well as a human rights violation. In Pakistan 21% of girls are married before their 18th birthday. According to UNICEF, Pakistan has the sixth highest number of absolute child brides in the world. "Violence is psychological, systematic and economical!"

Gender equality will be achieved only when women and men enjoy the same opportunities, rights and obligations in all spheres of life. "All we need to do is change the terms of superior and inferior and to create a balance "

Author- Sabeeh Lalani

Disclaimer

Forum for Dignity Initiatives-fdi is a research and advocacy forum working for girls, women and transgender persons in Pakistan since 2013. fdi organized an online festival "online festival on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights-SRHR of young people in Pakistan" with all their diversity (gender non-binary identities and expression referring to transgender youth and persons with disabilities).

The Festival aimed to understand and learn about young people's visions, challenges, and concepts about SRHR to assist policy makers on the needs of young people with all their diversity.

It was an online festival that called for entries from young people to submit their ideas/vision/ challenges they face while accessing sexual and reproductive health and rights services. Festival had five categories for submission of ideas by young people on SRHR, the five categories included; Blog, V-log, Short video, short animated video and posters.

This publications is comprised of blogs and posters submitted by the young people. fdi makes a very clear disclaimer that all the content submitted is by young people on voluntarily bases and fdi has just compiled this content to make it a reference document for key stakeholders working on SRHR and policy makers to facilitate them first hand information from the young people of this country. All the names and content is published with a prior written consent of all the authors.



Young people (10-24 years of age), around the world face tremendous challenges to meeting their sexual and reproductive health (SRH) needs. Inadequate access to health information and services, as well as inequitable gender norms, contributes to a lack of knowledge and awareness about puberty, sexuality, and basic human rights. This can have serious implications on young people's health and welfare as well as economic development and poverty reduction. In Pakistan It can lead to greater vulnerabilities to gender-related ill health, unintended pregnancies, maternal death, harmful cultural practices and sexual and gender-based violence. Young people often have no knowledge about their body when they are growing up. They experience changes in their body, they experience their attraction to opposite gender, but no one provides any help or guidance to steer them through these times. Young people are reluctant to seek help with their reproductive health or sexuality related issues because the society considers this a tabooed topic. Also the health care points do not cater to the needs of the young people. It's time to recognize and invest in young people's sexual and reproductive health to ensure their well-being and protection. One way of ensuring this is to include these services in Coasted Implementation Plans. It is high time to review laws that expose young girls to danger and deprive them of their basic rights such as early age marriages law.

Author- Abdullah Adil

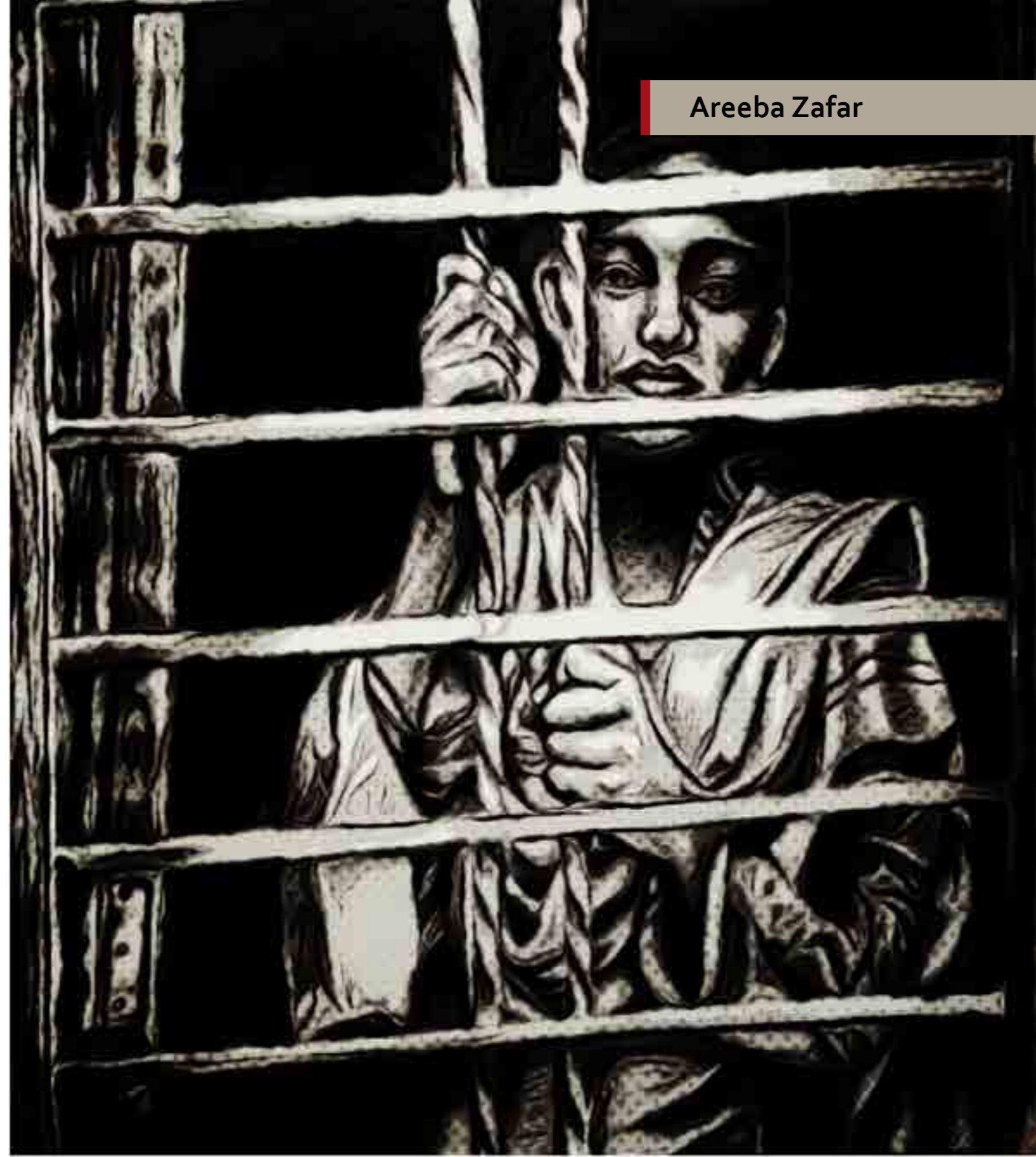


Young people that lie in the age range of 10-24 years make up the quarter of world's population and will be responsible for the up-bringing of future generations. So, it's essential to educate them about sexual and reproductive health and rights. According to current stats, around 11 percent of the births worldwide are by mothers between the age of 15 to 19 years. Most of these young girls die of complexities in pregnancy, insufficient nutrition and premature births. In some areas, youth is still poorly informed about SRH as there is stigma related to discussing SRHR. Usually, due to inconvenient and costly service hours and far-off location facilities, most people cannot avail the services. Young people's sexuality is considered a cultural taboo in parts Asia and Africa. But we cannot turn a blind eye to its importance.

- The services of SRH take into consideration the following factors:
- Sexual and reproductive health counseling
- Condom distribution
- Contraceptives, including emergency contraception
- Pregnancy testing
- Safe abortion care (within the national legal context)
- Reproductive tract and sexually transmitted infection testing
- Voluntary counseling and testing for HIV
- Gynecology services
- Maternal care (prenatal and postnatal)
- Sexual and gender-based violence support

Even the slightest awareness of these rights can reduce the incidents of HIV transmission, unwanted teenage pregnancy and unsafe abortions. Furthermore, these services can help to prevent maternal morbidity and mortality caused by sexual and reproductive health problems and issues. Young people should be aware of their SRH rights so they can make can informed decisions, that will in turn shape a healthy community.

Author-Abeer Mehboob



مجھے جنسی قید سے آزاد کرو!

What change Young People Seek to Improve Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights Services

Overview:

Sexual health is a nonplussed theorem of our camaraderie. We must not omit the brass tacks, sexual health should be foremost credibility they deserve. Sexual health is the aggregate of sexual orientations, reproduction and apropos expression with heed to gender. The indecisiveness that causes vexation can only swamped through didactic modus.

Diseases and Ways To Prevent:

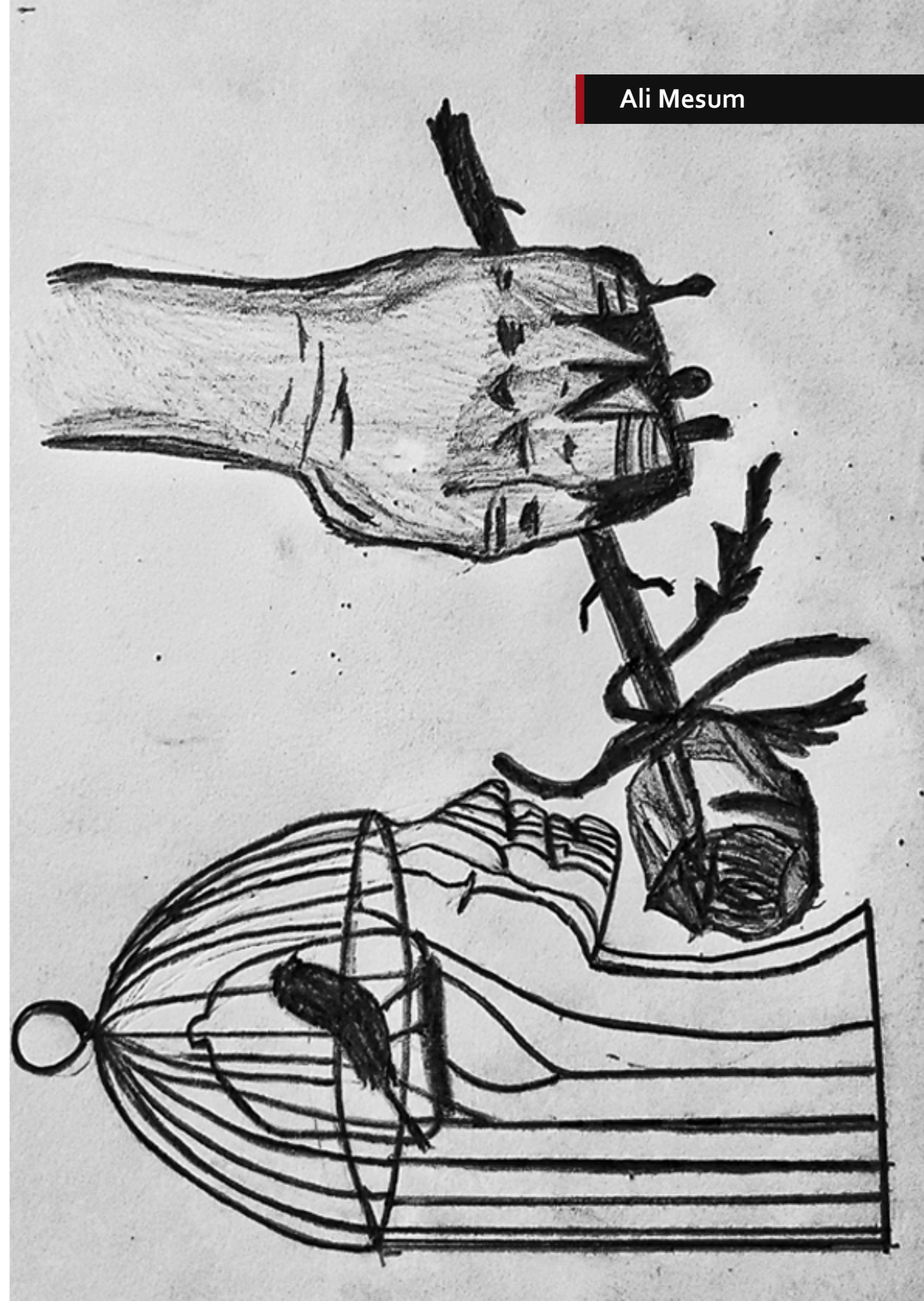
It is reported more than 30 types of bacteria and parasites channeled through sexual contact. A moderate ratio of them can be cured while others not so much it includes HPV-(Human Papillomavirus), HSV-(Herpes Simplex Virus) and many others. Whereas being the notable is HPV where it can also be transferred from mother to child during pregnancy and childbirth. Sexual health issues are serious and are a weld between eroticism and sexual orientation that craves a comprehensive inculcation. Certain things youth and people in general can confiscate to fill this gash.

- No discrimination should be based on gender, hence provides no room to tantalize this contention.
- Discretion of sexual orientation with families and teachers should be galvanized.
- They should have admittance to the reproductive health care proficient.
- Apprehension regarding knowledge about human body should not be obdurate.
- It is linked to personal lifestyle and emotions, so being assertive and decisive is something youth should work to enhance.

Conclusion:

The deterioration of this issue starts from home, because that is where the triumph and repulsive emotions were born. Ailments and calamities are part of life, so you want to handle life? Then try to handle emotions.

Author- Ahmed Alu Baber



Sexual and reproductive health (SRHR) is a concept of human rights. It makes sure a person can have respectful sexual relationships without any force, diseases, discrimination and violence. The youth plays an important part in the society and should be given total protection and safety in it. Government and public can protect and spread awareness for SRHR by making policies. Fines and strict punishment should be set for the protection of the victims of forced marriages, rape, violence and etc. Free education should be given to youngster so they become more career oriented and are able to earn and support their families positively. Early age marriages before 18 should be banned as teenagers are usually naïve before 18. Family planning should be promoted in the public. Contraceptives and healthcare facilities to people who can't afford should be given free. Child labor should be banned as it puts a lot of children working at people's homes and the street in danger. Sexual education should be made a part of the syllabus so the youth is more aware about their rights and mannered. The social stigma for SRHR in the society needs to erase as it gives more power to the offender and weakens the victims. Victim blaming should be stopped and the victim should be respected if they share their trauma to the public. Test for sexually transmitted diseases should be compulsory before marriage by law as they are contagious. Youth should be given toll free helpline numbers so they can make direct contact to the authorities without becoming news in the society. Laws should also be made for media agencies and social media to keep the victim anonymous and take their permission before posting information and images of them in the public. All these actions might make the environment a better place for the society most valuable treasure the youth.

