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Sociological Analysis of the Media's Role in Advancing Diversity, Social Inclusion and Comprehensive Sexual Education in Morocco

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Abstract. *This article aims to present the findings of both quantitative and qualitative research conducted among a sample of Moroccan children, adolescents, and young people. The primary goal of this research is to promote the improvement of accessibility for children, adolescents, and young people to sexual and reproductive health rights and services in a context of diversity through television. To conduct this research, we chose a sample of 200 units providing quantitative data, and others providing qualitative data, including 10 semi-structured interviews. The selection of this sample is based on a range of different sociodemographic characteristics (gender, age, education level, marital status, activity etc.). Moreover, there is an urgent need for sexual and reproductive health rights among young people and teenagers due to their growing awareness of its importance in addressing a range of negative aspects within society. This is linked to the fact that most of the interviewees have a education level. In contrast, there is a significant absence of these rights in media content on Moroccan television.*

Keywords: *SRHR, Adolescence, Young People, Children, Culture, Television, Education*

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INTRODUCTION

According to Shalev (2000), the rights to sexuality for children, adolescents, and young people, including sexual and reproductive health, free from any constraint and discrimination. All children, adolescents, and young people have the right to make their own choices, freely and knowingly, and have control over their health and their sexual and reproductive lives, free from coercion. Girls in particular are deprived of the ability to exercise these rights (Biggeri & Karkara, 2014). These rights are fundamental for all children to achieve gender equality. Moreover, the current media landscape presented to children, adolescents, and young people is largely made up of cartoons, movies, images, and advertisements that are based on fiction, attractive colors, and catchy songs that grab their attention and take them into a world far from reality and their rights.

Indeed, the current televised media landscape aimed at children, adolescents, and young people seems inappropriate, in the sense that there are programs that might not only be considered indecent but also highlight aggressive and violent scenes, which could negatively impact these groups psychologically and socially. Nowadays, children, adolescents, and young people are bombarded with violent images across all media (television, magazines,

advertisements, music, movies, and the internet). Parents often wonder whether these images are healthy for their children. While television could serve as a powerful tool to educate them about the responsibilities and risks of their sexual behavior, these issues are rarely addressed adequately in shows that depict a lot of sexual content.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Sexual and Reproductive Health Education: an Evolving Concept

Sexual education is a concept that has evolved over the years. The context of its emergence dates back to the 1970s (Giami, 2002). During this period, in response to criticism from feminist movements, gender relations began to be discussed in sexual education programs. However, the analysis of the thematic approach was often criticized as superficial, using euphemisms or underestimating the socio-cultural, moral and spiritual, emotional and psycho-educational components, the influence of which on the discourse of sexuality should not be overlooked. In 1994, the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) Programme of Action developed a set of principles: integrate sexual education in schools and at the community level, ensure age-appropriate sexuality education that helps young people develop the capacity to make mature decisions and responsible sexual behavior.

In 2009, UNESCO published the first version of the UN International technical guidance on sexuality education, in partnership with the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Health Organization (WHO). The approach of the developed guide is based on the consideration of the different physical, psychological, spiritual, social, economic, political and cultural dimensions and in reference to gender and diversity to understand sexuality (Coleman et al., 2022).

In 2010, the European office of the World Health Organization (WHO) renewed the standards for sexual health education by shifting the focus from risk prevention to a more positive, holistic approach. In this new approach, the goal of sexual health education is "learning about the cognitive, emotional, social, interactive and physical aspects of sexuality", adapted to the knowledge levels and ages of individuals. The United Nations (UN) designated this teaching objective as a priority in 2015 (Sayed & Ahmed, 2015).

The International Professional Practices Framework (IPPF) maintains the same principles in the same period in dealing with the concept of integrated sexuality education. It views sexuality holistically and in the context of emotional and social development. It recognizes that information alone is not enough; young people need opportunities to develop essential skills (critical thinking, communication and negotiation skills, personal development skills, decision-making skills, assertiveness) and to develop positive attitudes and values (openness, self-respect, respecting others, good self-esteem in the positive sense of self-worthl, comfort, an attitude devoid of negative value judgment).

The CSE approach, focusing on human rights and gender equality, was also made explicit in UNFPA's 2014 operational guidance by advocating for an age-appropriate curriculum that enables children and youth in and out of school, according to their abilities to acquire accurate information to discover and cultivate positive values and attitudes, and to develop life skills (UNFPA 2014). As part of a more developed vision, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) now offer the new global development framework in which to embed comprehensive sexuality education. The revised version of the international guiding principles on sexuality education published by UNESCO in 2018 adopts new considerations, including increased recognition of the gender perspective and social context in health promotion and the protective role of education in reducing vulnerability to poor sexual health outcomes (UNESCO 2018).

Sexuality education is currently a conceptual field according to several approaches that respond to different development issues for individuals and societies (Ossai, 2024). However, it is first and foremost an issue of integrating human rights and achieving the SDGs. The global

environment has undergone important changes that have had positive impacts on the health of populations and on health policies (Troell et al., 2023). At this level, it is relevant to mention the Millennium Development Declaration, which positions health as a fundamental component of development and thereby has mobilized the world community around quantified objectives.

Sexual and Reproductive Health Education as A Human Right

Sexual and reproductive health education as a human right can be found implicitly and explicitly in several international treaties, including the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). According to Monzó & Debussy (2024), both the treaties and their respective United Nations Committees have set standards that recommend states to ensure that sex education programs are comprehensive, accurate, objective, evidence-based, and non-ideological.

In this respect, Morocco has adhered to all international efforts to promote population health in general, and sexual and reproductive health in particular (Sabbe et al., 2013). After the adoption of family planning around 1966, and following the Bucharest Population Conference in 1974, Morocco realized that contraception could not be reduced to the technical act of swallowing pills or wearing an IUD. Successfully performing these seemingly simple acts requires true population health education (PHE).

Population health education is about teaching people to define and understand the nature, causes, and consequences of population phenomena and their interaction with the economic, social, and cultural development of the nation. It is about showing the individual that reproduction is not a matter for the couple or the family alone, but for the country as a whole. Twenty years after the Bucharest conference, and in the face of a sharp rise in sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS), and unprotected abortions, the International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo adopted the concepts of sexual and reproductive health through which it approached sexuality in terms of rights: The right to choose the number of children in family planning, the right to safe motherhood, the right to sexual information, and the right to STD-AIDS care.

It is within this paradigm of sexual and reproductive health that the notion of sexual education is reappearing in an attempt to be a universally recognized model. Sexuality education should include not only reproductive anatomy, but also specific information on contraception, the identification and prevention of human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and other STDs, and education on sexuality and gender that respects the new norms of responsibility and equality between men and women (Kismödi et al., 2017).

Thus, before being confronted today with the need for comprehensive sexuality education, as just defined, national policies in Morocco reduced sexual education to its contraceptive content through family planning and population education policies, before opening up to its preventive content (ELghazoui & Anass, 2024). The Ministry of Health, while adopting new approaches, namely human rights and health democracy, as well as the health system strengthening approach advocated by the WHO, initiated a national strategy in 2011 for the promotion of youth health in Morocco, which aims to guarantee adolescents and youth the right to physical, mental and social well-being.

The strategy has outlined four objectives, which include improving the knowledge and skills of young people to adopt responsible health behavior and sexual and reproductive health (Denno et al., 2015). The programs and actions carried out by a group of Moroccan associations have led today to the launch of the first consortium of associations for sexual and reproductive health rights, supported by the UNFPA, which aims to accompany national policies on sexual and reproductive health, including the 2021-2030 strategy (United Nations 2021).

Comprehensive Sexuality Education Between International Principles and National Implementation Context

In the International Guidelines on Sexuality Education revised in 2018, UNESCO defines comprehensive sexuality education as "a teaching and learning process addressing the cognitive, affective, physical and social aspects of sexuality. It aims to equip children and young people with the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that will empower them to achieve self-fulfillment - respecting their health, well-being and dignity-to develop respectful social and sexual relationships, to reflect on the impact of their choices on their personal well-being and that of others and, finally, to understand and defend their rights throughout their lives" (UNESCO 2018).

Referring to the 2018 CSE Guiding Principles, comprehensive sexuality education is part of quality education. Improving its implementation and guaranteeing its success is intimately linked to respect for the following principles:

> *"A CSE program must first of all be scientifically accurate, progressive and age-appropriate. It must be based on a comprehensive program and inspired by an approach based on human rights and gender equality. It is important that it is culturally and contextually appropriate, transformative cultivating positive values and attitudes towards sexual and reproductive health and able to develop the life skills needed to support healthy choices" (UNESCO 2018).*

Comprehensive Sexuality Education Between the Needs of Adolescents and the Role of Television

According to the WHO (World Health Organization), an "adolescent" is anyone between the ages of 10 and 19, while a "young person" is anyone between the ages of 15 and 24. In the past, adolescence was considered a typically western phenomenon. Today, it is universally recognized as a developmental phase through which all human beings pass through. Indeed, adolescents are one of the age groups most affected by HIV, STIs (Matovu et al, 2021) and a significant number of unwanted pregnancies (Hamdela et al., 2012). The increase in clandestine abortions, sexually transmitted diseases, violence and sexual aggression are indicators that reflect insufficient and deficient knowledge of infectious risk prevention and contraception.

