

# Developing A Training Manual on Reproductive Health for Social Work Trainees in India

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## Abstract:-

### Objectives:

To develop culture sensitive training manual to educate adolescents on reproductive health in India and to develop participatory training methodologies in areas related to reproductive health.

### Methods:

Focus Group Discussion was held with experts in the field for three days to bring out draft manual. This was followed by participatory methodology for three days to increase the effectiveness among trainees through using brain storming, videos, discussions, lecture methods, case studies and demonstrations. Finally the manual was again reviewed by the experts from Government and non-governmental organizations in Bangalore in a two day workshop.

### Results:

The manual is developed using cultural sensitive, gender sensitive and rights based approach. The session wise objectives methodology, duration, process and discussion have been helpful in implementing the objectives. The manual will certainly equip the social work trainees to work in this area of reproductive health.

### Conclusion

The cultural sensitivity is an important aspect that social work trainees need to be trained while working with adolescent reproductive health

## I. INTRODUCTION

Reproductive health addresses the human sexuality and reproductive processes, functions and system at all stages of life and implies that people are able to have a “responsible, satisfying and safe sex life and that they have the capability to reproduce and the freedom to decide if, when and how often to do so”. Reproductive health is a universal concern, but is of special importance for women particularly during the reproductive years. However, men also demand specific reproductive health needs and have particular responsibilities in terms of women's reproductive health because of their decision-making powers in some reproductive health matters. Reproductive health is a fundamental component of an individual's overall health status and a central determinant of quality

of life.

Adolescents form a vital population segment, i.e. one-fifth of the world's population, and are growing in number. Over one billion adolescents (aged 10-19) in the world and 190 million in India comprise nearly one-fifth (21.6%) of the total population. Adolescence is one of the important segment of population which is generally neglected as in this stage the illness is comparatively low than the children and aged group of population. This group is relatively neglected by the policy makers also. However, the adolescence group are more prone to various sexual and reproductive health risks due to their negligence and unawareness about the diseases. There is a huge regional differences exist in country like India in every measure of adolescence and at the same time talking about sexuality in front of others is considered as a taboo. However, there is need to understand the state of adolescents in India by considering the regional differences with regard to culture. Hence, there is need for a culture sensitive training manual for the adolescents to understand reproductive health.

## II. OBJECTIVES

The manual has following objectives

1. To generate awareness about reproductive anatomy and function
2. To provide enhance the knowledge and skill of the trainees in dealing with reproductive health issues and concerns
3. To sensitize the trainees to reproductive rights and sexual rights
4. To acquaint the trainees with the availability and accessibility of existing reproductive health care services, and policies and programmes related to reproductive health.
5. To enable trainees to explore youth friendly health care services

## III. METHODOLOGY

The study involves mixed method approach. Initially, people from all over India from social work background

and experience in reproductive health were contacted for the willingness to participate in a focus group discussion (FGD) for the development of the culture sensitive training manual on reproductive health. Among them twenty members were selected for the FGD. During this FGD the draft manual was came out where mostly participatory training methodology were used. The manual employs small group discussion, case studies, brain-storming and audio visual presentations to make the trainees to increase their practical knowledge. Subsequently, with required needs the draft manual was revised. After a pilot study, six post graduate social work colleges were selected from Bangalore city to test the draft manual. From each social work college, fifteen social work students were selected randomly to participate in the three day workshop training programme to find out the lacuna in the draft manual. Followed by this, with required modification the manual was corrected. After this an organized workshop was conducted where around fifteen participants were selected from both government and non-governmental organization having background of social work and working or research experience on reproductive health. According to their feedback and comments again the manual was revised and the necessary changes were incorporated in the manual.

### RESULTS

This manual is developed and designed as a training guide to help social work trainees in India on reproductive health. It builds information and skills related to adolescence's sexual and reproductive health. This manual uses a gender sensitive and rights-based approach by keeping the cultural sensitivity term combinedly throughout the manual. During the training programme, the trainers were selected keeping in mind that he/she should have subject matter experience with experience of teaching or training. India is having a multi-linguistic and multi-culture country. Hence, the adolescents group of population must have different perception, attitude and behaviour towards sexuality and reproductive health. By keeping in mind this cultural diversity, this manual includes different sessions which can be easily access and adopted by any culture in India. This manual is developed for the social work students to make aware about the reproductive health issues for adolescents. This manual can be use by other health care providers and non-governmental organizations also.

The manual includes session-wise objective, methodology, duration of time, process (activities), materials to be used, facilitator's discussion, and expected outcome and fact sheet. The manual consists of four sessions and details about the session are given below in a tabular form. The detail of this manual is given below in a tabular form. The fact sheets of each session cannot be given in detail. Hence, in brief the fact sheet is provided here as bullet points.