Author- Aleena Ittfaq



Where 6.4 % of the population is prevalent to Sexually transmitted diseases

Where 92% of the population is unaware of sexual and reproductive health rights



A Country with **SIXTH HIGHEST** Number of **CHILD MARRIAGES**



Where 35% of the population is married before the age of 18

Yet discussion on sex and reproduction is taboo

We urge the government;

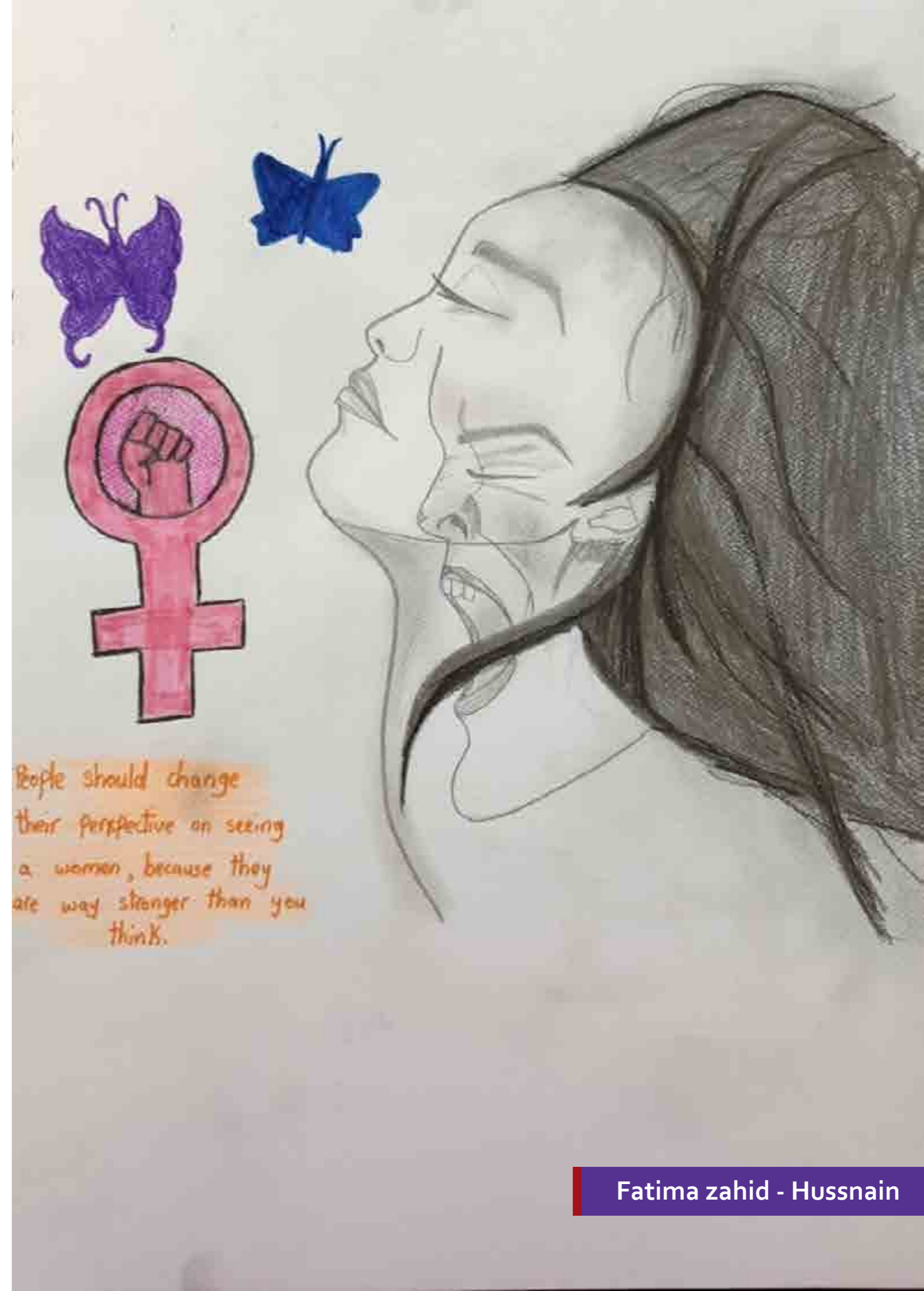
- To introduce appropriate sex education at all levels
- To take measures to educate the public on sexual and reproductive health rights
- To ensure that sexual and reproductive health care is accessible to all people regardless the age, gender, ethnicity and sexuality
- To introduce research to fairly monitor statistics and national surveys regarding STDs and other sexual diseases

Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights of Young People in Pakistan

How often have we been to supermarkets for grocery and particularly asked our young boys to turn away from a certain aisle with blue and pink packets stacked over each other? How often do we find ourselves visibly embarrassed when our boys find their way into the aisle anyways and we have to drag them back answering uncomfortable questions? And how many of us have actually asked why those questions are so uneasy in the first place? What about a natural bodily process pertaining to women, the same one that ensures they are reproductively able and safe, is so abhorrent and mortifying that women practically smuggle their only source of comfort in those trying days, into a suspicious brown bag and speed out of the store, as if fearing a police raid. Anybody who paid attention in 9th grade biology, or does not live under a rock would know it's this oh so vile 'P' word, the causations and absence of which unfolded eventually into them opening eyes into this Godforsaken World, yet it's women themselves, mothers particularly who actively keep their sons in the dark, sons who make their sisters uncomfortable if they catch them stealing a bite while they're supposed to be 'fasting', sons who're also going to be husbands and will learn to call their wives "crazy and neurotic" for their mood swings while they're menstruating, or even worse sons who will label every rational reaction to their absurdities as 'PMS'

Remove the shame.

Author-Amatul Fatima



Fatima zahid - Hussnain



What Change Young People Seek to Improve Sexual and Reproductive Health & Rights Services (Information, Services & Policies)

SRHR lies on four fields: sexual health, sexual rights, reproductive health and reproductive rights. Even though these fields are different, they are considered to be, and are naturally, intertwined. These rights should be granted to every adolescent/young individual throughout the world as these are essential to their well-being. And to be able to provide such good-quality services is just as important.

Such rights and their related services are not provided to everyone and their demands are not fulfilled. These individuals seek to expand the health care services, change laws that cause these rights to be neglected and want to improve it in several ways like:

- Granting Personal Protective Equipment to LHWs so they can continue their work within communities.
- Help by ensuring the availability of contraceptives and contraceptives injections.
- Further spread their services by expanding online counselling services for women seeking medical, psychological and legal support for domestic violence and also allow online prescriptions.
- Remove barriers for domestic violence survivors seeking protection services.
- Persuade health managers to be proactive in advocating for changes in policies and laws that restrict access to sexual and reproductive health services for young people and also to remove/ bypass such barriers that don't allow domestic violence survivors from seeking protection.
- And in these times, in the presence of Corona virus, reduce rates of discharging of such patients in hospitals by either providing the proper supplies to hospitals or allowing the testing of women, who seek help while staying at home, in communities for Covid-19

Author-Ammar Imran



About sixteen million girls aged 15–19 give birth each year, which is approximately 11% of all births worldwide. These statistics should be alarming enough for people to rise to the occasion to advocate the Young Peoples Sexual and Reproductive Health (ASRH), especially in countries where this topic is a taboo and lies at the end of their priority list. Some of the challenges faced by lack of proper ASRH include early pregnancy, difficulties accessing contraception and safe abortion, and high rates of HIV and sexually transmitted infections, sexual coercion, exploitation, and violence. The implications these have on an individual's physical and mental health is beyond imagination.

If by looking at this information you're wondering about why there is no talk of reproductive health in per se developing and underdeveloped nations then you should know how societal, cultural, and religious factors create an inhibitive environment for these discussions as many societies hold a deeply embedded sense of disapproval of adolescent sexual activity. Even young people's care-seeking behavior may be restricted because of fear of people finding out that may result in violence, embarrassment and shame and this is all because the illiteracy has led to stigmatization of something so basic and important.

ASRH has been long overlooked despite the high risks that countries face for its neglect and giving it its due importance has now become the need of the hour to improve our understanding of this age group and to preserve the future of the world.

Author- Aoun-ul-Rab



The World Health Organization categorizes “young people” as adolescents. As those between the ages of 10 and 19, are close to 1.2 billion in the world, constituting about 17% of the world population today. In developing and under developed countries like Pakistan, they have to face many problems related to sexual and reproductive health. Lack of awareness neglects it and youth faces problems like early pregnancy, early marriages, abortions etc. which not only put burden on females but also on males. About 11% of all births worldwide are adolescent girls aged 15-19 years. These young mothers are the most likely to experience complications and die of pregnancy related causes. Among the many barriers to sexual and reproductive health (SRH) service for young people are legal and policy constraints are related to age and marital status. These barriers include the stigma associated with teenage pregnancy; cultural taboos about young people’s sexuality; inconvenient hours of services and locations of facilities; and high cost of receiving services. Not only females but also males face a lot of problems and are not allowed to talk about the changes which occur in them during puberty. Sexual and reproductive health services for adolescents should be provided as a continuum that recognizes the importance of reaching adolescents in all strata with age specific services that takes into cognizance the key developmental milestones in adolescent development. The wide range of outcomes in providing rights based SRH services appropriate for adolescents will include a reduction in the incidence of HIV, unwanted teenage pregnancy and unsafe abortion which will invariably lead to a reduction in maternal morbidity and mortality.

Author- Areeba & Aresha Chaudhry

CHALLENGES

Sexual Rights

&

Reproductive Health

- Early Marriage
- Unplanned Parenthood
- Health Hazards
- Killing



Changes Young People Seek to Improve Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights Services

It is a fact that many young people go through puberty without any prior knowledge about it, which can be both confusing and terrifying,

The educational institute at secondary and higher level should provide gender segregated sex education classes, having a female teacher for girls and a male teacher for boys so they feel more comfortable talking about their sex health and bodily changes.

There should also be counseling seminars at higher educational institutes as an initiative that engages both males and females on issues regarding

- Gender based discrimination and violence
- Forced marriages
- Marital rape
- adolescent maternal mortality

Also importance of consent and female reproductive rights should be highlighted.

Contraceptive prevalence (% of women ages 15-49) in Pakistan was reported at 34.2 % in 2018.

Both the unawareness and unavailability of female contraceptives leads to unintended pregnancies and higher abortion and maternal mortality rates.

For its prevention and also to ensure women's rights over their own reproductive choices, female contraceptives should be made easily available.

The government should provide community programs to educate young married couples about family planning, contraception, sexually transmitted infections, and women's rights in consenting to marry and within the marriage itself.

The government should set up health clinics that provide

- Free annual testing for HIV and AIDS
- Reproductive tract and sexually transmitted infection testing
- Sexual and gender-based violence support
- Free Maternal care (prenatal and postnatal) for women suffering from extreme poverty.

Also your society should young people to talk about sexual and reproductive health and right services.

Author- Asfandyar Khan



Jovera Shakeel



Bertolt Brecht in his play 'Life of Galileo' writes: 'For thousand years men believed that the sun and all the stars of heaven were circling around them.' Something patriarchy whispered in every man's ear: you're the center of the universe, a sun in your own right. And they passed on this whisper, in a bellow, to their wives and daughters, and sons. Bleeding into every relationship, demanding conformity like a constant beating of drums.

Any arrangement where the power dynamic is not in one man's favour, hate and denial begin to breed. Blinding them to the possibility of arrangements where power is shared, whether that be a cis-het relationship, or any other arrangement.

Because how can the status-quo be distributed? And fair enough, people don't question what they are conditioned to accept as normal. And why would they, when conformity provides structure, and ritual provides order?

They resist change, since people fear that which they don't understand, even when it means them no harm.

And so to maintain the illusion of control, they deploy various means. Religion being the most wielded tool in our country.

Religion becomes the sheep skin the-wolf-of-fear-of-change uses to hide under. Labelling everything that even attempts debunking the falsity, as: Immoral.

So tell me if it is immoral to have your children educated about sex, and have them act responsibly: then is it morality to have 15 year old rapists, or is it morality to have our six year olds raped?

Author- Aymon Abbas Naqvi



Manal Hashmi

Sexual health of our young kids is important

A forum on care for children on the spectrum

My body, my choice. This is a universal call for equality and an end to widespread sexism but what people fail to acknowledge is what it means to our generation, no – the younger generation of Pakistan. Our country is one of the few remaining in the world that charge excessive taxation on women sanitary products, making simple sanitary pads seem like a luxury?! Why is a simple bodily function being profited on? How is a pack of male contraceptives cheaper than one female sanitary product? Speaking from an economic point of view, this is solely due to set 'rules' in society i.e. women products are more expensive than male counterparts. But jumping to the point of view of a 14-year-old girl who has less than sufficient means to make ends meet - this is specific inequality targeted at those who cannot raise a voice for themselves. This young girl is neither aware of her rights, nor is she going to get them, solely due to the fact that it won't profit the larger corporations at play here. I believe that even if one individual understands their fundamental right to clean sanitary products and bodily autonomy, this festival will have succeeded in its attempt to make Pakistan, our beloved country, a better place to be for our daughters, sisters and mothers.

Author- Bilal Shahid



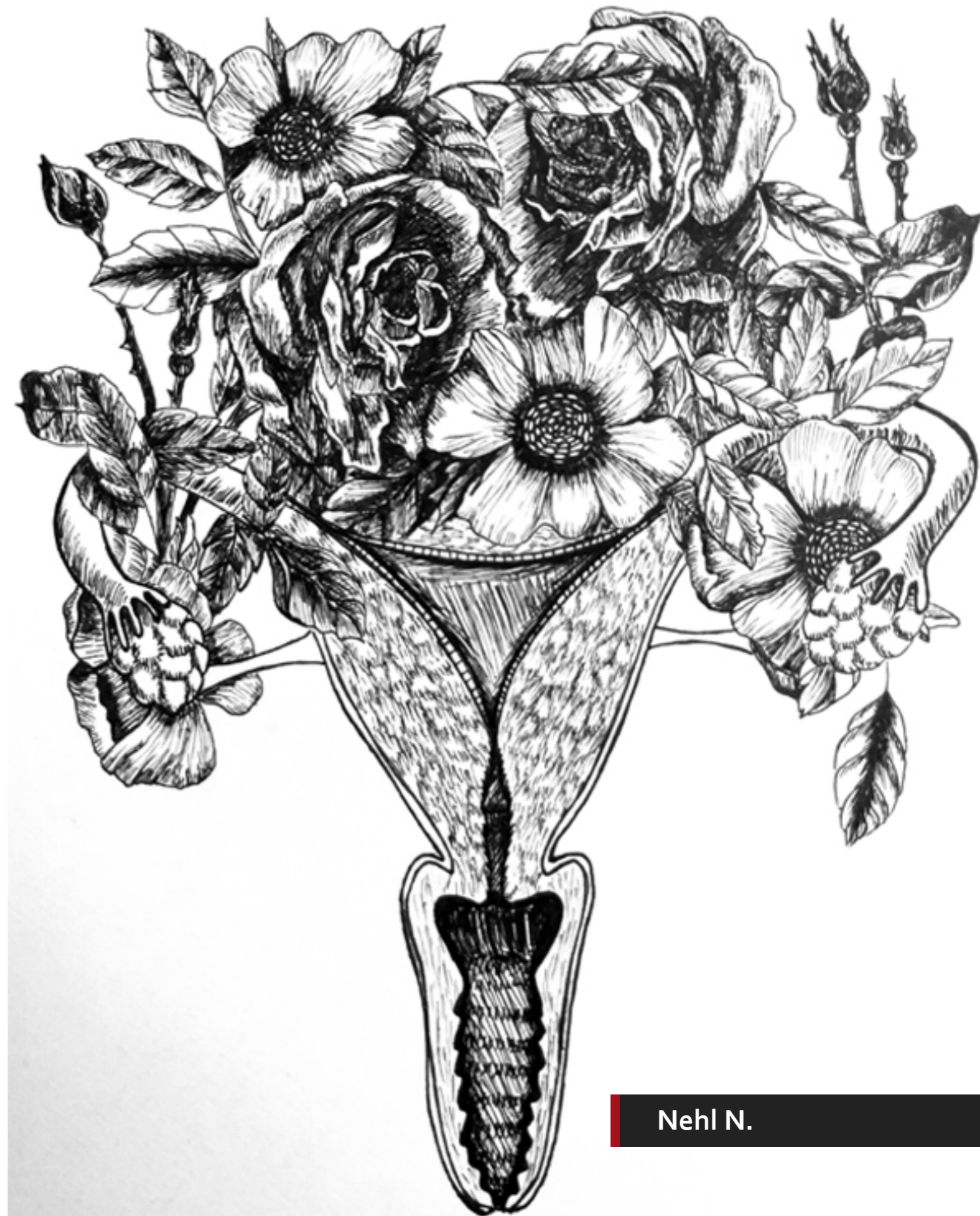
Young people, mostly during their adolescent age, between the ages of 10 till 19, also called the teenage, faces problems regarding sexual and reproductive health as they are new to it. Teenage is the most intense and demanding time period of any human being as they experience life situations for the first time. They are on the verge of finding themselves, who they are and what they want to become.