Statistics, Risk Behaviors and the Needs of Adolescents

In Morocco, the problem of early pregnancy also remains a cause for concern, due to the health risks it entails for both mother and child (Boutib et al., 2023). According to a study carried out by the Ministry of Health among girls aged 15 to 24 who had had sexual relations, 7.9% of them had already had unwanted pregnancies, 70% of whom reported having had an abortion. The survey also revealed that 60.8% of people with disabilities (PWD) do not have access to the general care offered by the health system. The survey also indicates that only 25.6% of young people feel they have had enough information about sexuality since childhood (Nguyen et al., 2021). It is also about only 29% among the 1122 boys surveyed declared to be satisfied with the information received during childhood on sexuality, and among the 1141 girls surveyed, 253 or 22% indicated to be satisfied.

Young people are already engaged in unprotected sex and acts that result in unwanted children. The portrayal of relationships in sex films is flawed because it bears no resemblance to reality, but distraught children would not understand their superficiality. In the same survey, Benharrousse adds, "young Moroccans' perceptions of sexuality are shaped by discourses of immorality within Moroccan culture and the cultural forms introduced by the media. Even though sexuality education was 'officially' introduced in 2005, it had no impact, as it was limited to marriage".

These findings reflect a growing demand among young people for reliable information and an education that prepares them for a safe, productive and fulfilling life. An education that not only provides children and young people, progressively and according to their age, with

education in human rights, gender equality, relationships, reproduction, risky sexual behavior and disease prevention, but also offers the opportunity to present sexuality in a positive light, highlighting values such as respect, inclusion, non-discrimination, equality, empathy, responsibility and reciprocity.

The unmet needs of teens and young people in terms of SE have been a major concern for NGOs in Morocco, so several associations have developed training and support initiatives, including peer sex education programs seen as a response to the teen's need to learn from another like-minded young person facing the same sexuality-related problems. Civil society actors are lobbying the government to put in place accurate sexuality education that informs young Moroccans about the dangers of unprotected sex and how to avoid them.

the Role of Television in Comprehensive Sexuality Education

Television, as a means of distribution, dissemination or interpersonal communication, documents, or audiovisual messages plays an important role in everyday life, whether to entertain, educate, inform and/or influence. The television's role in promoting better healthcare is not limited to public relations. It is just as important for the public to be involved in debates on the design and implementation of sound healthcare systems. Television is a powerful tool that can also be used to inform children, teens and young adults about the consequences of their sexual activity in promoting safer behavior (Martino et al., 2005). The current television landscape offered to children, teens and young people is made up, for the most part, of cartoons, films, images, based on fiction, attractive colors and rhythmic songs that attract their attention and lure them into a world far removed from reality and its rights.

Indeed, today's televised media landscape aimed at children, teens and young people seems inappropriate, in the sense that there are programs that not only may constitute an indecent assault, but also feature aggressive and violent scenes, which would have a negative impact on these categories, especially psychologically and socially. The power of culture, religion and other taboos related to sexuality play a key role in preventing the advancement of sexuality education in the Moroccan television (Chafai, 2017). However, television can be a powerful tool for educating these categories about the responsibilities and risks of their sexual behavior. Thus, these issues are rarely adequately addressed in programs with a lot of sexual content.

METHODS

Research Method

This research project was based on both qualitative and quantitative surveys. As for the fieldwork conducted with professional journalists in Rabat, which included 10 semi-structured interviews, providing qualitative data, and an online survey with a sample of 600 units, providing quantitative data. The choice of this sample is based on a range of different socio-demographic characteristics (gender, age, educational level, marital status, activity, etc.).

Questioning and Hypothesis of the Research

This action research was based on an analytical and extrapolative approach to analyze each content of the studied programs, both quantitatively and qualitatively, as well as the proposals of partners and stakeholders/journalists involved in the research, with the aim of extrapolating the various sexual and reproductive health rights and those that need to be reinforced due to their centrality in the lives of the target audience. This study begins with a question about the status of media content in official television programs in terms of integrating the right to sexual and reproductive health in the context of plurality and diversity. It assumes that this media content is conservative and ignores the dissemination of such rights; especially in programs directed towards children and adolescents.

Presentation of the Survey Sample

This is both a quantitative and qualitative survey based on questionnaires and interviews conducted using a non-probabilistic method. The questionnaires were administered online, and

the interviews were carried out in the city of Rabat. The sampling technique used was quota sampling, based on the identification of individuals on the spot, selected according to specific criteria. In addition to the requirement of being a journalist for the interviews, other criteria were considered to ensure the diversity of the sample. These criteria include the nature of the job, age and gender, marital status, and several other factors that pertain to different levels of rurality and urbanity.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The quantitative survey involved 200 questionnaires, and interviews were conducted with 10 journalists from the SNRT (see Table n°1).

Table n°1. Distribution of the Total Sample

	City	Female	Male	Other	Total
Survey	Online	65.5 %	34 %	0.5 %	100 %
Interviews	Rabat	5	5	-	10

Source: Survey Data

This table shows the percentage of both males and females participating in the study. It is evident that the percentage of females is higher than that of males. This is due to the fact that most of the respondents are students, where the percentage of females exceeds that of males at the national level in schools and universities. As for the interviews, we tried to achieve equality between males and females in this matter. Female's participation at a higher rate than men is highlighting their needs regarding sexual and reproductive health, and the survey was online allowed them to express themselves more freely compared to the interviews. It should be noted that some participants did not specify their gender at a rate of 0.5% and this is due to the presence of some people who have become freely expressing their different gender, especially when it comes to the survey filled out remotely.

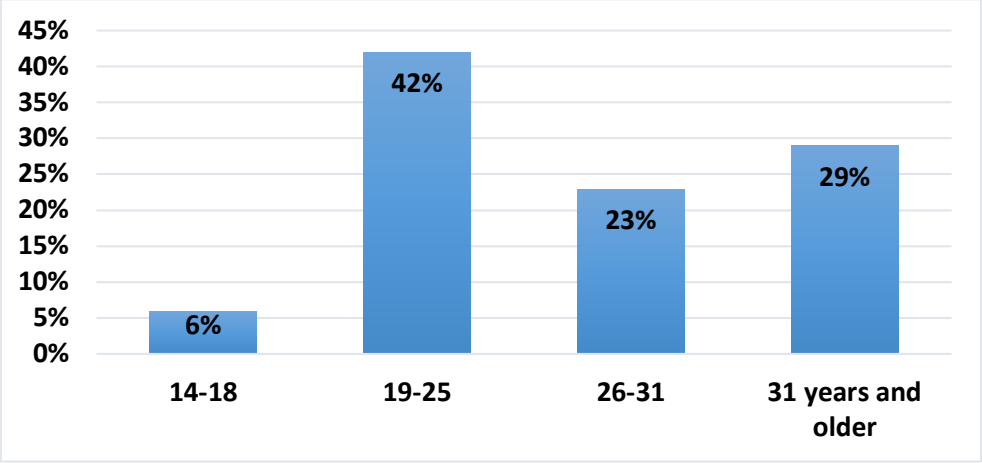

Figure 1. The Age of the Participants

Source: Survey Data

This study aims to diagnose the needs of children, youth, and adolescents in terms of sexual and reproductive health through television. We find that most of the respondents are aged between 19 and 25 years, accounting for 42%. The group aged between 14 and 18 years represents 6%, while 23% of the participants are aged between 26 and 31 years. This data shows that we have achieved the desired results concerning the age of the participants.

