

Relevance of community Based Institutions for Ending Harmful Cultural Practices Related to Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive

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Abstract

Harmful cultural and discriminatory practices deeply rooted in social, cultural and religious landscape of Nepal; are major barriers to promote sexual and reproductive rights of adolescent's population. The attitudes and prejudices of vanguard citizens are strongly detrimental to avert such practices. The objectives of study were to gauge attitude and readiness to abandon harmful cultural practices, to understand to what extent citizen's perception was influenced by social norms and to assess whether the community based institutions are making any differences in tackling harmful practices in the community. A opting a cross- sectional survey, five categories of Community Based Institutions namely Ward Citizen Forum, Citizen Awareness Center, Youth Network, Adolescent Girls Circle and Women Group were involved in the study. The social acceptance or resistance related to adolescent sexual and reproductive health were assessed by using Likert Scale of rating scores ranging from 1 to 5. According to the average rating scale, the majority of citizens showed strong disagreement to allow adolescent girls to go school during menstruation, allow to stay inside home during menstruation and open discussion on sexual & reproductive health related matters between parents and adolescent. Likewise, citizens have strong disagreement to allow girls and boys to make voluntary decision for marriage, allow unmarried adolescents to use contraceptive and abortion services by unmarried girls. This study evidences that that there is strong force of the social norms against adolescent sexual and reproductive health of adolescent. Similarly, the study shows that community based institutions have launched some social behavior change campaign - highest response (29.6%) on campaign for open defecations free, second most interesting issue is citizens have conducted advocacy campaign to child marriage (18.3%). Further. Campaign for free health service (17.8%) and campaign against domestic violence (17.5%) and against banishment during menstruation and delivery (16.6%). The study revealed that Community Based Institutions are highly relevant for addressing harmful cultural practices through citizen engagement and social accountability.



Biography:

Giri Prasad Panthi has completed his Ph.D. in Sociology with desertion on Social Accountability for Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health from Singhania University, Rajasthan, India. He is currently working as freelancer consultant in the field of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, in Nepal. He has over two decades of experience in development field including fourteen years with United National Population Fund. Recently he completed his assignment in UNFPA Myanmar as Programme Specialist – SRHR/ GBV. He has published research based papers in peer reviewed journals on adolescent sexual and reproductive health, sexuality education and social behavior change.



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