According to Nigerian Journal of Health Sciences, 11 percent of teenage girls experience pregnancy before an age of immaturity. Mothers of this little age have a great responsibility as they are inexperienced and has to look after a baby as well as themselves. Many girls dies at this age because of pregnancies, problems and causes.

These girls face many problems that cause these situations of being mothers at an early age, of adolescent age. The things that cause increase in these types of situations are different for girls living in different areas. For some it is because of the rubbish culture of early marriage, for some because of the areas having lack of knowledge or because of there are no services or organization to have a check upon these situations. These situations are the biggest hurdle in increasing the health rate of societies and in the growth of literacy rate. These situations and problems, lead a society towards downfall.

These problems should be sorted out as these girls are our future asset and will be the reason to have a prosperous and a high moral society in the future.

Author- Umar Abdullah



Nehl N.



Unfortunately, we live in a society where important subjects like Sex and Reproduction have been made a taboo, indicating lack of literacy and social awareness, categorising ours' as a society shackled by dogmatic thinking and an innate cultural mindset which thwarts its growth and progress. In this complacent commune, women have found it increasingly difficult to talk about menstruation and the importance of hygiene and sanitary pads; contraceptives are majorly unexplored and yet to be embraced by society; there is little knowledge of ovulation and pregnancy and consequently, the inability to conceive is predominantly attributed to women. Due to lack of knowledge and education, a number of problems that can be easily dealt with in unprecedented boundaries of modern day science and technology are left idle, at times even deteriorating. Surprisingly, conversation regarding the importance of such issues and the access of these facilities is often seen as opposed to religious and cultural values owing to the distorted images imprinted in people's minds. Underdeveloped regions and rural areas are majorly struck by these challenges and prospectively lay at the most risk of outbreak of sexual and reproductive health problems and diseases. The mere fact that one is obstructed from openly talking about the given subject is proof of the obstacles encountered in expressing problems, in turn preventing people from accessing rights and services to treat respective medical issues. The inability to progress socially and mentally as well as technologically means that sexual and reproductive health in our country is majorly compromised.

Author-Dania Tariq Butt



Rumaiza Baig



Do you know that half of the world's population is under 25 years of age?

In many regions, these youngsters reach puberty earlier, engage in sexual activity at a younger age and hence, they are sexually mature.

Most of them do not receive proper sexual and reproductive education because of different political views, cultural norms, socioeconomic status, which makes them vulnerable to serious challenges.

Early pregnancy:

Difficulty in accessing contraception leads to pregnancy which in many cases, is unwanted. The lack of education, insufficient finances and unsupportive environment leads to inadequate care which causes complications. Maternal death in adolescents less than 16 years of age is 4 times higher as compared to mothers in their 20s.

Sexually transmitted diseases:

About 5 million young people are living with HIV. The immature reproductive and immune systems of adolescents increases the risk of transmission of STDs. In most countries, comprehensive knowledge about HIV and other STDs like syphilis and gonorrhea is restricted and the rate of HIV testing in young people is low.

Social challenges:

The "sex talk" is considered no less than a taboo in many regions of the world, hence leading to an unsupportive environment, long term implications for families, exploitation, violence, difficult parenthood for young or single parents and social exclusion. Regional variation gives diversity to experiences due to different lifestyles, age, sex, marital status, residence, schooling, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, access to healthcare, sources of education, information and support.

Psychological challenges:

Neglecting sexual and reproductive health has great risk of a painful or damaging transition into adulthood that can result in lifetime ill effects. Both physical and mental health is compromised as people can experience depression, anxiety and low self-esteem.

Author- Dr.Sabahat Said



VICTIM AS WELL AS OFFENDER MAY BE MEN OR A WOMEN
HARRASMENT CAN COME FROM SAME OR OPPOSITE GENDER

SAY NO TO IT
RAISE YOUR VOICE

IT IS SEXUAL
HARRASMENT

IT IS A CRIME



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Sabeeh Lalani

I WON'T BE SILENCED



Stop Sexual
Voilence

SAY
NO!

NOT NOW MEANS NO
I'M TIRED MEANS NO
I'M NOT SURE MEANS NO
SILENCE MEANS NO

TAKE ACTION!!

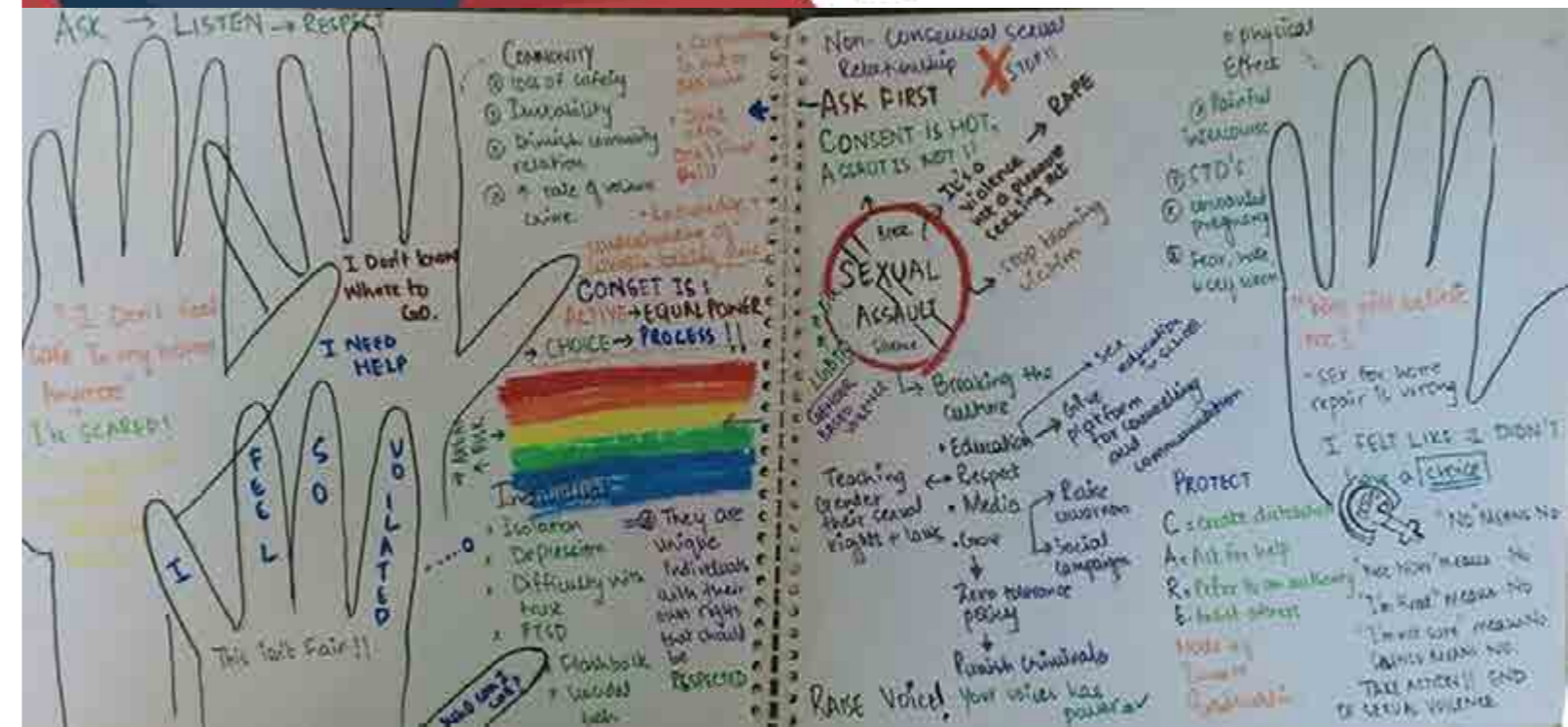
Your voice matters help
to end sexual voilence

BREAK THE SILENCE
ASK FOR HELP

Ranked as the sixth densely-populated nation globally with a prominent 64 percent constituting the youth cluster, I write with utter disgrace concerning the deplorable state of basic Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights as a substandard reflector of the prosperity and welfare of my country. Millions of adolescents and young individuals endure and suffer at the hands of inadequate sexual knowledge about subject matters such as the biology of sexual reproduction, sexual health, gender diversity and sexual orientation, menstruation, bodily changes, STIs and gender-constructed discrimination and violence. The traditional, outdated cultural norms and socio-cultural array of principles and beliefs that frown upon a slight conversation of sexual and reproductive issues restrict exposure and open communication in our socially-constructed society. The prevalent social stigma that is attached to the willingness to seek professional mental health therapy and treatment brings forth challenges, alongside staining accusations to the family honor: "Khan Sahb ki beti therapy session ley rahi hay, itna pesa, itna daulat yeh konga depression hay, zaroor boyfriend kay sath breakup hoaya hoga".

The patriarchal nature of our society represents an unequal, disproportionate power relationship between men and women which limits the women's right to exercise autonomy and self-governance over their own bodies and negotiating innocuous intercourse. Child brides grieve through marital rape and forced childbearing in consequence to the social and cultural pressure infused upon them. Lack of youth-friendly resources, health services and sexual skills makes our young populace prone to increased risks of pregnancy and abortion; substance abuse, nicotine and drug addiction; and exposure to sexually transmitted infections like HIV/AIDs. Founder of the youth-based NGO Aahung, Shazia Mohamed was appalled to hear about the lack of awareness regarding menstruation in rural girls who spoke of the traumatic experience as "they thought they were bleeding to death". An essential, fundamental human right required to empower our nation's youth, Sexual and Reproductive Health is intrinsic to an individual's entitlement to life, liberty, education, health and privacy; through proper introduction and implementation of a Sexual and Reproductive Health educational curriculum in nationwide schooling institutions and sufficient resources devoted to spread knowledge about dealing with the physiological and psychological modifications throughout a young child's lifespan, we can break the cycle of non progressiveness and poverty by raising a self-esteemed and confident young generation.

Author- Eman Danish



To start off, Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) & Rights Services encompass efforts to eliminate preventable maternal and neonatal mortality and morbidity, to ensure quality sexual and reproductive health services, including contraceptive services, and to address sexually transmitted infections (STI) and cervical cancer, violence against women and girls, and sexual and reproductive health needs of adolescents.

If we focus on the challenges of young people, they differ slightly. One of the simplest being the lack of awareness regarding the topic. Talking about anything whether it is sexual intercourse or even your period is considered either a cultural taboo or 'gross'. The lack of conversation leads children to search the internet for information which is often inaccurate. Lack of information can also lead to teenage pregnancies and children getting STI's.

There are a lot of barriers in place for an adolescent to access SRH services if they face any of the previously mentioned situations. Inconvenient hours and high costs for services make it tough. Paired with the stigma leads to girls opting to get abortions under unhygienic conditions or for them to die due to pregnancy related complications. The inability for adolescents to get checked for STI's which could lead to deterioration of health. When it comes to policy, the main problem is that this is still a stigma in society, if we don't acknowledge the problems the government won't either. Which is why SRH rights for adolescents has taken a backseat which won't change till we don't change.

Author- Eman Fatima



A naïve 13 year old girl, Sadika, in the tribal belts of Balochistan who just hit puberty was pulled out of school because she stained her uniform and bench. That girl went home and jumped off the building, and that is the amount of shame and embarrassment that orbits around a simple biological function called periods. Young boys often make it to news when they are caught by the ruthless, cruel jaws of pedophiles on the streets. These anecdotal truths only constitute a minor fraction of the wide and vivid painting of the painful state of sexual education and reproductive health rights services in Pakistan.

The state of services and rights in Pakistan will only embark on a venture of improvisation when there is a certain degree of conversation around these subjects. When sanitary pads will no longer be draped in opaque paper bags as though they are weapons of war, or conversation about ones biology will be no longer shunned as crime of the century. The premise of the problem is the lack of conversation eventually leading to lack of awareness. While the world is witnessing a stark revolution and is abandoning the painful, downtrodden values it was fraught with, there is still a long way to go to finally eradicate that shame. While the amount of pain endured by women in these realms outnumbers the grievances of young men, it would be unfair to ostracize them from the pool of victims. It is not a gender issue – it is a human issue.

Author- Rafay



We are living in a world with advanced technologies, a modern era, and yet if we take a look at our health services; we will find a pyramid matching the ruins left from Egypt a poorly constructed structure with many loopholes. Young people not only get deprived of their rights but they are also judged on their sexual preferences. If we take a look at the rights of biological sects, we can see that the transgender sect is mostly affected for example mostly government official posts only have two options to be filled from; male or female. Other than the transgender, women and their reproductive rights are mostly non-effective, for example, we can still see some local clinics performing illegal abortions which can put the mother's life in danger too. Even with all these new laws added into the form, there are not many effective laws that help in securing these rights which is the main problem. There are still no proper treatments for the sexual diseases faced by the youngsters and no proper guidance for women living in villages while they undergo their menstrual period. Young people don't need only written facts but they want real action. Recently we can see that the government has slowly started to normalize rights for the transgender community, which is a great head-start but we are still lacking behind this if we compare our country with others.