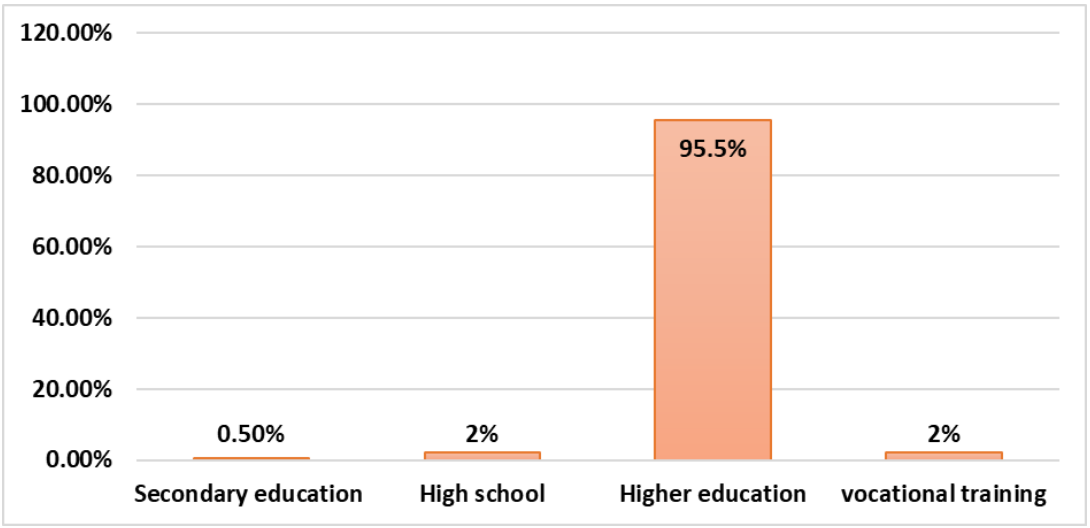

Figure 2. The Education Level of the Participants

Source: Survey Data

The table shows that the majority of the respondents in the survey study at universities and have a high level of education, at a rate of 95.5%. This situation has contributed to the fact that most participants have the ability to understand the posed questions, as well as express themselves substantially and answer the questions. This explains why all participants answered all the asked questions.

The Situation of the Media Landscape in Morocco

The current media landscape offered to children is largely made up of cartoons that rely on fiction, attractive colors, and rhythmic songs that capture children's attention and immerse them in a world far from reality; especially for the very young. Indeed, this current televised media landscape for children seems inappropriate. Recently, we have seen a number of programs that not only could be considered indecent, but also highlight aggressive and violent scenes (Sheehan & Sullivan, 2010). These could negatively affect children, especially psychologically and socially, leading them to adopt an indifferent behavior, becoming aggressive, violent, and offensive.

Align with research from Bleakley (2013) Children's access to television varies among families. Some parents provide this tool from birth as a means to occupy the infant and to get a break; while other parents are much more rational in their use and resort to television, favoring moments of exchange and activities: (1) Content for children is broadcasted throughout the day on satellite TV channels, whereas on state-owned televisions, there are specific times for these programs; especially in the late afternoon, a period that coincides with the end of school; (2) On television, one can find all sorts of programs, with limited access to channels that offer educational content, which are mostly premium and of high quality; (3) Once, cartoons were a medium of values, but now they encourage violence and highlight war and combat scenes; (4) Independent production companies are the main producers of programs for children, since state-owned channels do not place much importance on this kind of production.

Generally, content dedicated to children within the Moroccan context is marked by the dominance of television series that could potentially harm the psychological health of children (Steemers et al., 2018). In this regard, Turkish series are flooding the Moroccan television landscape, and clashing with the traditional values of society; specifically, modesty and respect for private life that these series reveal to the public. Similarly, we observe a somewhat mixed presence of cartoons on Moroccan public channels, which are broadcast either very early in the morning or late in the afternoon. These provide benefits to the child-viewer; especially in terms of forming their personality and communication skills. To our knowledge, there are shows

intended for children such as "Let's play with the children." However, we note once again the strangeness of their ideological content based on anti-Islamic references. In fact, away from the Moroccan media atmosphere, channels completely dedicated to cartoons are available, such as Spacetoon, MBC3, Ajial, Taha, and Spacepower.

The most popular TV shows are cartoons (SpongeBob, Miraculous, Slime Videos) broadcasted on television such as Tchoupie, Masha and the Bear, Frozen, SpongeBob SquarePants, Mr. Bean (animated series), and online like Little Malabar, It's Not Rocket Science, Web Series "Mon œil". The content varies depending on the program; some have entertaining content like imaginary stories, tales, etc., while others have educational content; especially those-broadcast online. In our opinion, cartoons such as Snow White and Monkey D. Luffy are very popular. The objective behind these contents lies in entertainment and promoting positive values. There is a young online media producer who creates content related to current events, and he is currently working on an educational program to teach letters to young children.

Local production places more emphasis on programs for adults at the expense of programs for children. That is, the availability of content aimed at adults is more visible compared to the availability of content dedicated to children (Staksrud et al., 2007). The types of television programs produced for children that are lacking in the television offer are programs in foreign languages and educational and scientific programs; especially for children over 6 years old. The Moroccan television landscape does not provide instructive content that would allow a child to shape their personality, ensure their moral and social development, and nourish their thinking. There is a lack of content with a scientific and literary focus, as well as those addressing educational and religious subjects. There are a few programs like Roma, Diana, Nastya; the advantage of these is that they depict real-life situations.

However, sometimes the content is unsuitable in relation to our context and our culture and may contradict the values of society (Schwartz & Bilsky, 1990). When shows are produced and broadcasted by children, they have a direct impact since the message is conveyed smoothly, and children are more receptive when their peers deliver the messages. This underscores the importance of carefully considering the content and studying their explicit objectives, as well as the implicit messages hidden behind the unsaid. There are indirect messages that reflect, for example, non-discrimination among students, as in the animated show "Tchoupie" where we find students of different skin colors who are friends and are schooled in the same class. There are also: (1) Reading competitions; (2) Master Chef Junior; (3) Celestin.

What do 200 Moroccan Youths and Teenagers Say About SRHR?

The national guidelines concerning children's television emphasize the importance of cultural, sports, and entertainment content over scientific and playful content (Huston et al., 1989). There are administrative regulatory authorities that ensure the protection of public order in the audiovisual sphere. The texts on audiovisual communication and those governing the High Authority for Audiovisual Communication (HACA) confirm the existence of a comprehensive legal framework for the protection of children in Morocco in the audiovisual sector. Examples: Morocco has provisions related to the protection of young audiences in the audiovisual media, as well as its practical implementation through the Guide for the Protection of Young Audiences in Audiovisual Media, and the provisions set out in the specifications of various broadcasters (radio or television).

The Importance of the Right to Sexual and Reproductive Health for Adolescents and Youth

Most participants agree that the right to sexual and reproductive health is very important at a rate of 74%, as shown in the table below:

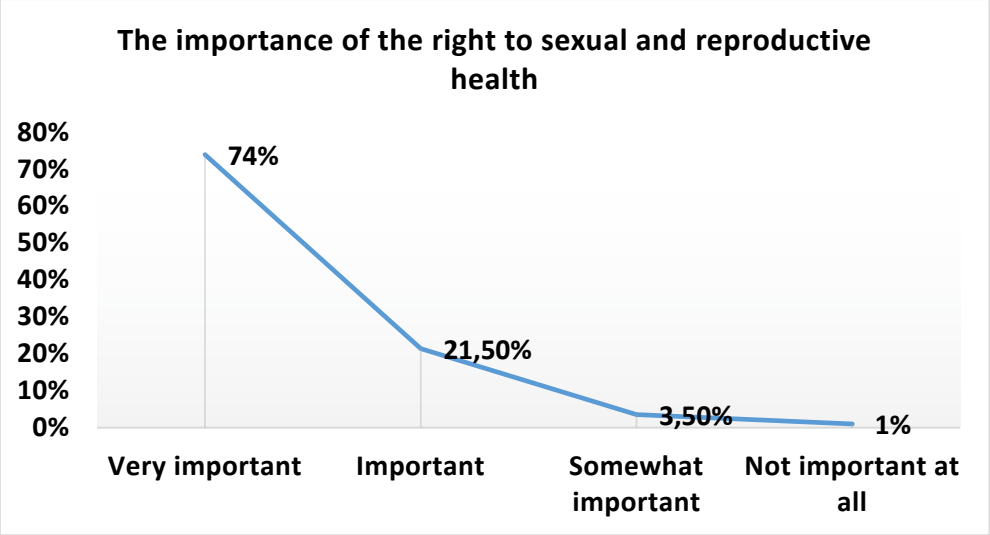

Figure 3. The Importance of the Right to Sexual and Reproductive Health

Source: Survey Data

The importance of the right to sexual and reproductive health (SRH) for adolescents and youth is crucial for several reasons: (1) Health and Well-being: early and unwanted pregnancies, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV. By ensuring SRH rights, we can reduce these risks and improve the overall well-being of adolescents and youth; (2) Empowerment: knowledge about one's body, sexuality, and reproductive rights empowers young people to make informed decisions. It enables them to navigate relationships confidently, advocate for their rights, and access necessary health services; (3) Reduction of Teenage Pregnancies: comprehensive sexual education and access to contraceptive methods can significantly reduce teenage pregnancies. This is important as teenage pregnancies are often linked to higher health risks for both the mother and the baby and can limit educational and economic opportunities for young women (Taufikurrahman et al., 2023).