Table 1:

Topic	Objectives	Process
Structure and function of the reproductive system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To generate awareness about reproductive anatomy and function</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brainstorming</li> <li>Film clips</li> <li>Discussion</li> </ul>
Realizing reproductive health: issues and concerns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To provide enhance the knowledge and skill of the trainees in dealing with reproductive health issues &amp; concerns.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussion Demonstration</li> </ul>
Rights and Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To sensitize the trainees to reproductive rights &amp; sexual rights</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lecture and discussion.</li> <li>Case studies</li> </ul>
Getting acquainted with policies, programmes and services related to reproductive healthcare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To acquaint the trainees with the availability &amp; accessibility of existing reproductive health care services, and policies &amp; programmes related to reproductive health.</li> <li>To enable trainees to explore youth friendly health care services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussion</li> </ul>

### DISCUSSION

The manual basically comprise of participatory training methodologies to understand in a practical way by the participants themselves. The first session deals with the reproductive anatomy and functions. It is very essential for the adolescents to understand the basic anatomy and functions of reproductive organs of both male and female so that conceptually they can understand in a better way. It will help them to create awareness about reproductive health and minimize the misconception about the bodily functions. During adolescence many physical changes

occur. Hence, this session will help adolescents to learn the functions and changes of reproductive organs. For many teens, sexual maturation comes with a lot of questions and understands about reproductive organs and its functions help them to separate fact from fiction<sup>1</sup>. In order to be prepared and respond to problems related to adolescence it is necessary to acquire a comprehensive knowledge concerning adolescence. Therefore, the adolescent should learn about human reproductive system; reproductive organs and their function, problems related to adolescence<sup>1</sup>.

Today, there are 1.6 billion people aged 12-24—the largest generation of adolescents and young people ever<sup>7</sup>. The growing number of adolescents and their risk taking behaviour associated with them is an alarming issue in the developing countries like India. During adolescence stage risk associated behaviour is found due to their transitional phase of life and hormonal changes in body. At the same time they want to do experience to know about the bodily functions and as a result of this they are more prone to various diseases. Adolescence (10-19 years) is a phase of physical growth and development accompanied by sexual maturation, often leading to intimate relationships<sup>4</sup>. Fifty percent girls are married by 18 years (NFHS 2). Over 35% of all reported AIDS cases in India occur among young people in the age group of 15–24 years<sup>9</sup>. Contraceptive use in 15–24 years age group increases between NFHS-2 and NFHS-3 by more than 1% point per annum<sup>10</sup>. From this it is clear that premarital sexual relations are increasing day by day. Hence, the adolescents in India should aware about the issues and concerns related to reproductive health. Including HIV/AIDS, condom use many mental health issues related to reproductive health is also discussed in the manual. Psychosocial issues related to pregnancy, child birth and the postpartum period, adverse maternal outcomes like still birth, miscarriage, premarital pregnancy during adolescence etc. is highlighted by<sup>5</sup>. Along with these issues, postpartum psychosis, Premenstrual Dysphoric Disorder and the required intervention is also discussed in this manual.

The adolescents can be made aware about the safe and unsafe sex by realizing the problems associated with unsafe sex. This manual highlights the absentee method and use of contraceptive method to minimize the burden of illness found among adolescents due to sexual intercourse. The Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)<sup>6</sup> reports that women and minorities in particular are more likely to have STDs. Sexual abstinence is the only way to prevent acquiring STDs. There are ways to reduce the risks of being infected with STDs in sexually active persons. For these reasons, STD control programs across NYS that conduct public health activities aim to: educate the public on safer sex behaviors; prevent the spread of STDs through counseling and treatment of those infected; and provide health services to partners of persons infected with STDs<sup>8</sup>. This manual includes the various psychological and physical problems faced by the unwed mothers which can make aware the adolescents about the dark side of unwanted pregnancy.

Reproductive health rights refer to those rights specific to personal decision making and behaviour, including access to reproductive health information and services with guidance provided by trained health professionals. Adolescents' age-related low social status and lack of autonomy can make them vulnerable to a host of rights violations<sup>2</sup>. These include denial of access to reproductive health information and services, violence and exploitation, and extreme hardship when faced with an unwanted pregnancy<sup>11</sup>. However, the adolescents also need to be informed about the reproductive rights. This manual covered the reproductive rights including sexual rights so that it can be easily differentiate between these two rights.

The adolescents should aware about the programmes and policies available in central government as well as state government which helps them to avail and access the government reproductive health services. Many NGOS also developed various Reproductive health programmes. In this way the adolescents can learn various benefits offered by healthcare centres. The population policy also emphasized that reproductive health services for adolescent girls and boys are especially needed in rural areas, where adolescent marriage and pregnancy are most prevalent. The policy also underscored the need for programs that encourage delayed marriage and childbearing and the need for education about the risks of unprotected sex<sup>3</sup>.

Along with the above mentioned points about reproductive health, this manual highlights more about the cultural sensitivity term as India is full of cultural diversities.

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