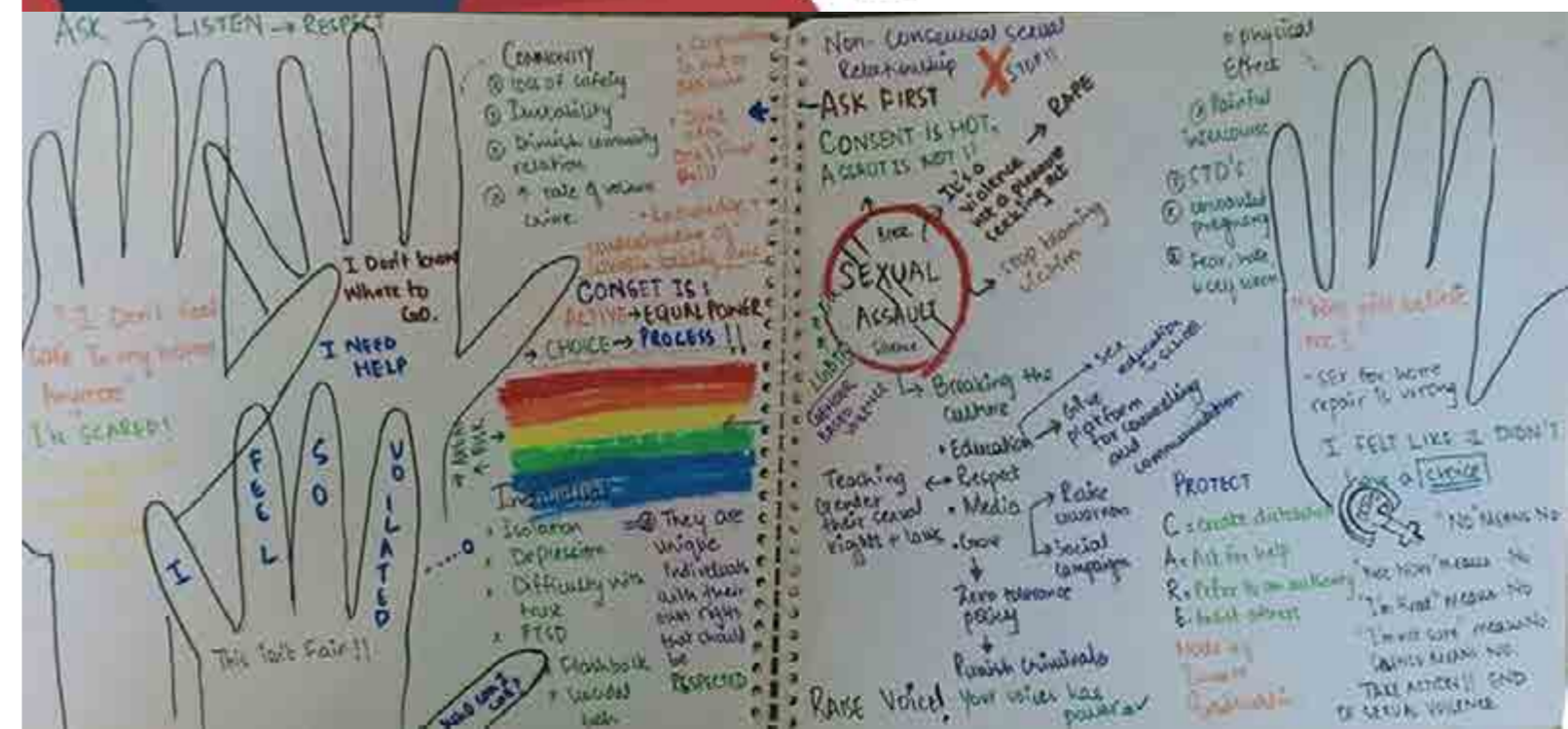
Author-Faryal Tariq



Sabeeh Lalani

BREAK THE SILENCE

IT IS A CRIME



What change young people seek to improve Sexual and Reproductive Health & Rights Services?

Sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights or SRHR is a concept of sexual and reproductive human rights. The combination of the four categories that in some cases is very different from each other, but less so or not in some cases. These four platforms are sexual health, sexual rights, reproductive health and reproductive rights.

Good sexual and reproductive health is the state of complete physical, mental and social health in all matters pertaining to the reproductive system. It means that people can have a satisfying and safe sexual life, reproductive capacity, and the freedom to decide when, and how often. To maintain individual sexual and reproductive health, people need access to accurate information and a safe, effective, inexpensive and acceptable safety method. They must be informed and empowered to protect themselves from sexually transmitted diseases. And when they decide to have children, women should be able to access services that can help them get pregnant properly, a safe delivery and a healthy baby.

High-level and consistent interventions include direct provision of contraception, peer education, and a mass media campaign. To reduce unwanted pregnancies, the use of contraceptives is very important. Many interventions focus on outcomes related to reducing risk behavior, such as the reduction in the number of sexual partners and promoting condom use. Half of the high-quality interventions that significantly reduced the diagnosis of STIs or STI symptoms were multiple media campaigns. High-level strategies are focused on avoiding focusing on early marriage in interventions to ensure that schooling is more beneficial for girls' families than marriage.

Author-Fatima Ikram



ARE YOU ONE OF THEM?

1 IN 4 WOMEN EXPERIENCE SEXUAL HARRASMENT

START FIGHTING FOR YOUR RIGHT.

BREAK THE SILENCE

Sabeeh Lalani



"...and "that" chapter was torn out from our books. One girl had it so the whole class borrowed her book to read it."

I felt that this short extract from my diary in 8th grade aptly portrays one major setback in terms of the youth's understanding of and access to their sexual and reproductive health and rights – education. Or rather, a lack of it. Despite being an inevitable part of life, sex education is seen as a taboo in our society, often not an official part of school curricula. An inexorable consequence of depriving the youth of this knowledge, is the further challenges that stem from it: attaching labels, and the reluctance of people to embrace their sexuality and aspects associated with it.

I remember when I as a child felt ashamed mentioning my periods, unable to even talk to a gynecologist about them. I remember when at times someone's menstrual pad was accidentally seen by other students, or when a girl had her period in school and stained her uniform in an all-girl classroom, it elicited some horrified gasps and a hushed "jaldi chhupao" from someone else, while the culprit fumbled in embarrassment. Menstruation is just one of the numerous examples of stigmatization of SRHR. By labelling such matters (through both cultural and religious lens) as almost condemnable, society creates a hurdle for people, especially the youth, seeking services that should be commonly accessible by the general public, for instance healthcare for STDs, contraception, family planning, abortion and transgender health, to name a few very necessary ones.

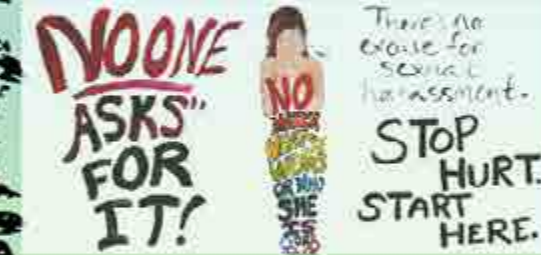
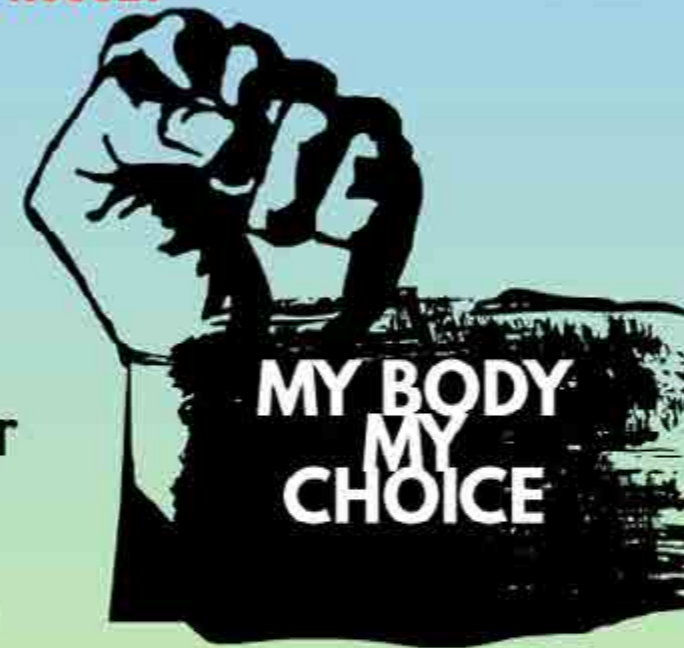
Author-Fiza Zaheer (Winner of the Festival)

STOP SEXUAL ASSULT

CONSENT IS HOT, SEXUAL ASSULT IS NOT

sex with anyone
under age of 18 is
prohibited

Zero
tolerance for
sexual
exploitation
and abuse



No means No! ASK FIRST

ask for consent



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FORGETTING IS DIFFICULT
REMEMBRING IS WORSE!!

1 IN 4
WOMEN EXPERIENCED
SEXUAL HARASSMENT
IN THE LAST 5 YEARS

FIGHT !! The most effective weapon
against sexual harrasment is prevention

Sabeeh Lalani

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To speak with someone who is trained to help You are not alone in this



Since always one can scrutinize the tragedian violation of rights and services especially the ones supporting the younger groups.

Globally the younger peers are subjected to substance abuse, materialism pressures, negative stereotyping, body related issues et cetera.

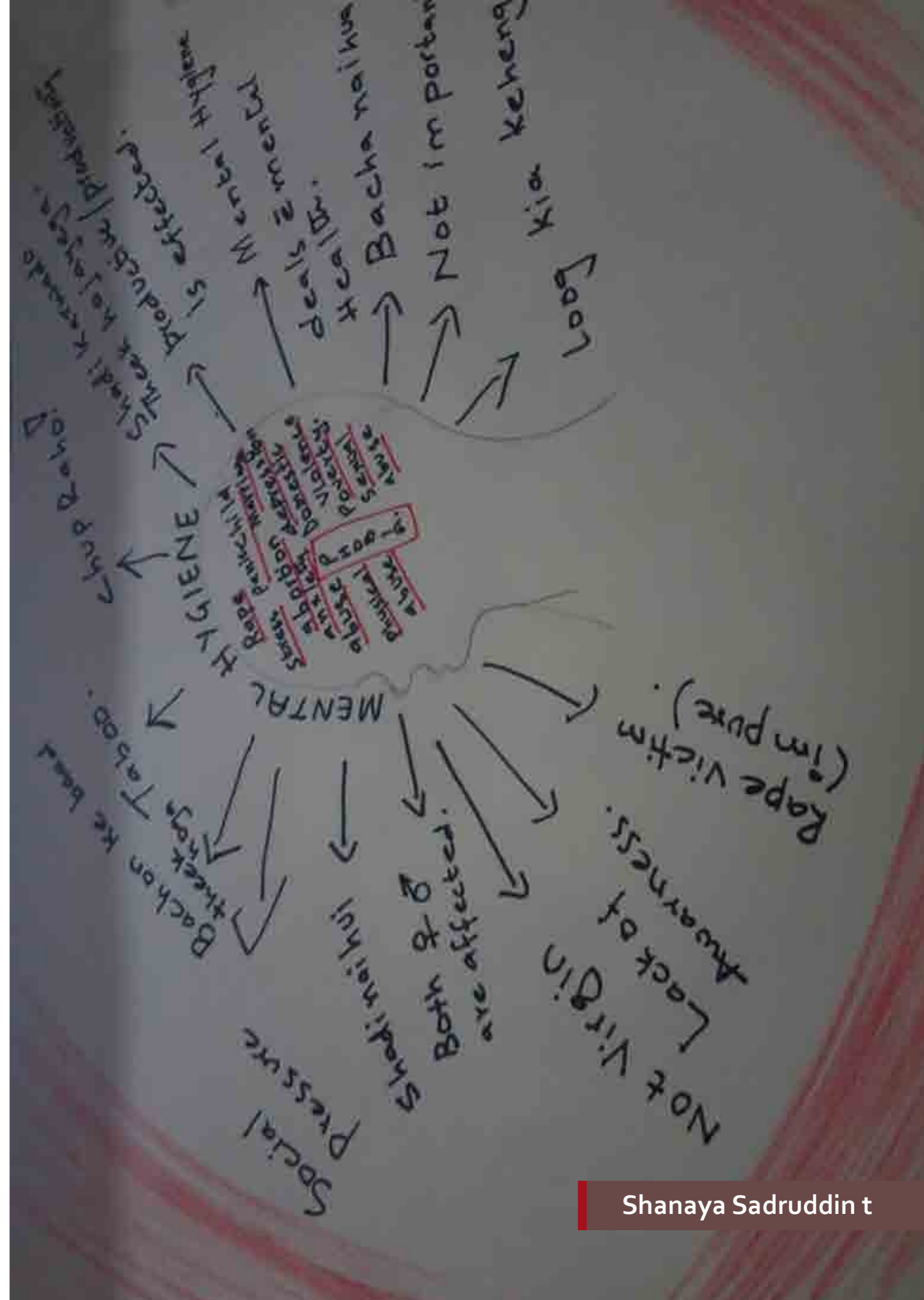
Explicitly talking about the Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights services one can prorate that most of the younger generations have no idea what rights or services are we essentially referring to, and why is that? The Lack of awareness and information highlights the maximum major challenge when we talk about this status quo. Youngsters have no idea how this lack can result into a sore and upsetting receiving of adulthood.

Challenges and barriers grows even stronger when they are settled at the lowest priority not only by the law but our very own cultural, societal and religious norms which inclines to fashion a very obstinate environment when communicated such basic services. The biases of stereotyping the sexual activity diminishes the level of discussion especially if the rights are to be provided to a sexually active but unmarried individuals. Not only unmarried but married juveniles are ignored as per the lack of youth friendly services.

Deficiency of care because of societal embarrassment, myths, lack of knowledge and stigmas and lack of confidentiality plays a vital role in raising unwanted births and defilement the reproduction system.

Challenges are subsequently countless and absurd that there is no full stop and there are no solutions observed unless economic and physical accessibilities show signs to bring a change.

Author-Hafsa Noor Fatima



In our culture, it is believed that men have rights over women but many of those rights are abused. Our culture has been very toxic and many rights have been violated, like woman's right to be intimate by her own choice. A lot of women all over Pakistan marry and have children, but it's not necessary that it is by their own choice, it's extremely upsetting and deranged that men force themselves on women committing one of the worst forms of domestic violence known as marital rape. The concept on consent is much unknown to men in this country, and has caused many psychological issues among women who cannot talk about it on any platform because they are afraid of people. They are scared of the mentality of people who would say things like, "He's your husband, and he has right over your body." and "its okay, I mean you would have been intimate with him at some point, so what?" So there's no particular platform where women can speak up about such atrocities committed by the opposite gender. So what I do not understand is when such women have children, are they happy? Or do they feel fearful of their husband who they are supposed to trust and are scared that they he may attack at me at any time, or whenever he likes and feel hopeless because they can't do anything about it. We cannot even imagine that helplessness or fear that they feel just be their presence.

Author- Hamna Rehman



Shanaya Sadruddin

I STAND AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

60% of high school girls report being physically or sexually assaulted by a male partner.