(4) Economic Benefits: Investing in SRH can lead to long-term economic benefits. When young people can make informed choices about their reproductive lives, they are more likely to continue education, join the workforce, and contribute positively to the economy; (5) Reduction of STIs: adolescents and young adults are at a high risk of contracting STIs. Comprehensive SRH education and services help in reducing the prevalence of STIs by promoting safer sexual practices; (6) Mental and Social Well-being: the stigma, discrimination, or trauma that can come from SRH issues (like an unintended pregnancy or an STI) can have significant mental and social consequences for young people. Ensuring their SRH rights can mitigate these impacts; (7) Reduction of Unsafe Abortions: with comprehensive SRH education and access to contraceptive methods, the number of unwanted pregnancies can be reduced, which in turn can reduce the instances of unsafe abortions. Unsafe abortions can lead to severe health complications and even death; (8) Informed Future: young people who are informed and educated about SRH are more likely to pass that knowledge on to the next generation, leading to more informed and healthier future generations.

In line with that, the majority of journalists in individual interviews emphasize the importance of the SRHR for media coverage, but it is still perceived in society as a taboo subject and may invite criticism of media content. According to the interviews, journalists should prioritize news stories and content that are relevant to their audience. This means covering events, issues, and developments that have a significant impact on the community, region, or the world. Relevance helps ensure that the public is well informed about the most important issues of the day (Oxman, 2013).

"The journalists select media content based on the relevance of events happening in society, and should not deviate from their cultural background"

Moreover, there are some programs that discuss reproductive health and family issues, but they remain within the bounds of topics related to disease prevention such as HIV/AIDS and reproductive health, and they are aimed at the public rather than teenagers and young people.

"The journalists should respect and understand the nuances, traditions, and values of our society and ensure that their reporting is fair and respectful"

Based on that, journalists should also adhere to principles of objectivity, diversity, cultural sensitivity, and ethical considerations in selecting and presenting media content to the public. Their responsibility is to inform the public while respecting the cultural backgrounds of their audience and the people and events they cover. They should also be mindful of representing a diverse range of perspectives and voices. This helps ensure a more comprehensive and fair coverage of events, taking into account the cultural, social, and political diversity of their audience.

This importance is represented by the fact that there are several social institutions and organizations play a pivotal role in ensuring sexual and reproductive health (SRH) globally and nationally. These institutions are involved in various capacities, including education, protection, advocacy, and the provision of health services, as shown in the figure below:

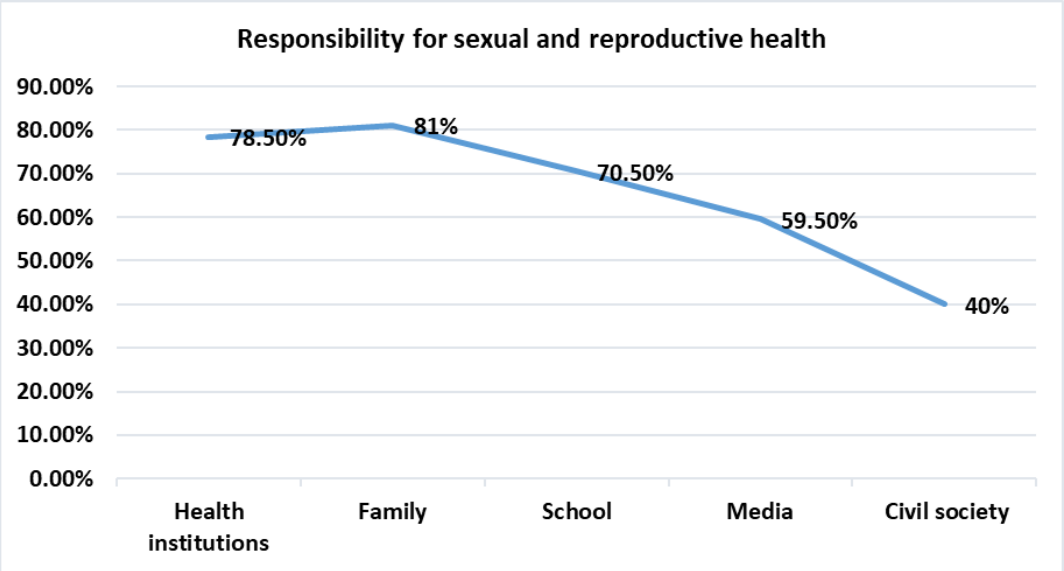

Figure 4. The Institutions Responsible for Sexual and Reproductive Health

Source: Survey Data

Several social institutions play a role in the area of sexual and reproductive health (Ireland et al., 2021). These institutions can significantly influence individuals' beliefs, practices, and access to information and services related to sexual and reproductive health. Here are some of the primary social institutions responsible for this area: (1) Family: often, the family is the first point of contact for young people to receive information (or misinformation) about sexual and reproductive health. Parents, siblings, and extended family members can influence attitudes, beliefs, and practices; (2) Schools/Educational Institutions: comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) in schools can equip young people with the knowledge and skills they need to make informed decisions about their sexual and reproductive health. However, the quality and extent of CSE can vary widely between regions and countries; (3) Healthcare Institutions: hospitals, clinics, and other healthcare facilities provide direct services related to sexual and reproductive health, from contraceptive counseling to maternal care.

Their approach and the services they provide can be influenced by cultural, religious, and socio-political factors; (4) Media: traditional media (TV, radio, newspapers) and new media (internet, social media) are powerful tools for disseminating information or misinformation about sexual and reproductive health. They can shape societal attitudes and perceptions on these topics; (5) Civil society: many NGOs, both local and international, play a crucial role in advocacy, education, and the provision of sexual and reproductive health services, especially in regions where state facilities might be lacking. In any given society, the interplay between these institutions will vary, and their influence might shift over time as societal values and norms evolve (Muslimah, 2021). It is also worth noting that while these institutions can play a positive role in promoting sexual and reproductive health, they can also contribute to misinformation, stigma, and barriers to access.

> *"Journalists are more credible than social media influencers, as journalists have accurate sources, while influencers have unknown sources and may provide incorrect ones".*

More than half of the sample believe that the media plays an important role in spreading the SRHR. Despite the openness of young people and teenagers to social media, audiovisual media still plays a significant educational role, as confirmed by journalists. However, the media should also use social media to convey its messages to the youth and teenagers (O'Keeffe et al., 2011). Social media influencers may not have the same level of training, standards, or editorial oversight. Their content is often driven by their personal opinions, experiences, and preferences, which can introduce bias and subjectivity.

> *"Media also needs to exert effort in the way it presents such topics, or else it will become outdated".*

However, it is important to note that not all social media influencers are the same, and some may prioritize accuracy and responsible content creation. The key is to approach both journalists and social media influencers critically. In today's digital age, it is essential to verify information from multiple sources and be discerning consumers of information. Credibility can vary greatly within both categories, so it is crucial to evaluate each source individually based on their record of accomplishment, expertise, and the quality of their content. While journalists have formal training and editorial oversight that can contribute to their credibility, social media influencers can also provide valuable content, but their credibility depends on their commitment to accuracy and their expertise in a given subject. Critical thinking, fact checking, and a willingness to seek out multiple sources are essential when evaluating the reliability of information, regardless of the source (Metzger, 2007).

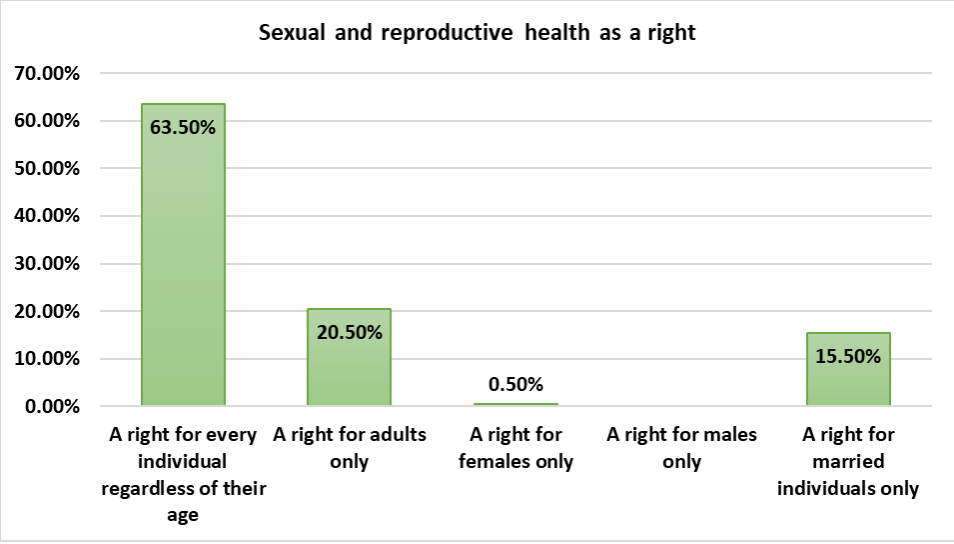

Figure 5. The Right to Sexual and Reproductive Health

Source: Survey Data

The figure shows that most participants believe that everyone regardless has the right to sexual and reproductive health at a rate of 63.5%. This right is a fundamental principle supported by numerous international frameworks and treaties. Recognizing SRH as a universal right emphasizes the importance of individuals having control over their own bodies, choices, and futures. This recognition aims to improve the access to accurate information and quality services related to SRH as a fundamental human right (Hartmann et al., 2016).

