



HCD EXCHANGE

The Sexual & Reproductive Health Needs of Female University Students in Ethiopia

Prepared by: Heran Birhanu
30 March 2022

Adolescents'
participati
in SRH

Table of contents

Content	#
Problem Statement	4
Objective	4
Methodology	5
Insights	6
Awareness	7
Service Demand	10
Agency	13

WHAT & WHY

Problem Statement

Young female university students in Ethiopia face a number of risks to their sexual and reproductive health, including adolescent pregnancy, HIV/AIDS, sexual violence, and unmet need for contraceptive use. While universities themselves and SRHR initiatives within universities attempt to fill the gap, interventions are not student centered, lack comprehensiveness and inclusivity.

Not only that, SRH services do not have a clear understanding of students' needs as dictated by students themselves

Project Objective?

The objective of this project is study the unmet SRHR needs and challenges of female university students studying at Addis Ababa University. It will be conducted with the intention of having a clear understanding of the student's perceptions, needs, and challenges that influence their use (or lack thereof) of SRHR services.

HOW

Project Methodology

The individual learning project employed a human-centered design methodology

The methods used to collect insights were:

- Individual Interviews, through the use of card sorts
- Focus group discussions through the use of vox pops
- story telling
- Surveys

Insight collected through these methods we prioritized, synthesized and compiled through the use of Human Centered Design methodologies.





HCD EXCHANGE

Insights

Adolescents'
participati
in SRH

Theme One: AWARENESS

INSIGHT

While students face various SRH challenges, they are unaware of the SRH services that exist within the university; in turn students don't seek nor receive services to eliminate their SRH challenges.

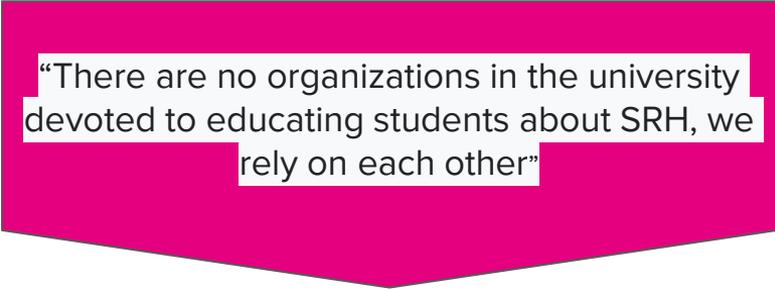
FINDINGS

It was found that students are largely unaware of the SRH services that exist in the campus as well as the different bodies that provide SRH services.

Their lack of awareness of the two was also found to be strongly connected to why students don't seek SRH services.

HOW MIGHT WE

How might we grow SRH knowledge to positively affect the demand for SRH services within the university?



“There are no organizations in the university devoted to educating students about SRH, we rely on each other”

INSIGHT

Because students lack credible sources of SRH information within the university, there is a lack of comprehensive knowledge and understanding surrounding SRH.

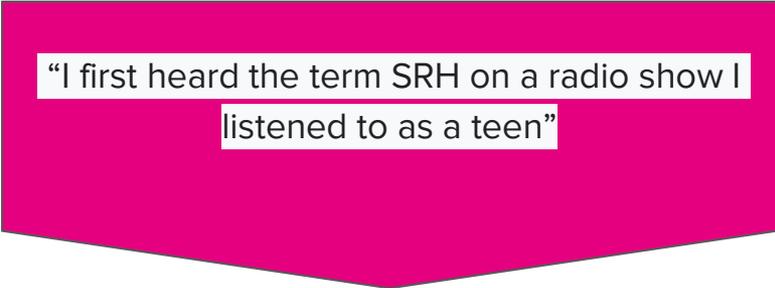
FINDINGS

It was found that students did not have reliable sources of information with regards to SRH issues.

Sources of SRH information students relied on are friends, social media, television and radio.

HOW MIGHT WE

How might we expose students to credible sources of SRH information?



“I first heard the term SRH on a radio show I listened to as a teen”

Theme Two: SERVICE DEMAND

INSIGHT

Students face a multitude of challenges to their sexual and reproductive health and therefore want to access services that tend to their various needs.

FINDINGS

Based on their challenges it was found that students are interested in accessing services that focus on:

- Contraceptive uptake,
- GBV including legal aid, Management of STD/Is,
- Comprehensive sex education
- Promotion of SRH,
- Awareness creation, Advocacy

HOW MIGHT WE

How might we identify SRH challenges of students to identify demand areas for SRH services?

“We have many challenges. Female students are being Harassed and abused by their teachers, their class mates even by the securities guards. female students are involving with inappropriate relationship to cover their Sanitary costs, female students are exposed to unwanted pregnancy and abortion just because of lack of information and sex education and also because there is no access to contraceptive methods in the campus.”

INSIGHT

Students don't actively seek SRH services as they believe services provided in campus are rudimentary, lack comprehensiveness and are disorganized. They also believe that there aren't necessary linkages between the few existing services and service providers.

FINDINGS

It was found that students' negative beliefs about the SRH services offered within their university directly impacts their unlikeliness to seek services. It was also found that beliefs were a result of direct experiences as a service seeker as well as shared experiences with peers.

HOW MIGHT WE

How might we avail students with comprehensive, user centric SRH service channels within the university?

"The services are not given at one place and they are not student centred because they don't even try to inform the students where they are and how they can access them"

Theme Three: AGENCY

INSIGHT

Students believe sexual reproductive health is an ‘inactionable right’ because they don’t feel empowered enough to demand for its fulfillment within the university.

FINDINGS

While students generally viewed sexual reproductive health issues as human rights issues, they did not believe they possessed a defacto right to claim their rights.

It was also found that students don’t believe they are empowered enough to demand their sexual and reproductive rights against the university.

HOW MIGHT WE

HMW build the agency of female students to help them demand their SRH rights?

“I don’t demand my rights because I am scared of the backlash, if my demand is overturned like it normally is I am left to deal with the negative consequences”

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT/THE VALUE OF THIS WORK

This study that intends to identifying the SRH needs of female students in universities originates from a deep desire to connect the dots between the SRH needs and opportunities in universities. Moreover, as an HCD project, this study is relevant because it has allowed students who face the problem first hand to name and frame the problem as well as identify paths for its solution.

My hope for this insight deck that identifying SRH needs of students in AAU, will not only contribute to the resources in the SRH space but also give direction and inspiration for interventions by actors in the field.



HCD EXCHANGE

THANK YOU