REPORT AN INCIDENT,
MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

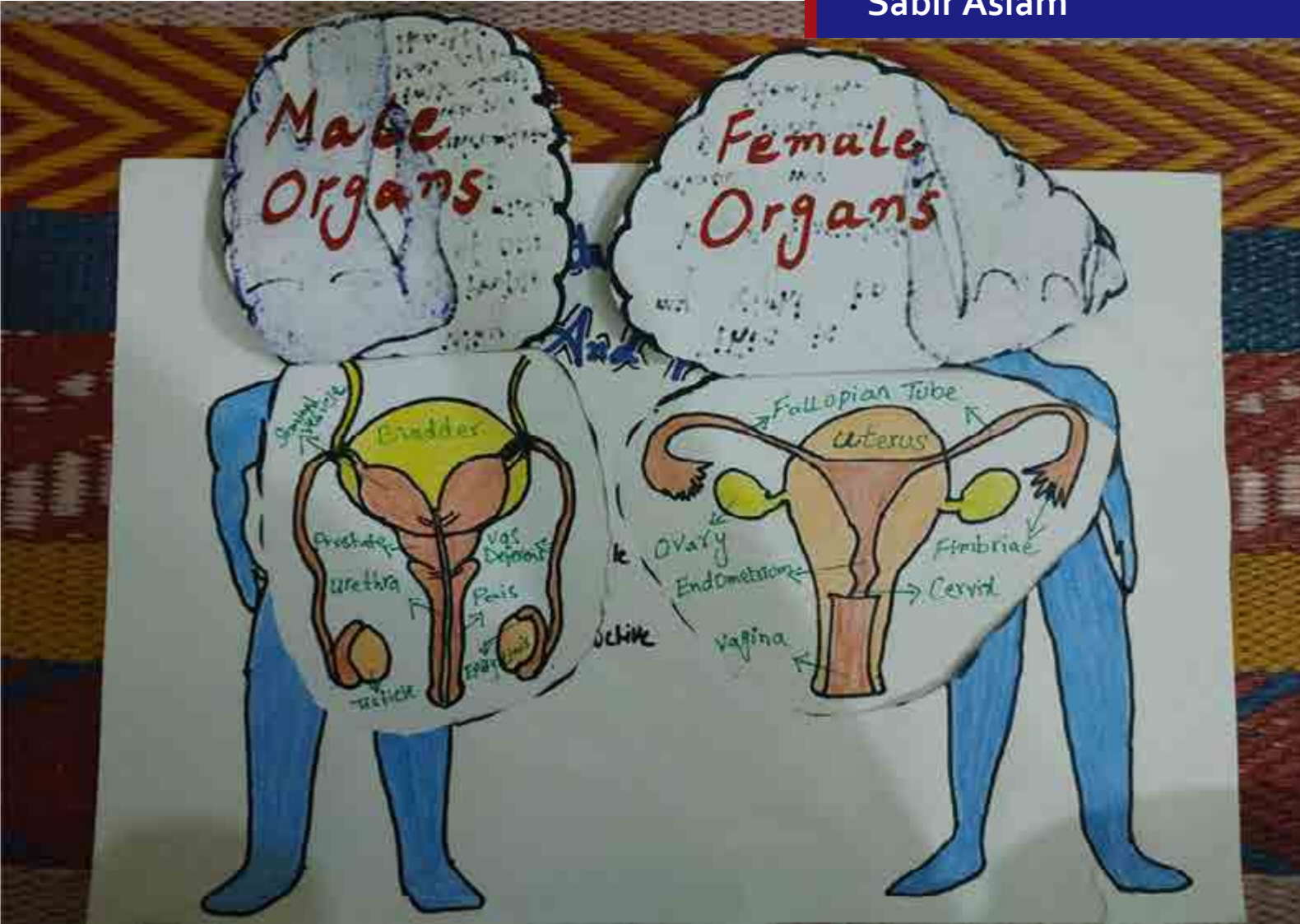
BREAK THE
SILENCE

World is evaluating every day yet there are things and issues which clearly require more than just mere consideration; that demands serious actions. One of the most important yet ignored issue is unequal sexual rights and reproductive health. This is challenge especially faced by adolescents from 10-24 years of age. The main issue is the conservative and polluted mind sets of society. The early marriages, kids having no say in their marriage or when they want to take responsibility of parenthood, forced marriages everything combines up to dreadful and painful realities of life. Girls are the most affected in this ignorance as their life is endangered due to all they suffer. Young girls are forcefully married to men thrice their age, who force themselves on these girls. These girls have no right over their bodies and do not have any protection. They suffer their whole lives. The suffering ends by death caused by men forcing themselves on the poor souls or by getting pregnant which worsen their health and they either die or lose the baby; in the later case they are so fragile that they do not survive afterwards. Not just this but also when women are grown up but not ready to have babies and build a family, but the norms of society force them too. Measures should be taken as a lot of lives are at stake and if this is not address timely, there are a huge chance of society collapsing.

Author- Ifraeem Yousaf



Sabir Aslam



Mitti Ke Bartan

A blog on the complexities that entail the life of a rape survivor.

Carrying the ghadda brimful of water, i walk myself home with a thought that leaves me anguished. A thought about the vessel i fit between my sides and the front of my arm. Mitti ke yeh bartan they say, are the vessels that mirror the entirety of my existence to its fullest and its deepest. Because these vessels when smashed or hit against each other, don't clatter and clink like a metal plate or a wooden pot. They simply break. And then they lie bare on the floor as bits of mud and clay losing their bodies like a martyr does his own, in the course of a deadly war. Like i lose my own, as someone pins me down to the bare dry land and leaves me behind in bits and pieces of khaaq and mitti.

Mitti ke yeh bartan, are the equivalent of my body, reminding me each second in the scariest of ways, about the fragility of my being. The weakness of my body. And the helplessness of my soul. How all it would take for a man to break me, is a whimper, an echo, a whine and a shout. How after i am broken and my honor is no more, im nothing but a piece of broken flesh and bone and nothing else at all.

Mitti ke yeh bartan, embody me the way nothing else does. But sometimes I wonder why an object really does mirror the depths of my wujood?

Author- Imaan Fatima

CHALLENGES FACING THE YOUTH



EARLY MARRIAGES
forced marriages of
children under 18

Zoha Malik

SEXUAL ABUSE
Harassment and
exploitation of
children



LACK OF AWARENESS
Lack of sex education
at home and schools

Child rights
matter!



Pakistan is the fourth worst country for women according to the rankings of the Women, Peace and Security Index last year. A study by the Center for Economic Research in Pakistan (CERP) reported 70% of the surveyed men discouraged their female family members from using public wagon services. In these wagon services, there is very limited seating capacity exclusive to women. Moreover, when compartments do exist, they are not fully segregated. This results in ungentlemanly staring, uncivil comments, and inappropriate touching by fellow men passengers and service staff. Most drivers and conductors, themselves, lack any sort of training in regard to passenger harassment and/or dealing with passenger-to-passenger harassment. Recently, there are a number of women transportation services running in Pakistan, however their services, so far, remain very limited geographic spare.

Moreover, 79% of Pakistani women are unaware of their menstrual hygiene which eventually leads them to many severe complications even death, as in every 48 hours a woman dies in Pakistan just because of poor mensurational management, even if they're aware the still buying a sanitary pad is misery in Pakistan from being writing it into a separate piece of paper to getting it home in black opaque packaging makes you feel like a criminal awfully we live in a society where buying death is considered to be art while buying life is considered to be a taboo.

However, let's do some maths now as you all know that according to the World population Index, Pakistan has one of the highest numbers of the youth population in the world which makes us more prone towards the development but that not the case actually, the fact is that 51% of your youth population is female which eventually means that more than half of your so-called youth population is underprivileged, they don't have any access to their reproductive health, they're being thrown out of the schools because of they bleed, they don't have right of proper education, they are victims of early marriages which makes them more towards maternal mortality, they're malnourished because boys are always preferred for to be fed first isn't?

History is evidence that developing your youth is the only way to develop a nation and see that's what we're doing with the major half of our youth population. What a masterstroke towards development, I'm speechless!!

Author- Innara Lalani



Sexual and reproductive health & rights Services Changes and Solution.

Overview:

The challenges and the solution or changes young people seek in order to have a healthier and safer sexual and reproductive life are mentioned in this document.

The challenges:

The society we live in, have these taboos about SRHR which are to be followed by youth wither they want it or not.

Enlisted below are the challenges youth face:

- Environment
- Lack of proper education of SRHR
- Unwanted and unsafe sexual relations
- Gender inequality
- Early sexual initiation

The solution:

Our environment doesn't support the sharing of SRH related problems as it's considered embarrassing.

Young people should get a supportive environment both from their family and school so that they can freely be able to share everything.

Poor education leads young generation to media which is indeed a notorious source of sex education leading to increased rape cases.

Proper SRHR education is necessary so that they be well aware of their rights and their boundaries as well.

Proper education and support will lead to safe and healthier SRH.

Gender inequality should be addressed because the opinions of young female are not considered neither in their marriages nor in marital life.

The opinions of young people should be considered about marriages (wither they are ready or not) so that early sexual initiation be prevented.

Application of these solutions would lead to a better SRHR, decrease in divorce rate and decrease in rape cases overall.

Author-Iqra Munir

1 in 3 Girls in Developing Countries
are Married before
The Age of 18.



Sabir Aslam



Growing up as a Pakistani girl, I realised very early on that there was a dichotomy between us and them. I was always told that it isn't about us, it's about them. That it wasn't I who or anyone from my family who thought like this, it was people outside of home who did. And, to prevent them from thinking like that - I was the one who had to make amends to the way I dressed or felt about my body. Ironically, even when I've always dressed "decently" according to my society's definition, I still can't count the number of times I've been subject to such to the gaze.

As a female in my country, the gaze always shifts from gazes to the point where you just cannot count the number of times you have been wrongfully looked at. What was common in all of these times is that I felt as if the autonomy of my body had been taken away from me, and that I must adapt it to suit the likes, wants and preferences of men. Such ideology becomes more prominent because our culture perpetuates a mindset where the female body is glorified, but only for the sake of unleashing and adorning at the right time. It is terrifying to live with the reality that women really are never safe. They are taught to stay on guard from their childhood, even in the confines of their own homes, a place that should be safe for everyone.

Author- Jovera Shakeel



Sabir Aslam

What change young people seek to improve Sexual and Reproductive Health & Rights Services?

The world is home to the largest generation of young people in history, with more than 1.75 billion people aged between 10 and 24 year. The World Health Organization (WHO) defines young people as those aged 10–24 years, while youths are defined as those aged 10–19 years. This is a very diverse group of individuals whose life circumstances and opportunities and obstacles to improve their lives vary considerably from country to country.

To influence the youth creating separate facilities for young people is not always necessary; rather, the existing healthcare system should be organized to better address their needs. Once young people have indicated their confidence and trust in the system, they will use it to obtain relevant information and services. To achieve this goal, specific barriers must be removed, such as professionals' bias and negative attitudes toward sexually active young people. The interpersonal competence of professionals requires reflection on personal beliefs and the influence of those beliefs on their interactions with young people.

When young people have access to health and education, they become a powerful force for economic development and positive change. Professionals in their role as clinicians should continuously reflect on their values, attitudes, and commitment to the SRHR of young people, and must be competent to provide the services. There is an urgent need for more efficient, high-quality, interdisciplinary collaborative care, and greater access to it. Health managers should be proactive in advocating for changes in policies and laws that restrict access to sexual and reproductive health services for young people. It is also crucial to evaluate and document the impact of SRHR interventions on young people's morbidity and mortality.

Author-Kainat Shad



Sabir Aslam





Author-Khadija Aslam

SRHR is the idea of human rights towards sexuality and reproduction. This is the wide term that includes four major field sexual health, sexual rights, reproductive health and reproductive rights. Directly coming towards the challenges that are faced by adolescents regarding this idea in this era of life where everything is getting advanced day by day. There has been public and private challenge especially by backward cultures hierarchies, to the abstraction of rights to sexual and reproductive health. For instance, bride price and dowry that is very common in countries like India and Uganda. Early pregnancy challenges, forced early marriages, forced abortion; Gender based violence, family planning and many others these kinds of issues are mainly faced by women. These kinds of challenges are also faced by men and further results in marital conflicts. Many research articles are written on the relationship between men's sexual dysfunctioning and marital conflict. Men are even unable to discuss their matters with anyone because people make fun of them and taunt them. Moreover, if anyone consults to doctor regarding any this kind of issue, even society not accepts him. Due to these challenges, men hide this issue and resulting in marital conflicts. In order to avoid and remove these issues in future, all girls and boys should be given lectures and institutions should give knowledge regarding this topic. A well-designed sport programme can create activities and sessions that target and serve this need.



Sabir Aslam

Living in the south of Asia, in a country with a population of 212.2 million and where 64% of the nation is younger than 30. This means more than half of the people in the country are youth. The age group when one is growing emotionally and physically and need personal guidance because the majority of them hesitate to discuss their problems. Especially in this digital era, youth is in a complex dilemma. Common issues faced by them are harassment, online bullying, blackmailing, hate comments, data breach, inferiority, spying, suppression, etc. They need the right counseling regarding personal hygiene, overcoming fears and failures, sex and relationships, guilt complexes, self-control, personal satisfaction, opting right career, and to make productive decisions for their life.

In Pakistan, discussing gender roles, sexual and reproductive health or family planning are considered taboos and violation of religious boundaries. Here is when the problem occurs. We have to understand that discussing sexual rights doesn't mean male-female intimacy or corrupting a young mindset; instead, it means preparation for adulthood.

If being a teenager I talk about myself regarding the challenge I have been facing in this case then it will be quite noticeable that in my 19 years of life I was never told me about anything regarding these rights and surprisingly the majority of my age don't know about it. Guess what? All kids are left on their own to discover this either through porn sites by the overindulged, narcissistic spoiled brats.

Author- Laiba Umar



What change young people seek to improve Sexual and Reproductive Health & Rights Services

As they grow up, young people face important decisions about relationships, sexuality, and sexual behavior. Young people have the right to lead healthy lives, and society has the responsibility to prepare youth by providing them with comprehensive sexual health education that gives them the tools they need to make healthy decisions. This provides an overview of research on effective sex education, laws and policies that shape it, and how it can change young generation lives. Sex education should be informed by evidence of what works best to prevent unintended pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections, early marriages. Sex education should treat sexual development as a normal, natural part of human development. Avoid negative health consequences. Communicate about sexuality and sexual health. It is always very important in every aspects of life to teach our youngsters about precautions. Here comes that in which age we should teach our youth. I think in 6th grade this is the best age of a child to build up his or her mind. On physical and emotional changes in puberty of both genders. Also about sexual harassment, rape intercourse without love, birth control and abortion, falling in love and marriage these are some lessons that a child should learn from grade 6th. In grade 6th student tends to pick and memorize things because it is the prime of their mind and body. They should be taught via special guest lectures, video animation and other means of knowledge but notable aspect is that learning should start early.