Every individual, regardless of age, should have the autonomy to make decisions about their own bodies, including decisions related to sexuality and reproduction. Women and girls disproportionately face barriers to SRH services. Ensuring their access helps in leveling the playing field and promoting gender equality. Sexual and reproductive health (SRH) is a fundamental aspect of the overall health and well-being of individuals and communities. The following are priority services related to sexual and reproductive health with their rates:

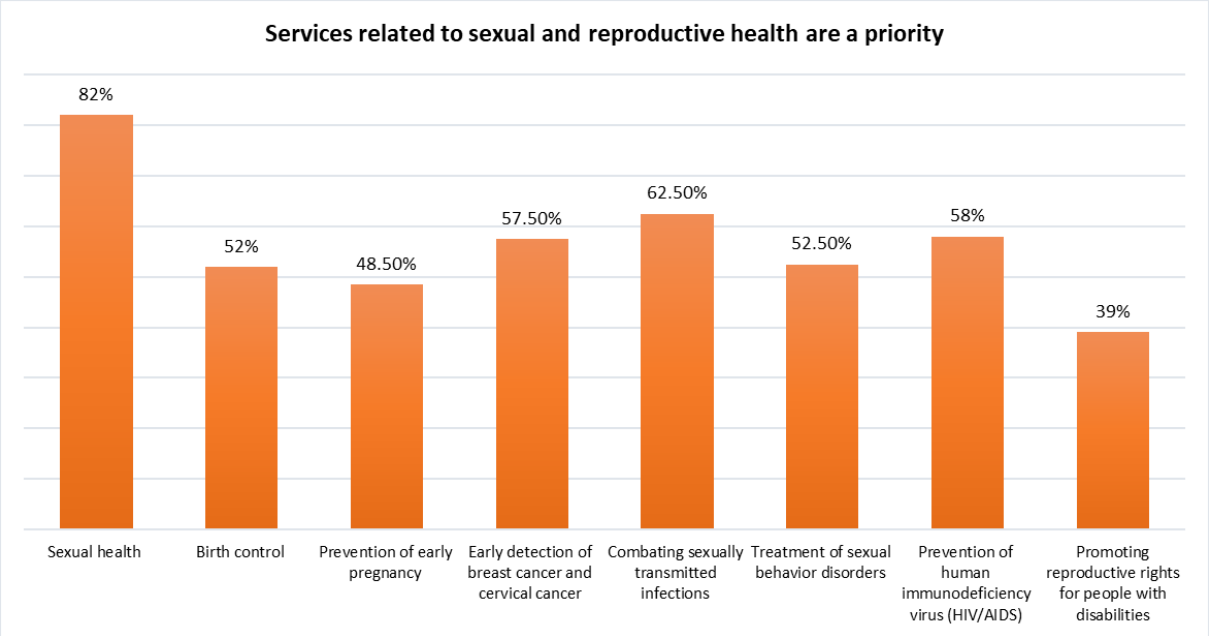

Figure 6. The Priority Services Related to Sexual and Reproductive Health

Source: Survey Data

Based on the figure above, we conclude that there are some services that scored high percentages from the participants as follows: (1) Sexual Health: comprehensive sexuality education that provides accurate information about human sexuality, contraceptive methods, consent, and relationships; (2) Combating Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs): this includes education, testing, treatment, and counseling for STIs, including HIV; (3) Prevention of human immunodeficiency virus (HIV/AIDS): it involves a combination of education, behavioral interventions, and medical approaches; (4) Early detection of breast cancer and cervical cancer: this includes services such as screening (as Pap smears for cervical cancer), prevention, and treatment for cancers of the reproductive system, such as cervical, breast, and ovarian cancers.

Ensuring access to these priority services is crucial for achieving universal health coverage and the Sustainable Development Goals set by the United Nations. It requires commitment from governments, international organizations, and civil society to provide these services comprehensively, equitably, and without discrimination. Supporting SRH as a universal right aligns with global efforts to ensure health, well-being, gender equality, and empowerment for all. Such a perspective is not just beneficial for individual well-being, but also contributes to broader societal and developmental goals. International frameworks, like the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set by the United Nations, also underscore the importance of SRH rights in achieving a more just and equitable world.

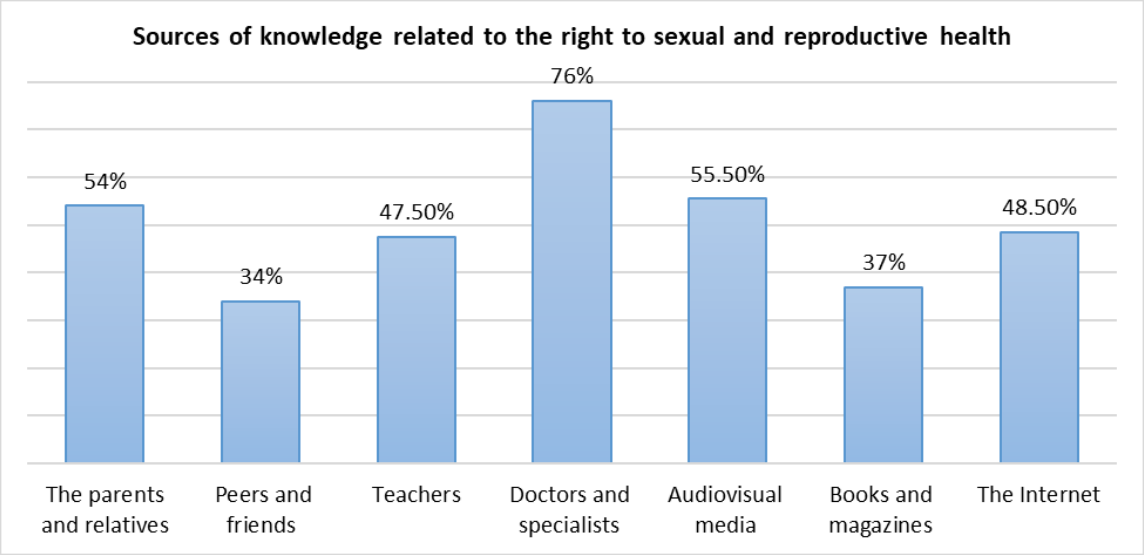

Figure 7. The Sources of Knowledge Related to the Right to Sexual and Reproductive Health

Source: Survey Data

The right to sexual and reproductive health has been discussed and advocated for in numerous international treaties, declarations, and organizations. These sources of knowledge are crucial for understanding the frameworks, goals, and principles guiding the global perspective on sexual and reproductive rights (Hardee et al., 2014). According to the figures, we see that doctors and specialists are the pivotal sources of knowledge related to the right to sexual and reproductive health at a rate of 76%. Those doctors can be gynecologists, obstetricians, urologists, and primary care physicians who are key sources of clinical information about sexual and reproductive health. There are other sources associated with the audiovisual media; such as parents and relatives, the internet, and teachers, which also scored high participation rates ranging between 55.5% and 47.5%.

In conclusion, safeguarding the right to sexual and reproductive health for adolescents and youth is not just a matter of personal autonomy or a response to immediate health needs; it is an investment in the future. Ensuring that young individuals can navigate their sexual and reproductive lives safely, and with agency, has broad societal implications, from economic growth and educational attainment to gender equality and human rights (Corrêa & Parker, 2004). To neglect this right is to overlook the foundation on which a sustainable, inclusive, and prosperous society is built. By prioritizing the sexual and reproductive health of our youth, we pave the way for healthier, more informed, and empowered generations, capable of leading societies towards a brighter and more equitable future.

Young People's and Adolescents' Needs Related to the Right to Sexual and Reproductive Health

Sexual and reproductive health is a critical component of an individual's overall well-being (Dixon, 1993). For young people and adolescents, navigating the complexities of sexual maturation and their evolving identities, ensuring they have access to appropriate sexual and reproductive health (SRH) information and services is paramount. Recognizing and upholding the rights of these populations in this sphere is not just a matter of health, but also of ethics, social justice, and economic advancement.

