

Short Communication

It's Not a Taboo, Period!

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A teacher barged in our class who was not apparently used to teach us any subject, and said **“Your bodies are growing now, have you noticed??”**

She tried to enlighten us about puberty without using the word “puberty”. She left after few minutes of talk perhaps because she had to give the same lecture in the other sections of 6th grade as well. We all were left confused, some were laughing however, everyone was curious, guys made fun of girls as usual. That was my first lesson about my body, I hadn't discussed it with anyone before, like others I also thought it was immoral, and private.

Then came my periods, since it is a taboo subject I was never given any information beforehand but my friends told me bits and pieces since they had already gotten their periods before me. I don't know why I use to get excited when one of my friends use to be down and was waiting for my turn, I was last. And then I realized that those days were restless, painful and miserable but again...wasn't aware of that either.

On the day I got my first period I was home, I showed my pajamas to my mother and she just gave me a pad and then nothing. NO talk. I am an avid reader, thanks to books and Google, I came to know about my sexual development or else our society have pinned in our minds that these things are taboo, we can't talk about sex, we can't talk about puberty, contraception, sex education is prohibited. But majority of the people in our country, do not have excess to internet or can hardly read that is why they do not get proper information till later.

Pakistan has one of the largest allies of young people in its history, with approximately 25 million adolescents and young people aged 15 and 24 years however, awareness of bodily changes and sexual development in adolescents is

very little, if we ignore this topic, which is reality of our society, it leads to serious consequences. Male adults somehow, get their hands on sexual material like pornographic magazines and videos and get information from friends outside home, but their female counterparts spend their time mostly at home and since they are told they will lose their virginity even if they touch themselves anywhere near vagina or look at another boy, they don't get to have enough education on sex.

People believe that ours is an Islamic nation that is why it is inappropriate for parents to tell us that you have become an adult and all such body and emotional changes will occur. As kids also do not ask out of fear of humiliation or perhaps respect. This cycle has been in succession since forever in our society, the generation gap and the fact of parents not communicating with their kids about their sexual development and later on sexual behavior and relations.

Most of the women does not have any knowledge about sex till they get married, they do get brief information from their mother or close friends however, and they are not familiar with sexual relation until they have performed it already on their wedding night. The only information girls get is from media, which is confined to romance and kissing. Some of the girls have also told that they thought, before they knew about sex, that they can get pregnant by kissing, holding hands etc. A woman told;

“Yes we know about pregnancy, but how it happens, the process etc. that was not known... that is not in our knowledge. We have this impression that while kissing pregnancy occurs”

Since men mostly watch porn videos and have more knowledge of sex before marriage and

female are naïve in this matter. A girl told about her knowledge on sexual relations;

When I got married, no one told me anything. They only said “Don’t get scared” Whatever husband asks or does, you don’t get scared. We will be alone in a room and it will be a new thing”

These kind of conversations are not helpful when a person does not have detailed information on a certain subject, it will fill their mind with more fear and they will react in a negative way. In our society sex has always been portrayed as an immoral, bad, and hidden subject, no one has ever treated it as natural, like a process through we are born, or something that gives us pleasure.

These are the reasons, sexual frustration in our youth has grown so high. Young men feel that their knowledge of sexual behavior before their marriage lacked profundity, so men felt nervous about their sexual performance on wedding night, on the other hand when a girl gets married she hardly knows anything about sex and she doesn't

care about her performance but, she is rather scared of the event she is about to face and has no knowledge of, she had been told her whole life that it is not a virtuous thing but now suddenly you have to perform it. Mostly girls get detailed information on sex from their husbands after wedding, but they are still not comfortable because in our society most marriages are arranged.

Since female virginity is such a big issue in our society and our girls are brought up in such a way that after marriage, they fear to lose it to their husbands which leads to marital rape and later on psychological problems in females. We need to address the matter very casually and considerately at the right time.

Which is why it is very necessary that we give information on sexual development from school level, communicate in homes and put proper course of sex education in syllabi for adolescents to learn from a proper source and not from pornographic material or learn nothing at all.