Author-Maheen Baber

CHALLENGES OF YOUNG PEOPLE SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHT SERVICES

CHALLENGES

- *Many teachers do not have the skills, time or motivation to adequately teach sexuality education and are often uncomfortable teaching about SRH.
- *Parents can have difficulty clearly communicating with their children about SRH issues and thus expect teachers to do this for them.
- *Community members are often unsupportive of sexuality education project.
- *Health workers can scold youth instead of giving them the SRH services they need, making health centres the last place young people want to go.

FACTORS

- * Education
- * Employment and economic circumstances
- * Family environment
- * Traditional & cultural structures
- * Women status

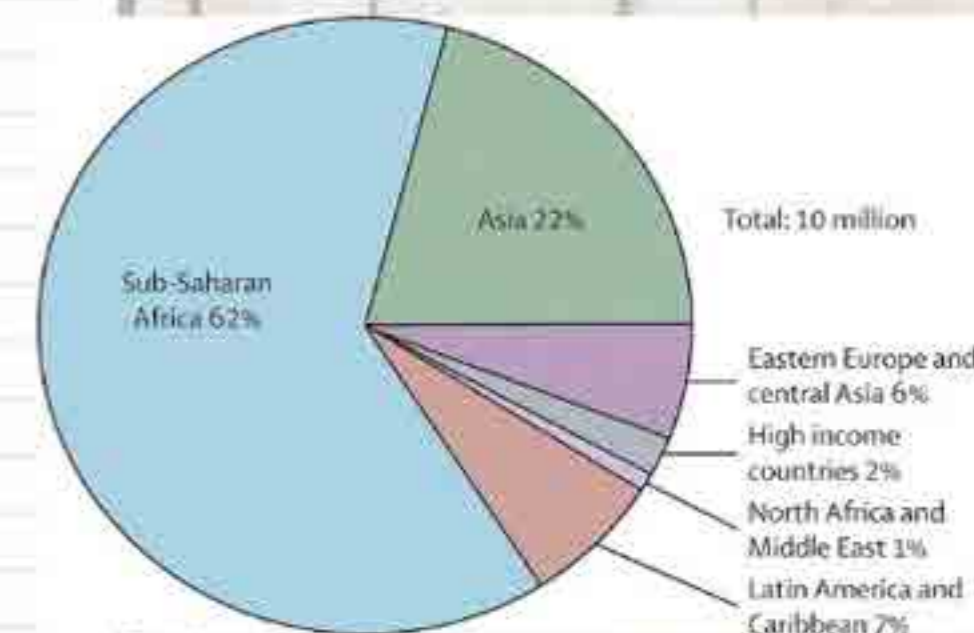
CONCLUSIONS

Public Health is one of the efforts organized by society to protect, promote, and restore the peoples' health. Public health is the combination of science, skills, and beliefs that is directed to the maintenance and improvement of the health of all the people through collective or social actions.

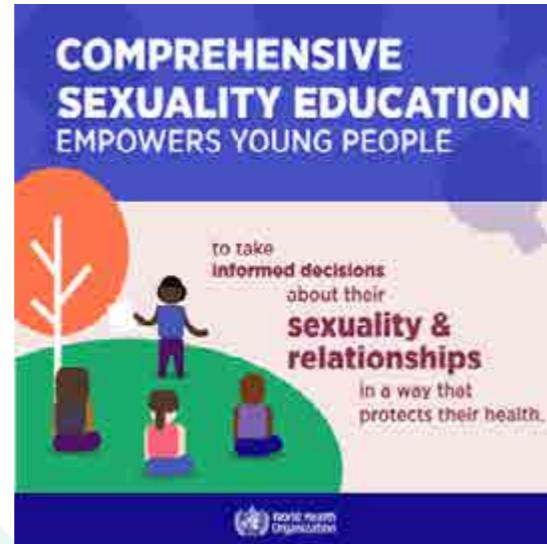
AWARENESS

Awareness will be given to youth by:

- * Information & skills
- * Safe & supportive environment
- * Health & counselling services
- * Involving them in young people program
- * Providing them accurate information
- * By addressing barriers
- * By providing information to them through media

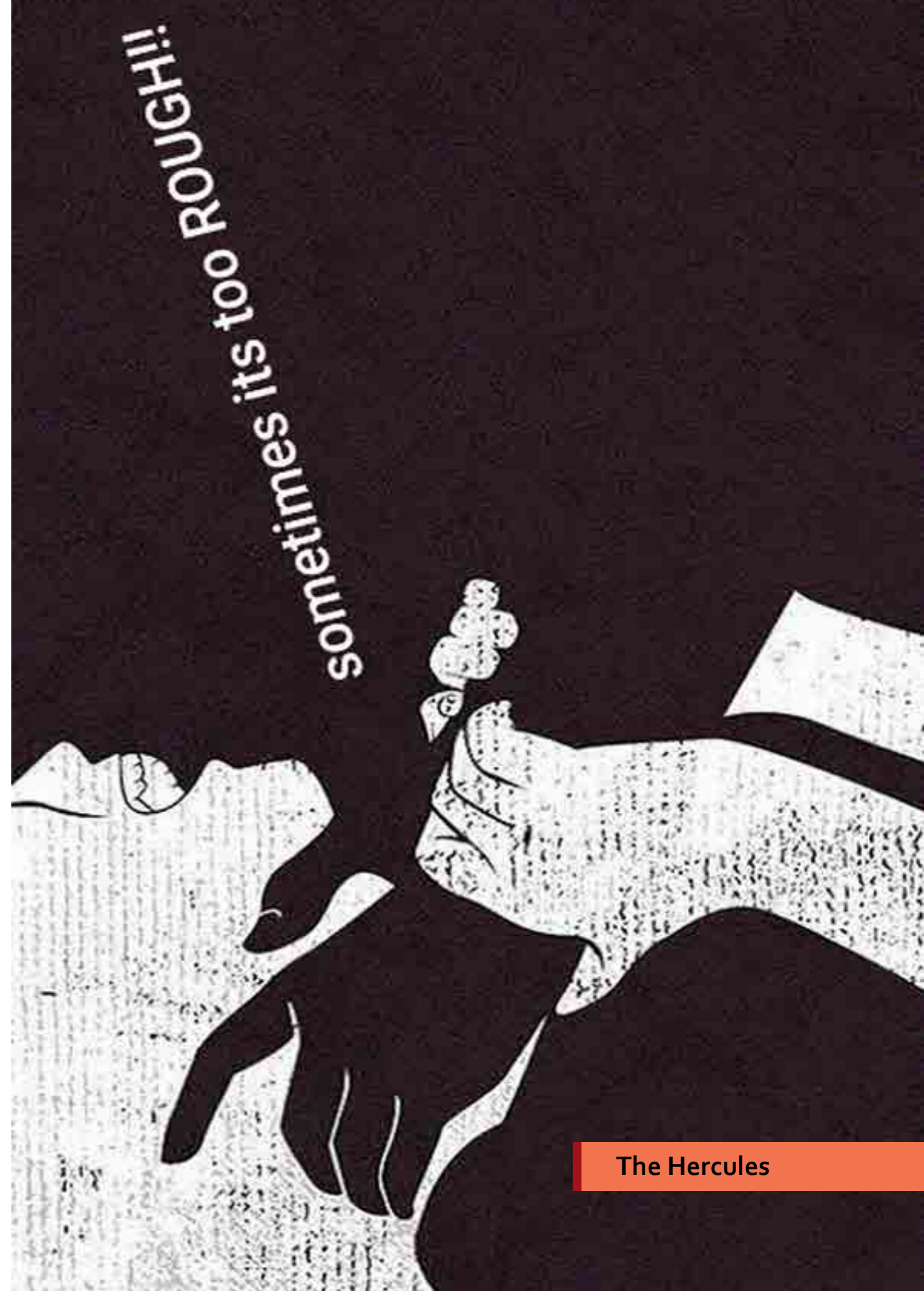


According to UNFPA, good sexual and reproductive health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being in all matters relating to the reproductive system. It implies that people are able to have a satisfying and safe sex life, the capability to reproduce, and the freedom to decide if, when, and how often to do so. However it is highly infelicitous that SRH conditions continue to cause diseases and inconveniences, even in the 21st century. A leading cause of these complications is the stigma and discrimination attached to sexual and reproductive health and rights. Stigma is a social construct which occurs when an individual or group is identified as being different from a perceived norm and is hence subjected to labelling, disapproval or discrimination. Stigma and discrimination are distinct but interlinked concepts. In this context, discrimination occurs when societal conditions constrain wellbeing and access to opportunities and resources such as the adequate health care facilities or quality care. Discrimination can be an expression of stigma. Thus the stigma attached to family planning and contraception leads to unsafe and in most cases, unwanted sexual relations. Not only does it increase the risk of pregnancy but also causes sexually transmitted infections including HIV. In 2018 an estimated 37.9 million people were living with HIV. Around 21% of these same people do not know that they have the virus. By this, it can also be concluded that illiteracy and ignorance are other, major challenges affecting SRHR. Youth is not provided the necessary education by authentic sources such as parents and schools and thus the teenagers turn to inauthentic sources such as their age mates who are also naive about these issues. Neither pre-marital sex nor sex within marriage is always consensual, although males unlikely to admit, perpetrate forced sex on female partners/wives. Evidence says that women who have experienced sexual coercion are more likely to experience genital infections and pregnancy loss than the others. Furthermore the situation is worsened in areas where abortion is illegal, making life harder for the women who are enforced into sexual activity. As a result these women, some of them being very less in age, have to go through childbearing, oftentimes without a husband.



Pakistan is the sixth most populous country in the world with a prominent youth slot. However, the sexual and reproductive health and right concerns of the population, particularly the youth, remain unaddressed at the policy level as well in terms of implementation. The patriarchy in our society is an important factor which curbs girls and women to exercise autonomy when it comes to making decisions about their own bodies or negotiate safer sex. The most important way to bring a change is to turn the mindsets of the population into a thinking which makes the subject of sexual and reproductive health and rights more inviting and open for consideration.

Author-Maheen Umar



Challenges of Youth SRHR Services

SRHR is a fusion of human rights and reproductive and sexual rights. But how often are they fulfilled?

A typical lower class girl doesn't have access to affordable sanitary-products leading her to stay away from school during her PMS and eventually drop out. Within a few years she is married and moves out to her husband's home. Owing to lack of sex-ed, she starts an intimate relationship without family planning or birth control resulting in a pregnancy. Patriarchal norms suggest that a son should be born. If this doesn't happen, being unaware of her reproductive rights, she tries again under societal pressure and risks her health. She faces serious health issues but cannot receive an abortion because it hurts religious sentiments and is mostly illegal. When a girl is born again the cycles repeats. These girls undergo the same fate.

This narrative outlines the gist of challenges faces by the youth.

Provision of sex-ed is objected. Sanitary products are a luxury. 'Marital Rape' and concept of bodily autonomy are considered hokum. Abortions and use of contraceptives are considered 'un-islamic'. Reproductive rights like of men and women are neglected. Women are forced to undergo repeated pregnancies resulting in health issues, infertility or death.

Therefore validation of a violation becomes difficult when the general public is unable to identify it or accept it as a violation.

This is the major challenge faced by the SRHR services: overthrowing patriarchal concepts and rigid religious sentiments of the public.

Author- Momna Mudassar

BREAK THE
SILENCE.
 BREAK THE CHAINS
LET IT BE HEARD,
 LET YOUR VOICE
PROCLAIM!



Change Young People Seek to Improve Sexual and Reproductive Health and Right Services

Introduction

The world is home to the largest generation of young people in history, with more than 1.75 billion people aged between 10 and 24 years [1]. The World Health Organization (WHO) defines young people as those aged 10–24 years, while adolescents are defined as those aged 10–19 years. This is a very diverse group of individuals whose life circumstances and opportunities and obstacles to improve their lives vary considerably from country to country. In 1994, the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) drew attention to the special needs of adolescents regarding sexual and reproductive health [2]. Statistics show that 17 million young women aged 15–19 years give birth every year, half of all new HIV infections are among people aged 15–24 years, and over 6000 contract the HIV virus daily [1]. There are 2.6 million deaths annually among young people, the majority of which are preventable. At the 64th World Health Assembly, held in Geneva in May 2011, the report by the Secretariat on Youth and Health Risks and the Resolution proposed by Tunisia (cosponsored by Finland and Hungary) received overwhelming support and were adopted. The Resolution calls on Member States to increase their efforts on the health of young people and consider this important population group in all policies within and beyond the health sector [3].

2. A rights approach to sexual and reproductive services for young people

Given that the principle of nondiscrimination is central to human rights, and that discrimination itself constitutes a violation of human rights, one important way of combating stigma and discrimination in relation to young people's sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) is within a human rights framework. Promoting rights-based perspectives in relation to HIV/AIDS, sexual diversity, and access to information and services is a powerful strategy to emphasize the validity of young people's claims to the knowledge and resources they need. 2.1. Sexual rights and sexual health of young people Sexuality is central to all phases of a person's life, and this includes young people. Comprehensive sexuality education and accessibility of gender-sensitive services should be central to youth-friendly services. It is important that young people are able to explore, experience, and express their sexuality in healthy, positive, pleasurable, and safe ways. This can only happen when the sexual rights of young people are respected. The International Planned Parenthood Federation's (IPPF) Declaration of Sexual Rights supports a comprehensive vision of sexuality [4]. It provides a framework for the application of basic human rights to sexuality. It is an important reference tool for service provision to all and addresses stigma related to sexuality. Young people's sexual rights are more complex than those of adults. There is a common misconception that young people should not be sexual beings, with the exception of certain groups, such as those who are married or above a certain age. The concept of the evolving capacity of young people stems from the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. "Evolving capacity" means that each young person gradually develops the ability to take full responsibility for their own actions and decisions. At any given age, some will be more mature and experienced than others. Social inequities also influence young people's capacities

3. The value of youth participation in programs

Effective involvement of young people in the design, implementation, and evaluation of programs helps to ensure that their needs are addressed. Results of a study carried out by 10 young researchers on adolescent sexuality and the barriers to the uptake of youthfriendly sexual and reproductive health services in Bangladesh and Malawi found that [5]:

- Sexual and reproductive health services

often have a strong focus on physical issues, but the young people involved felt that their concerns are often more related to social and mental aspects of sexual and reproductive health.

- Young people perceived that the services were for those who were sexually active or adults only.
- Social stigma is a significant barrier for young people to access sexual and reproductive health services, along with physical and material barriers such as distance to services and limitations of time, mobility, and costs.
- Peer educators and community mobilization form an important and effective strategy to increase awareness, demand, access, and quality, and also to establish partnerships with community. Young people utilize services more often when outreach activities are available; the services and condoms are free; and educators and professionals are young, nonjudgmental, of the same gender, and have a positive attitude toward young people's sexuality. The concept "youth friendly" is used by many organizations and health professionals; however, there is no real consensus on what it means in practice. Quality aspects of youth-friendly services concern respecting confidentiality, giving choices, and raising awareness of rights. Youth friendliness goes beyond service delivery settings to include community acceptance of young people's SRHR. In addition, demand-driven services contribute to quality by responding to the realities of young people's lives. It is important to create demand among the widest possible audience. This paper describes the relevant key aspects of youth-friendly services as part of a young person's journey and pathways to accessing health services. The paper also discusses how to: (1) create demand and make linkages with the community; (2) make young people accessing services feel welcome; and (3) follow up a young person's visit to the services.