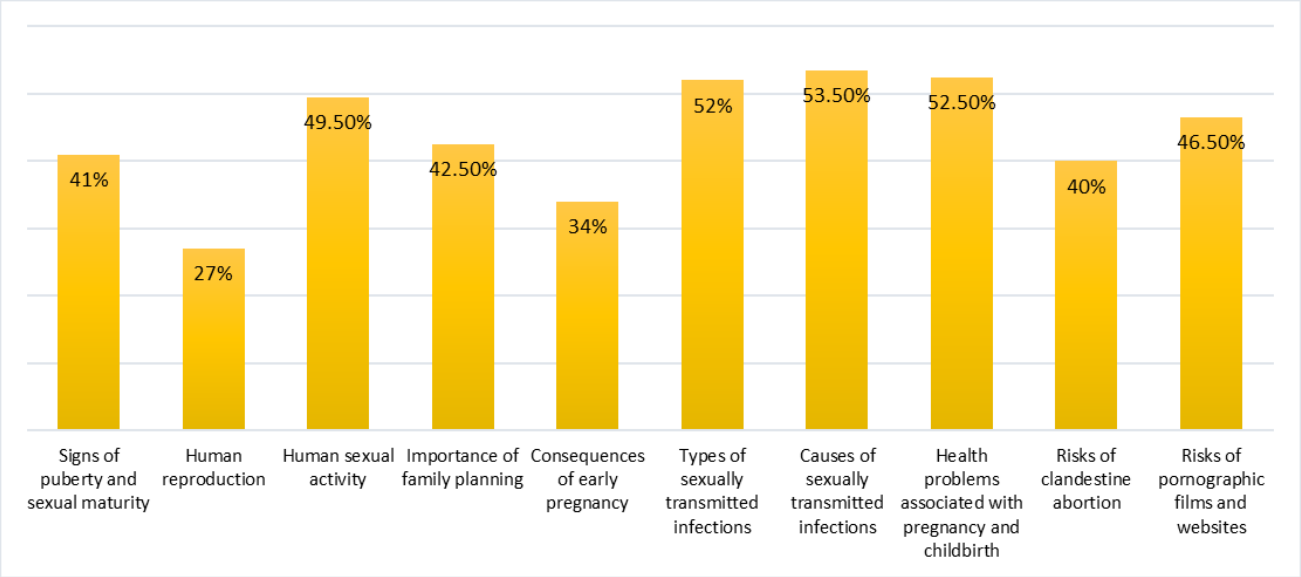

Figure 8. The Information That Young People and Teenagers Need to Access (1)

Source: Survey Data

Sexual and reproductive health rights (SRHR) encompass a broad range of topics and issues that are vital for young people and teenagers to understand. These rights ensure that all individuals can make decisions about their bodies, relationships, and reproduction freely and without coercion, discrimination, or violence (Miller, 2000). Here is an overview of the information young people and teenagers should access concerning their rights to sexual and reproductive health: (1) Signs of puberty and sexual maturity; (2) Human reproduction; (3) Human sexual activity; (4) Importance of family planning; (5) Consequences of early pregnancy; (6) Types of sexually transmitted infections; (7) Causes of sexually transmitted infections; (8) Health problems associated with pregnancy and childbirth; (9) Risks of clandestine abortion; (10) Risks of pornographic films and websites.

Young people and teenagers should be encouraged to discuss these issues openly and seek guidance when needed. SRHR are fundamental to the well-being and autonomy of all individuals, and equipping young people with this knowledge is vital for their health and future.

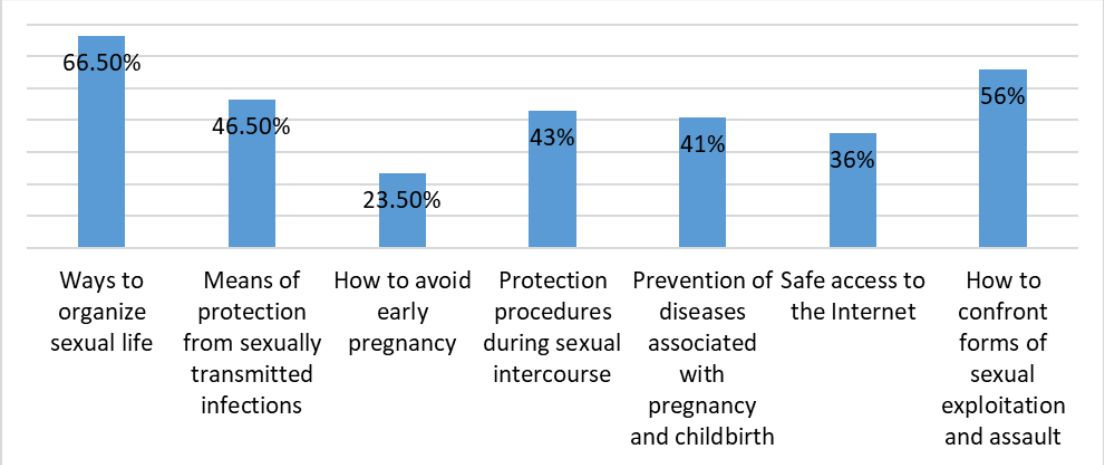

Figure 9. the Information that Young People and Teenagers Need to Access (2)

Source: Survey Data

Among the other important topics that young people and teenagers need to know about, we find the ways to organize sexual life at 66.5%, how to confront forms of sexual exploitation

and assault at 56%, and the means of protection from sexuality transmitted infections at 46.5%. By ensuring access to these topics, young people and teenagers can be better equipped to lead healthier lives, make informed decisions, and advocate for their rights.

> *"It is difficult to tailor media content exclusively for teenagers and young people; therefore, most of it is directed at everyone without considering the psychological specifics of this category".*

Ensuring young people and teenagers have comprehensive knowledge about sexual and reproductive health rights is not just about promoting safe behaviors; it is about affirming their dignity, autonomy, and worth. As they stand at the crossroads between childhood and adulthood, these young individuals are forming the habits, values, and knowledge base that will inform the rest of their lives. Therefore, comprehensive education in this domain is crucial not only for their immediate well-being but also for the quality of their future lives and relationships (George, 2010).

"We are still far from these topics"

By integrating these topics into educational and community programs, societies invest in a future where individuals are informed, safe, and empowered to make choices about their own bodies. It further lays the foundation for a world where individuals can enjoy their sexual and reproductive lives without fear, discrimination, or violence. A society that prioritizes the sexual and reproductive health rights of its young citizens is one that looks ahead to a brighter, more equitable future. It is crucial for this information to be presented in a non-judgmental, inclusive, and evidence-based manner. Engaging young people in dialogue and ensuring that their voices are heard can further empower them to make informed decisions about their sexual and reproductive health.

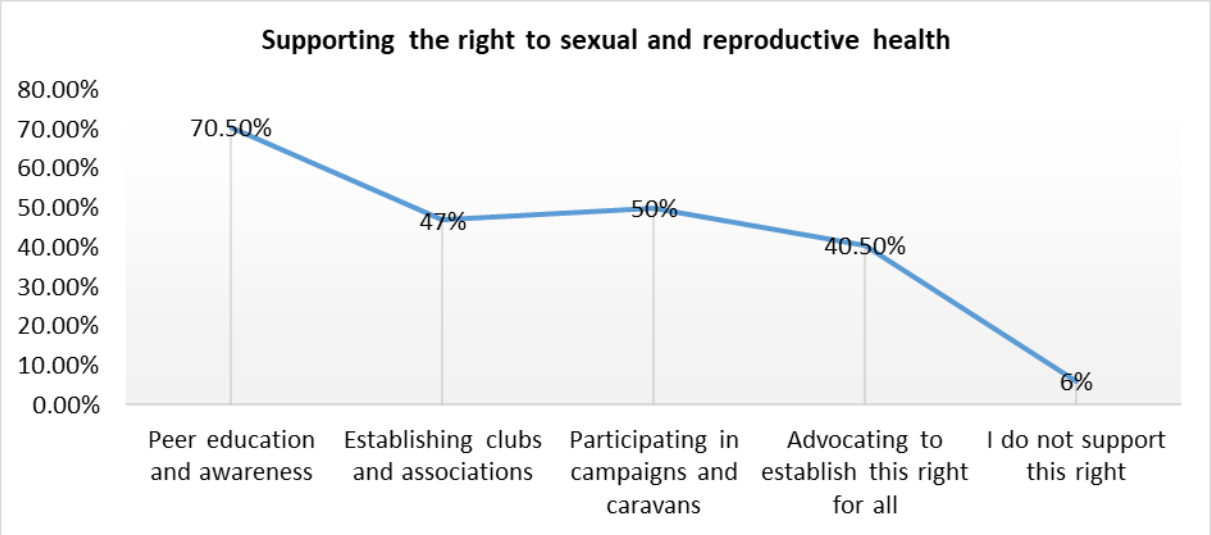

Figure 10. The Opinion of Young People and Teenagers Regarding Support for the Right to SRH

Source: Survey Data

Peer education and awareness is one of the most important things participants suggest doing in terms of supporting right to sexual and reproductive health at a rate of 70.5%. In contrast, 6% of participants do not support this right. The opinions of young people and teenagers on SRH rights are influenced by a myriad of factors, such as their personal experiences, family upbringing, societal norms, educational institutions, and exposure to media and technology. Furthermore, while there is a general trend among young people and teenagers towards supporting SRH rights, it is essential to consider the diverse experiences and backgrounds within this demographic. Their opinions are not monolithic and can vary based on a range of influencing

factors. In conclusion, sexual and reproductive health rights for young people and adolescents are a cornerstone for a healthy transition into adulthood (Sundby, 2006). These rights ensure that they can make informed decisions about their bodies, relationships, and futures. Investing in these needs not only improves individual well-being but also results in broader societal benefits, including reduced rates of unplanned pregnancies, STIs, and sexual violence, and the promotion of gender equality and empowerment.

Integrating the Right to Sexual and Reproductive Health in Audiovisual Media

Integrating the right to sexual and reproductive health (SRH) in audiovisual media involves producing content that is both informative and respectful of individual rights. This cannot only help in spreading accurate knowledge about SRH, but also in dismantling myths and reducing stigma associated with it.

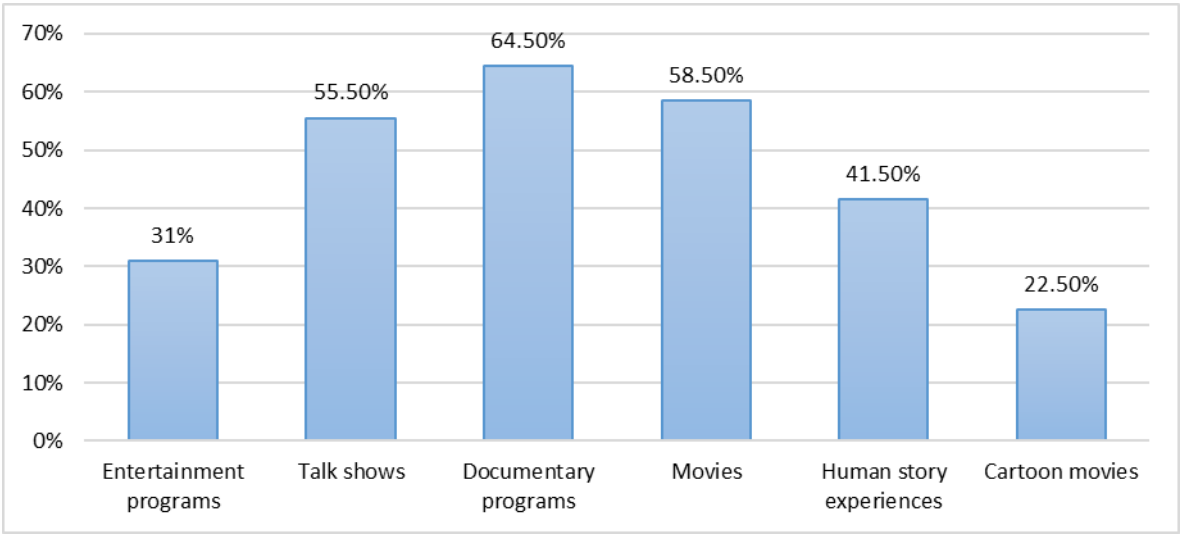

Figure 11. Media Content Most Viewed by Young People and Teenagers

Source: Survey Data

In today's digital age, young people and teenagers are at the epicenter of a transformative media landscape. The exponential growth of the internet, mobile technologies, and social media platforms has reshaped how this demographic consumes content, as well as the kind of content that captures their attention. No longer confined to the linear programming of television or the pages of print magazines, the younger generation now has an extensive array of digital channels readily available, offering an eclectic mix of videos, music, games, and interactive content.

As their preferences and habits evolve, understanding the media content most viewed by young people and teenagers becomes crucial for educators, parents, marketers, and society. This understanding provides insights into their values, aspirations, and the cultural shifts that are likely to shape the future (Zipin et al., 2015). Accordingly, among the most important content that young people and adolescents watch, according to this survey, we find entertainment programs, talk shows, documentary programs, movies, human story experiences and cartoon movies.

However, the media plays an influential role in shaping societal perspectives and behaviors on a variety of issues, including the right to sexual and reproductive health. Furthermore, the media provides a window into the practices, challenges, and successes related to sexual and reproductive health rights in different parts of the world. This can lead to cross-cultural learning and collaboration. Here is an evaluation of the media's contribution in consolidating the culture of this right:

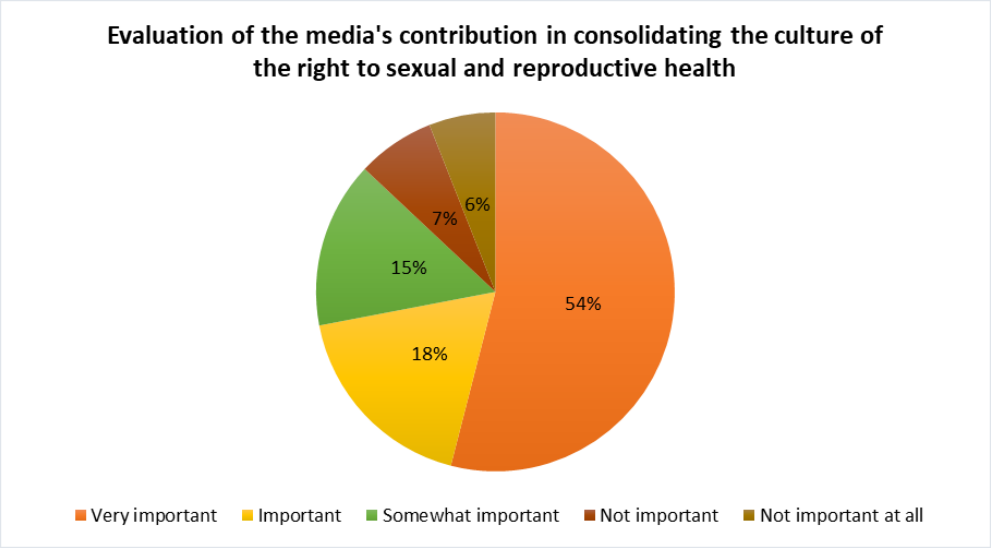

Figure 12: Evaluation of the Media's Contribution in Consolidating the Culture of the Right To SRH

Source: Survey Data

"Media outlets have the power to frame stories in particular ways, emphasizing certain aspects of an issue while downplaying others"

While the media has played a considerable role in promoting and consolidating the culture of the right to sexual and reproductive health, the quality and integrity of the content, as well as the intent behind the media's message, are crucial in determining its overall impact. It is essential for consumers to critically evaluate media content and for media entities to prioritize accurate, inclusive, and unbiased reporting. Media can shape public opinion by presenting information, analysis, and expert opinions. The debate about the right to sexual and reproductive health is not random; it involves experts on the subject who participate in media programs. Therefore, specialists, not journalists, provide all media content in this context.

"Media literacy and critical thinking skills are essential for individuals to navigate the media landscape and form informed opinions"

Social media platforms and digital content have democratized information dissemination. Grassroots movements and individual activists can now use these platforms to share stories, resources, and strategies, reaching a global audience. Nevertheless, the decentralized nature of digital media can sometimes amplify misinformation or extremist views that might be detrimental to the understanding and promotion of sexual and reproductive rights. It is evident that while the media has the potential to be a potent force for positive change, its influence is multifaceted, and the outcomes depend on the integrity, intent, and methodology of content production and dissemination.