4. Access to youth-friendly services

WHO defines an adolescent-friendly health service as one that is accessible, acceptable, equitable, appropriate, and effective [6]. Young people's access to services is affected by many factors, including ethnicity, lack of insurance coverage, clinical hours, transportation, attitudes and behaviors of professionals, and, most importantly, lack of privacy and confidentiality. A recent systematic review of contraceptive service delivery in the UK showed that the most significant concerns for young people are anonymity and confidentiality [7]. Fear of unfriendly and critical staff was also raised. A final evaluation study among 6 IPPF Member Associations showed similar results [8]. Health systems and providers must adapt to the needs of young people, particularly their preventive health needs.

5. Characteristics of young people accessing services

Service providers need to understand what makes young people seek services, but more importantly, what prevents them from coming. Providers need an understanding of the diversity of young people, their level of knowledge, and their perception of need. They must also realize that young people may be sexually active or not, married or single, HIV positive, heterosexual, homosexual, bisexual, or transgender. Not all young people accessing health services are literate, confident, know exactly what to expect, or are capable of explaining what they need or want. 6. Before a young person reaches a service delivery point Research has revealed many hurdles for young people who want or need to use services, including inconvenient hours, legal and policy hurdles, confidentiality concerns, fear of discrimination, disrespect, and high costs [7]. Young people seeking services may be disproportionately (compared with adults) subjected to discriminatory behavior from professionals. Studies in Kenya, Laos, and Zambia documented that one-half to two-thirds of professionals were unwilling to provide contraceptives to adolescents [9]. Young people may be particularly reluctant to seek services where extensive physical examination is performed if confidentiality and privacy are not assured. Although it may seem obvious, it is important to remember that despite how friendly a service may be, or how friendly the staff are, services cannot be considered "youth friendly" if young people are not actually using them. On the other hand, an effectively promoted service should not lack the necessary aspects of quality and warmth.



6. What makes young people access a service?

6.1.1. An attractive space It is important that a clinic is attractive and appealing for young people, including input and support from the community and decorations selected by those attending. 6.1.2. Price and accessible hours In principle, services for young people should be free of charge; however, if this is not possible, a voucher scheme for essential sexual and reproductive health services can be adopted to facilitate access. 6.1.3. Trained staff Health professionals should have additional qualities on top of appropriate training. Staff across the service delivery point should respond in a friendly and nonjudgmental manner. 6.1.4. Promoting services in the community In general, professionals concentrate on the service that they are providing, and in some cases on the needs and profile of the population, while neglecting the promotional aspect. Promotion may be perceived as being an additional effort, expense, and/or a diversion of resources. However, health promotion is important because it serves as the primary strategy to bridge the gap between existing services and young people. 6.2. Should a youth-friendly service be separate or integrated into existing services? Creating separate facilities for young people is not always necessary; rather, the existing healthcare system should be organized to better address their needs [10]. Once young people have indicated their confidence and trust in the system, they will use it to obtain relevant information and services. To achieve this goal, specific barriers must be removed, such as professionals' bias and negative attitudes toward sexually active young people. The interpersonal competence of professionals requires reflection on personal beliefs and the influence of those beliefs on their interactions with young people.

7. Once a young person reaches the service delivery point

When a young person reaches a service delivery point, the first interaction is paramount in putting them at ease and establishing rapport. Expressing genuine interest and being courteous and sensitive helps establish trust. The visitor may have spent days or weeks thinking about whether or not to seek services. Their decision to come should therefore be rewarded. First impressions are powerful and a bad experience may deter a young person from returning. It is also important to recognize that some young people may prefer to see a professional of the same gender; where possible, this choice should be offered to all attending the services. The service facilities available should comprise a private and soundproof space so that information gathering and history taking can be done confidentially. Careful and comprehensive interviewing and history taking are essential to address a young person's general health and well-being, and particularly any concerns about sexuality, psychosocial and economic factors, performance in school or employment, family functioning, and the characteristics of their communities. A vital part of history taking is to assess a young person's "connections" with their parents, school, teachers, and peers.

Author- Moazzam Ali

Pakistan's Population has been growing rapidly. In the last two decades alone, our population has increased by 70 million. With that the number of young people or else recognized as "Youth" is also increasing. One of the reasons behind this population increase is the illiteracy rate in our country that's also very high. Illiteracy rate stands at 60% as recorded back in 2017, which means more than half of the country's population is illiterate. That's because most of our people live in Rural areas where education is not provided or even if it is, it's not considered necessary especially for young girls to be educated. A woman is thought of a human being whose sole purpose is to get married, give birth to children and stay inside the four walls of her house. Girls are thrown forcefully into marriage at quite young age of 14 and 15 even. All she bears for the rest of her life is birth pain and beating of her husband. But the problem doesn't stop there, in poor family's young girls who get married at an early age our expected to give birth to at least 6 or 7 children, because they believe that more children they'll have more people to earn for their family. But not once it is asked from the young girl that will she be able to feed 6 or 7 children let alone bear the pain of their birth because if she argues she'll be considered a disgrace to the family.

Author- Muhammad Talha



First of all, before even considering of the types of challenges and issues can we all need to consider and highlight the point that how hard is it to even talk about these things. Even if it's your parents or your brother/sister. I know our religion doesn't let us talk about these things openly but at the age where our bodies are changing we have so many questions that are supposed to be answered since they are important for our health and future yet we either do not ask our parents because we are embarrassed "ke pata nae kia ho jaye gay a woh kia sochein ge (even though apne amma abba hi hain)" or if some of us even do ask they reply we get it "ye hota hai" or "koi bat nae" because they know it happened to them but even they didn't ask their parents and just ignored it. Some of these issues or questions are actually important because they might turn into actual medical problems if ignored at the start. These things that happen to our body are natural, they happen to every human on this planet but they are treated as if they are something wrong and should never be uttered about. I mean you're talking about them with your parents that gave you birth, that gave you every single body part that you have but you can't talk to them about those because that's what has been done for centuries.

Author- Nayfa Habib



In today's day and age, teenagers very early on in their lives face complex challenges when it comes to their sexual health. In our so called "MODERN SOCIETY" where technology is evolving every second, talking about sexual health is still considered extremely taboo and this is exactly where the problem lies. Had we educated our men and women regarding sexual health, had they learnt about sex from books instead of semi erotic, pornographic movies and magazines, little Zainab wouldn't have been raped by her relative so inhumanely at such a young age, neither the thousands of innocent children, teenagers and nor would've Pakistan been number 6th on child marriages all over the world. While the issue may seem quite deep rooted the key to this impetrated issue is as simple as teaching our children saying 'NO' loud and clear as well as reminding them constantly that "no means no". Adding sex education to the curriculum might even have better results as opposed to ripping off the reproduction chapter from biology text books. The selective woke-ness of our nation as a whole proves us to be quite hypocritical where we quickly run out to unsubstantially sentence a person accused of blasphemy but fail to hold a harasser accountable. The day we hang a rapist to death is the day we get to call our judiciary equitable, the day we listen to our child complaining about an uncle for an inappropriate touch is the day we get to call ourselves devoted parents and the day we quickly take action as we notice someone getting cat called is the day we get to call ourselves truly responsible citizens/ humans.

Author- Rameen Salman



What Change Young People Seek to Improve Sexual and Reproductive Health & Rights Services (Information, Services & Policies)

The terms 'sexual and reproductive health' are shrouded in stigmas within Pakistan. Despite being the 5th most populated country in the world with a large youth population, the topic of sexual and reproductive rights is hardly ever discussed. A survey revealed that a majority of girls thought that they were bleeding to death when they had their first period. This traumatic experience stemmed from the fact that neither their families nor their schools bothered to educate them on such a vital topic. Furthermore, our society- full of patriarchal norms- teaches young girls and women to be embarrassed of what is simply a bodily function; this is evident by the brown, opaque bags handed to women when they go shopping for feminine hygiene products.

In my opinion, the most important thing that we need to overcome as a society is the taboo surrounding this topic. The way to achieve this is by introducing programs focused at educating school children on sexual and reproductive health, as deemed appropriate by age. This will also further extend into adolescence by initiating sexual education classes in school. Additionally, organizations need to host classes which teach young adults and anyone unaware, about things such as consent, contraceptives, family planning, and sexually transmitted diseases. There is also a general absence of knowledge about one's legal rights which often leads to unjust actions against individuals. Hence, people should be educated about their rights. Lastly, there must be changes in public policy, as per public demand and need.

Author- Saman Saeed

Sexual and reproductive health rights (SRHR) is a never heard term by more than 95% population of Pakistan. When a girl gets her first period, she no more can talk with the opposite sex. It's considered a Taboo to talk about periods, sexual needs, pregnancy, because "WHAT WOULD PEOPLE SAY/ THINK?" Blood is flowing through the legs but a girl can't go to get the sanitary pads by herself because it's considered a "Taboo" to talk about periods or it's relevant terms. They use dirty clothes, which causes rashes, pain and even "Urinary Cancer" sometimes. More than 22,000 women die every year from unsafe abortions. The most important thing about SRHR is that it is happening every day for everyone in every country. But more importantly, it is interlined with Global issues because, if a girl cannot go to school, because she has no sanitary pads or because she got married way too early, then, how can we have social and economic independence? Moreover, lack of sexual education can cause sexually transmitted diseases. Such as HIV and AIDS etc. If we don't get the right information in schools, we are left with misconceptions and confusions. It should not depend on your age, gender or where you come from. SRHR is inherently connected to human beings and we as young people have the power to change that!

Author- Samra Syed



The topic of sexuality and reproductive health and rights services is considered a very sensitive one. One thinks a lot while talking about it. Years have passed while enlightening people about these rights, but still many think that this topic is not worth teaching. Even the person who sent me the topic was not sure whether he is sure about it or not. His voice seemed frail. Why is it like this? I cannot understand it. The world is a dynamic place, everyone goes through change. In West, people are taught about these reproductive changes. It may happen in Pakistan too, but very rarely. When periods start girls worry what is happening, and if someone who is not familiar with it may say that she has murdered someone. Think about her emotional state at that time. Abuse has become the talk of town since years, not so bigger steps are taken towards it. If they were, then I think the crime rates would have reduced. Not only women are its victims, but men too. I know a Madaras where in the name of religious education, all of this was happening. People don't speak about this to avoid putting a mark on their slate. When this happens to someone else, they say Not my monkeys, not my circus, but when they face this issue they say all the aid must be towards them.

Author- Sara Zameer



Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) are related to multiple human rights, including the rights to life, health and privacy. Despite their huge importance there are still countless violations of these rights occurring across the globe to the extent that it is considered normal by many individuals. The violations of SRHR encompass forced pregnancies and abortions, denial of access to health services or providing services with subpar quality, forced virginity examinations and early marriages among other things. These violations are often deeply engrained in societal values pertaining to women's sexuality. Women are considered inferior and their roles within a family are usually thought to be that of a reproductive machine. This discrimination also acts as a barrier for women to actually exercise their rights.

The main hurdles in accessing and utilizing SRHR services also include stigma, lack of awareness and fear of privacy breaches. Since this topic is considered taboo there are many young people who do not even know that these rights exist. For those who are aware, they are afraid to actually exercise these rights due to the humiliation which they would have to face (due to the stigma) and lack of ethics shown paramedical or other related staff in maintaining privacy. Another challenge for young people is the scanty access to proper health services as they are usually costly and not available in every locality (especially in rural areas).

Author- Sarah Asif



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Author- Sarah Asif



Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights of Young People in Pakistan

As Ayesha turned 9 the world felt like her canvas, her miniscule heart throbbed at the thought of all the presents abba would fill her room with, but she had told abba if he brings another Mariam she would be very cross with him. Mariam was Ayesha's age, her fawn brown hair like the skin of a deer fell upon her pale face, especially when she'd be in a corner of the verandah hiding her face, Abba said she was just a little shy even though Ayesha was sure she had seen a tear or two. The morning Mariam came to the house, Ayesha remembered sitting on Abba's lap, her eyes had questions as big as those in Mariam's but her heart unlike Mariam's was excited to have found a new friend, although as soon as the words left her mouth Abba's face grew stern, a strange mix of anger and defeat, 'Ammi 'Ayesha, she's your 'Ammi'. Ayesha was taken aback "but you said Ammi was with Allah" "well I know how much you missed her jaan so I bought one". Ayesha took one look at the girl's tiny hands that looked like they'd carried weights way beyond their reach, her face adorned with the kind of lipstick Bari Amma said only 'bad women' wore'

She wondered instinctively therefore if her father was a 'bad' man

She was right, just for different reasons.

Author- Shamama Masood



Whether or not we accept it, premarital relations do exist within this country and often lead to acts that would be deemed heinous by the religion of the majority within it. Something which should be understood by the people of this nation is that communicating the Reproductive and Sexual Rights possessed by all human beings to the youth of this nation is extremely important, not only to better the nature of this great country but also to lay down focus on STIs(Sexually Transmitted Diseases) and the possibility of teen pregnancies.

Currently, to even mention such a topic would be considered taboo within Pakistani society. It is highly important that we devise a proper method of conveying detailed information, which not only educates but also remains within the limits put forth by our nation. In order to practice this, we may move towards providing such knowledge in a segregated environment, where males and females are taught by teachers of the same gender regarding:

1. The Reproductive and Sexual Rights they possess as citizens of Pakistan
2. What is and is not permissible between a husband and wife
3. What the consequences are of having premarital sex, in this world and the hereafter

To adequately provide them with knowledge which they would find useful, it is of great importance that we form a detailed notice of the consequences within this world as many may be of a different religion, or may not be from practicing Islamic backgrounds.

Author- Shayan Faisal



No matter how modern we are, where we live, where we work we still feel ashamed of talking about sex, periods, reproduction. we live in a very modern world where sex is considered a taboo. Youngsters feel guilty talking about sexual or reproductive health issues.

Youth is facing a lot of challenges for sexual and reproductive health issues as they are growing. WHY? Adults seem to hesitate to get into such discussions, parents assure themselves by assuming schools ought to educate the kids about such affairs, likewise, the teachers assume this matter to be domestically taught. Meanwhile, due to this hesitation, the youngsters get poor knowledge about such topics. Teenagers feel guilty talking about their periods and when they seek help about sexual issues from the internet or any third person here is where they are misguided which causes several problems. Who is responsible for the

problems they face? they themselves? NO! Their parents, teachers, and the environment.

One of the biggest SRH challenges faced by a youngster is early marriages. Some pfemales get married at the age of 12. Early marriages result in HIV in females. then comes to childbirth due to lack of information about safe sex or reproduction planning a family or giving birth to a child is another challenge faced by youngsters. we live in a male dominating society where having a baby boy is a must so as long as a couple is having baby girls they are forced by the society to reproduce no matter they want to or not.