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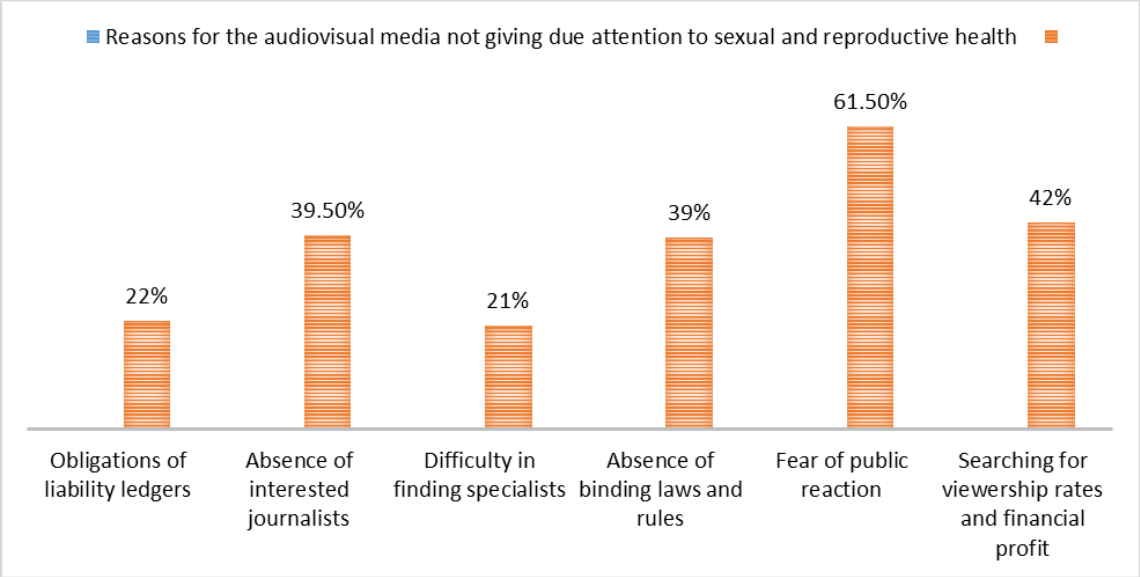

Figure 13. Reasons for the Audiovisual Media Not Giving Due Attention to SRH

Source: Survey Data

"We should provide content that is in line with our culture; we do not want to stir up problems"

For SRH topics to gain more attention in the audiovisual media, there needs to be a concerted effort from both civil society and media professionals. Education, advocacy, and strategic collaboration can help in bridging the gap and ensuring that SRH issues receive the attention they deserve. According to participants, fear of public reaction is one of the most important reasons for the audiovisual media not giving due attention to SRH, at a rate of 61.5%. This is in addition to other reasons related to the obligations of liability ledgers, absence of interested journalists, difficulty in finding specialists, the absence of binding laws and rules and the searching for viewership rates and financial profit. Nevertheless, promoting sexual and reproductive health (SRH) through audiovisual media can be a powerful way to disseminate vital information, challenge harmful stereotypes, and empower people to make informed decisions about their own bodies. Here is how the audiovisual media can promote SRH:

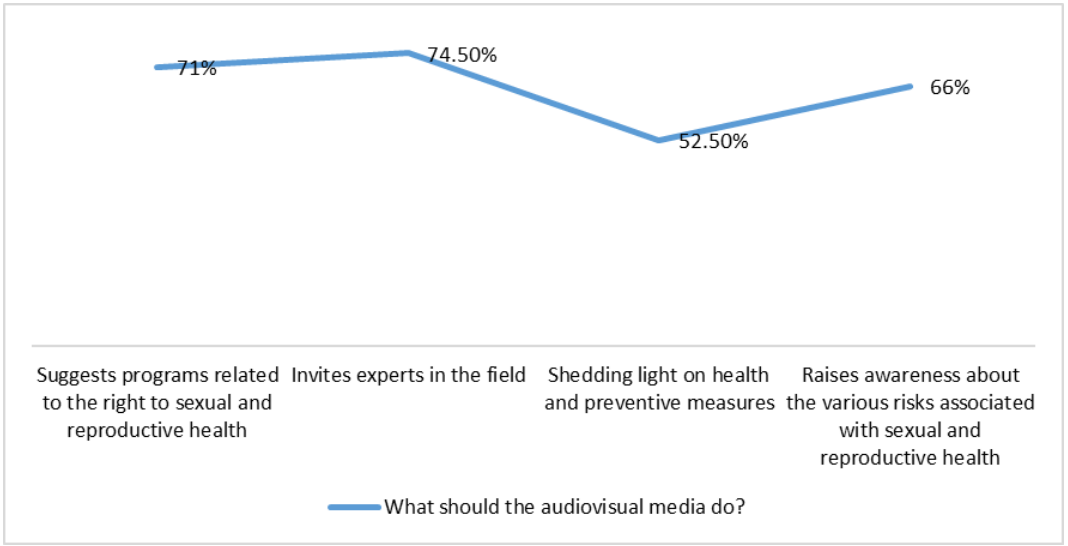

Figure 14. What Should the Audiovisual Media do to Promote SRH?

Source: Survey Data

Audiovisual media, given its widespread reach and influential power, plays a pivotal role in shaping perceptions and disseminating information related to SRH. Based on that, participants believe that the media should suggest programs related to the rights to sexual and reproductive health, invite experts, shed light on health and preventive measures and raise awareness about the various risks associated with sexual and reproductive health, this is at high percentages ranging between 52.5% and 74.5%.

> *"In healthcare settings, experts can contribute to the improvement of the quality of care by ensuring that healthcare professionals are well-informed and trained in providing comprehensive SRHR services"*

Inviting experts in promoting sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) is essential for a variety of reasons. SRHR is a complex and multifaceted field that encompasses issues related to sexual health, family planning, gender equality, and human rights. Experts can contribute significantly to advancing these important issues. They play a vital role in advancing SRHR by bringing knowledge, expertise, and experience to the media (Oronje et al., 2011). Their contributions are instrumental in developing programs, and strategies that promote the health and rights of individuals and communities, and ultimately lead to better outcomes in the field of SRHR.

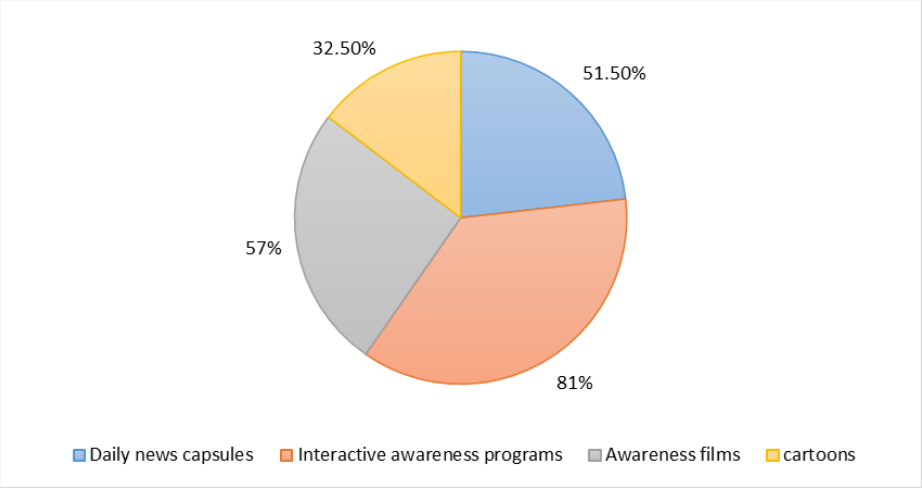

Figure 15. Contents Through Which the Media Can Promote Right to SRH

Source: Survey Data

Media has the potential to reach a wide audience and can significantly influence public opinion and policy. By responsibly addressing SRH issues, the media can help promote and protect the right to sexual and reproductive health for all individuals. It plays a pivotal role in shaping public opinions, beliefs, and behaviors. By providing interactive awareness programs, awareness films, daily news capsules and cartoons, media can support the right to sexual and reproductive health (SRH) in various ways. By playing a proactive role in promoting dialogue through the interactive programs, media can be a formidable ally in advancing sexual and reproductive health rights for all.

Interactive awareness programs are educational initiatives designed to inform, educate, and engage individuals or communities on SRH (Moore et al., 2014). These programs use interactive methods and tools to promote learning, encourage participation, and foster a deeper understanding of the issue. The use of interactive elements helps ensure that the information is not only presented but also understood and retained, increasing the likelihood of meaningful impact.

CONCLUSION

Leveraging television and media to promote diversity, inclusion, and sexual and reproductive health rights in Morocco is a vital step toward creating a more equitable and just society. By addressing the unique challenges and opportunities within the Moroccan context, and by engaging all stakeholders, we can work toward positive and sustainable change. Television and media can serve as powerful tools to foster diversity and inclusion in Moroccan society. By representing a wide range of voices, cultures, and backgrounds, media can help break down stereotypes and promote understanding among different communities. This is especially important in a diverse nation like Morocco, with a rich tapestry of languages, traditions, and religions. However, educating the public about sexual and reproductive health rights is vital in a society where there may be misconceptions, taboos, and limited access to information. Television and media can play a key role in disseminating accurate and non-judgmental information about topics such as contraception, family planning, sexual education, and the importance of consent. The media, with its vast reach and influence, holds the power to be a staunch ally in championing the right to sexual and reproductive health. By consistently and accurately presenting information, challenging societal norms, and giving voice to those often silenced, the media can significantly contribute to a world where everyone can make informed and empowered choices about their bodies and lives.

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