As a parent, teacher, or adult it is their duty to tell their child about sex, periods, and reproduction timely. An urban mother thinks that a girl should not know about this before

marriage. why? So that her life gets ruined? we have to wake up now before it gets too late.

Author- Sherza Mohtashim



“consensual”, Just a word in marriage ?

In a country where culture, law and rights are intertwined few concepts are merely words in speeches. “Marital-rape” something a lot of women in Pakistan endures. An essential right to self, stripped away from women across the country under the pretence of marriage.

The old ways dictated that women remain submissive and docile under men. But as time shifted true values of “consent” were brought forth yet the fact remain unchanged, due to the role that “culture” plays in the law enforcement. Men of our country takes this to the advantage in a marriage to force themselves upon women. Most women are raised by their families to endure this with no talks or teachings of “consent” and in cases where women are abused in their marriages, may it be for consummation, male lineage or pleasure, they are afraid to speak out.

In a country where talks of sex outside of family is considered taboo, the shouts Marital-Rape is shamed upon, even by their own families at times, eliminating the glimmer of hope she might have. The mental and physical toll on these women are immense from the abuse itself just imagine the feeling when they hear “Its dishonourable to speak of your husband like that, he has the right to take you at his will as you are his wife” from her own family. The lack of awareness and the fear of being persecuted keeps these women feeling unsafe in their own home.

Author- Sreesyam Mohan

What are girl’s lives really worth? Are they worth being married of as young as 8 to men as old as 40 , or are they worth dying during child births when you are yourself a child? How can we possibly call ourselves progressive when more than half of our population i.e women lose their lives every day at the hand of a multitude of childbirth complications and we still don’t budget? Our healthcare system does not budge, our mindsets do not budge. We want women to remain a notch or two below us even in death. Those complaining of complications while they’re expecting are labeled as weakness, as if pushing whole new human beings out of us is not both a miracle and a testament to our unrivalled strength, it’s almost as if nothing we do not even bringing more life into this world emancipates us from the idea that we are weaker and far less resilient in trying times ,but while that is part of the problem, the issue actually lies way beyond just that ,it starts from us feeding into young girl’s minds that their lives after marriage become the rightful property of whoever they marry almost as if these lives were theirs.

Author- Taha bib Imran



Youngsters in Pakistan face challenges when they try to cater to their sexual and reproductive health complications. Although it's a basic human right and almost every other adult has fallen victim to such circumstances in former times but still it is treated as a taboo and frowned upon if the youth talks about it openly.

The sexual and reproductive health rights of young people are not respected nor considered. The society openly discriminates and puts a stigma on anyone who demands for it. Sexual and reproductive health services for youngsters barely exist; they are unheard of and when youth protests for it they are snubbed and ignored.

There is lack of basic sexual and reproductive health education and services because of cultural taboos. There are policy constraints related to sexual and reproductive health rights and services. The services provided may be available at inconvenient timings, might be costly and where located, those areas may be difficult to approach which makes access to facilities more challenging for youngsters.

The young people also fear of being exposed to public about matters they want to keep confidential so they chose not to avail the services or exercise their rights fearing the matter may be exploited and they may be treated badly from the society.

If the issue is not addressed on time properly then in near future there will be a high rate of mortality, maternal morbidity, unsafe abortions and sexually and reproductively transmitted infections and diseases consequently affecting workforce and productive economy.

Author- Tehmina Shamsi



There are in excess of 50 sexes on the planet each exists with its own concerning issues. Since multiplication is significant for endurance and so far as that is concerned sex is significant however there are number of issues worried about the SRHR of women, adolescents girls, disables, LGBTQ, intersex and cisgender .

Female involve half of the total populace. 353,000 infants are brought into the world daily. Youngsters comprises a fourth of the total populace and the greater part of them are denied from the SRHR. Essential facilities like water, sanitation, cleanliness, woman wellbeing, preventative, medical clinics are absent in the zones they live over all the fundamental rights like number of dividing in kid, women wellbeing, use of contraceptive another words the privilege of proprietorship on their on bodies is additionally detracted from them. With regards to teenagers they involve 17% of the world's pop . regardless of whether it's a created or creating nation the act of early marriages still exists which invites unpalatable difficulties for like HIV, sexually transmitted diseases, access of contraceptives, maternal mortality, child mortality, infertility etc. This was have a place with the typical individuals with no inability we lives in a society where handicaps fall in the marginalised bunch around 1 billion individuals in earth lives with an incapacity they suffer more in the SRHR Same stance for the LGBTQ ,Cis and intersex they are people being human they have all the rights and the state should ensure their cooperation in legislative issues and strategy making. We should being non judgemental towards others.

Author-Ujala Azher



In layman terms, the sexual and reproductive rights of individuals pertain to their sexual health, sexual rights, reproductive health, and reproductive rights. Looking at these terms any individual would feel that they are the basic human rights that have to be acknowledged, but unfortunately, the reality is far from this. There are numerous challenges that young people face, especially living in a conservative society further fuels into the lack of understanding, and therefore, making way for numerous abuses. The following paragraphs would focus on the pertinent ones in society.

The biggest challenge that young people have to face is directly related to the lack of awareness. People are unaware of these rights. Complicated norms and culture further take the entire concept away. Looking into Pakistan, there is no sexual education. Talking about it with anyone is considered a taboo. Anything slightly associated with sex creates a moral panic. The information that individuals gather from are either through porn or listening to people share their concepts. This creates a problem. The concept of consent seems to blur out, and coercion becomes a normal routine. This results in the point that the people have generated their concepts and fantasies of how things are supposed to play out in such a manner. Women are seen as objects and as something existing to only pleasure the opposite gender. Now, this directly violates the sexual rights and health, as it strips away safe and pleasurable sexual experiences from individuals. The concept of STDs is out of the window as well. People neither have knowledge about it nor care about it. They also lack a basic understanding of boundaries. Now when these ideas become part of the mindset at an early age, it becomes extremely hard to undo years of damage. Therefore, awareness at a very later stage produces little to nothing.

Another major challenge that arises is the wrong interpretation of religion, and that being the driving force towards implementing certain concepts. Looking at the rural areas or the working class, they tend to remain towards the concept of "rizq" and shun out and talk about birth control. Now women usually have no say in how many children they want, or what the gap should be. In often cases, the health and safety of a woman are ignored. She constantly pushed into the pressure of having to not only satisfy her husband, but she cannot even have her say in how many kids she would prefer having, and whether her body can handle such a constant burden. Young people are fed with the same interpretations, along with the lack of sexual education; not only sexual rights but reproductive health and rights also come under a question mark.

In this way, young people have little to no idea about what their rights are. The control over their body and their needs is something that has to be internalized within the individuals, as it would ensure that people are pressured, coerced, and put into harmful situations that they believe are normal. In addition to this, proper legislation and implementation of those laws would ensure a safer society with better awareness.

Author- Urfa Ahmad



This blog discusses emerging areas of concern and identifies some of the opportunities that practitioners and advocates would like to draw attention to in the coming months.

Even before the current crisis, access to quality and affordable reproductive health care in Pakistan was beyond the reach of many women. Pakistan Demographic and Health Survey (PDHS) 2018 data, proving that key indicators of our SRH are not acceptable.

As the epidemic spreads in Pakistan, it is already putting a huge strain on the public health system. ICUs are flooded with Covid 19 patients. Patients with non-communicable are being denied admission in private hospitals due to a fear of infection.

"Pregnant women are very upset about this situation because they are unable to make their regular, scheduled appointments, that those who get pregnant at high risk are especially anxious," says gynaecologist Dr. Sadia Pal.



Specific recommendations

- Provide Personal Protective Equipment to LHWs so they can continue their work within communities.
- Ensure availability of contraceptives, including contraceptive injections and long-acting reversible contraceptives.
- Expand the testing of women in communities for Covid-19.
- Hire and train women to serve as contact tracers.
- Expand online counselling services for women seeking medical, psychological and legal support for domestic violence during lock down and as economic conditions worsen.
- Remove barriers for domestic violence survivors seeking protection services.

"As we face this public health emergency, it is important that our response is tailored to the needs of women, girls and disadvantaged groups and take advantage of opportunities to remove barriers to quality sexual and reproductive health services."

Author- Wajid Zahid



It would not be a stretch to say that reproductive and sexual rights for young people in Pakistan are more of a joke than anything else. In a society where even the word sex is considered to be a taboo, what else can be expected? Children are never taught about their own bodies, they are never taught how to tell when someone is crossing a line and touching them inappropriately. The topic of reproduction is almost never approached in a logical or scientific manner. Instead, parents make up inane stories about how children are born which only serves to hinder a child's growth and development. Birth control pills are another topic that is deemed to be shameful. These pills are used for a variety of reasons such as to control hormonal imbalances and to correct irregular period cycles but for an unmarried woman to be taking them leads to a million judgements upon her character. The stigma in society means that women cannot even talk about their sexual and reproductive rights without being looked down on. It leads to millions of women suffering in silence but nothing can change unless women around the country are willing to realize and fight for their rights.

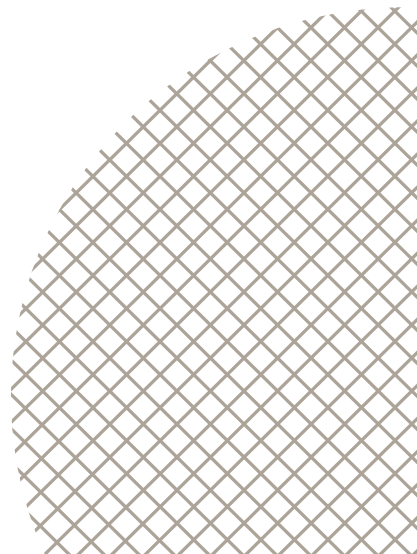
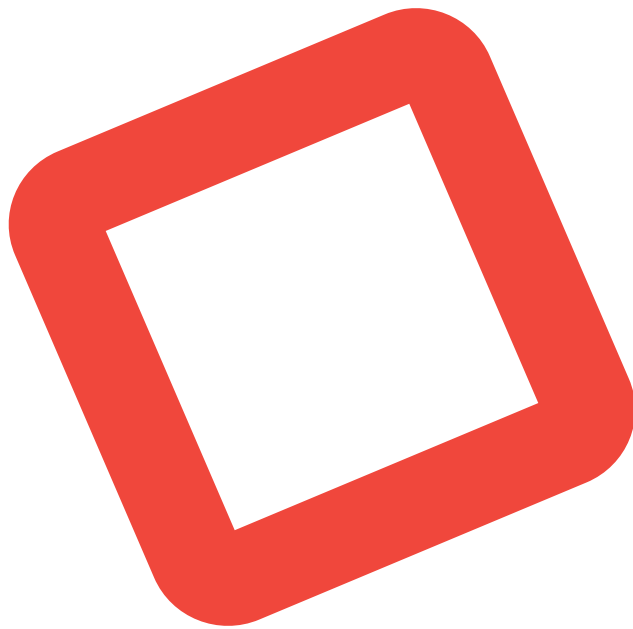
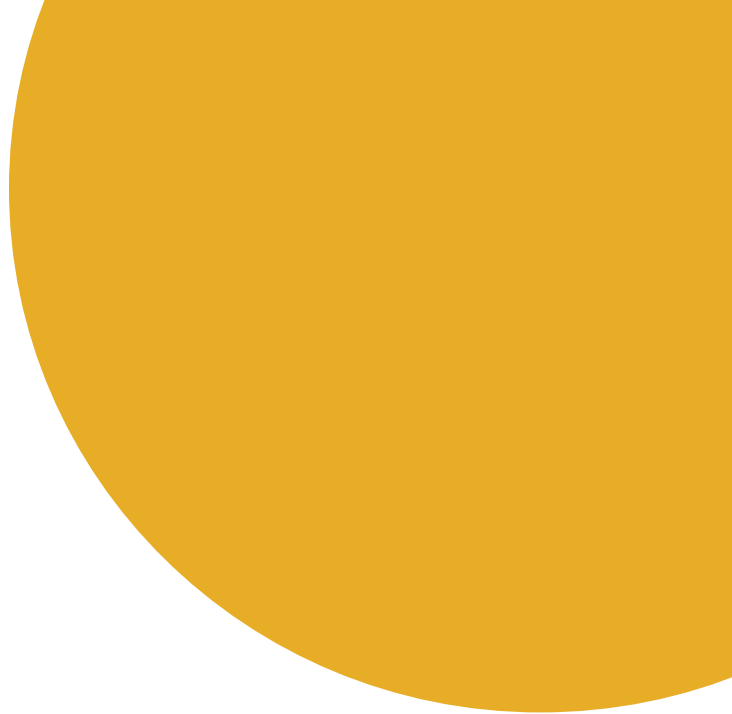
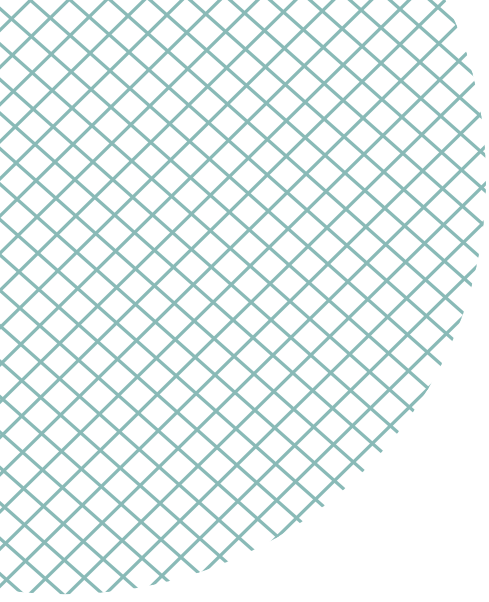
Author- Zahra Khalid



The sexual and reproductive health and rights of people are two of the most important aspects in an individual's life. However, in the country of Pakistan, this subject is considered a taboo and often ignored by the elders. The young generation is unaware of its dynamics because of the lack of education on the topic not only by their families, but also by their teachers. The health of young people is affected by their lack of knowledge on the subject and about their rights. The effects surface when young couples are married and have no idea as to how to manage and initiate respectful sexual relationships with their spouses. Young women are affected more due to the notion of immediately conceiving after marriage. They are young and their bodies are not ready to give birth to a child. They are unable to bear the strain which results in a lot of innocent young women losing their lives. The young people of Pakistan are unable to exercise their rights and do not have complete autonomy over their bodies. They experience changes in their bodies but they are too shy to talk to their parents about it. They don't seek help when they face an issue because the society has deemed it an anathema. The government needs to create, implement and enforce laws on the sexual and reproductive health and rights of young people in our country. There should be a Sex Ed subject in all educational institutes to guide the current and the yet to come generation for a brighter future of the citizens of Pakistan.

Author- Zainab Atique Khawaja





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