Introduction

• In the Middle East, many young girls and women experience reproductive oppression.

• Young girls and women are deprived of reproductive education such as contraceptives, sexual diseases, family planning, and proper prenatal care.

• The tradition is for young girls to marry older men, sometimes three or four times their age. Many of the men who marry these young girls have had prior sexual encounters, often without proper protection. This can lead to the transmission of diseases and STDs to young girls.

Education Reduces Infant Mortality Rate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percent of married women using contraceptives</th>
<th>Women’s education</th>
<th>Births per woman</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>66</td>
<td>Secondary or higher</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>No education</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• In Egypt, 69 percent of married women ages 15 to 49 who had completed secondary school reported seeing family planning messages in newspapers or magazines, compared with 32 percent of those who had completed only primary school.

• Women with more education are also more likely to discuss family planning issues with their husbands. (prb.org)

• Mandatory premarital programs that taught about sex and birth control, instituted in 1993 to control population growth, helped women delay pregnancy and changed their views toward marriage. (NY Times).

Background

• Education is vital to women of all ages in the Middle East in order to improve a family’s well-being, and to ensure proper methods of family planning.

• Reproductive education helps clarify misconceptions of the idea that “contraceptives are harmful to the mother and the potential child.”

• Education has a positive effect on child nutrition, and reduces the infant mortality rate.

• Reproductive education informs the health risks associated with early conception, which as a result reduces the average birth rate.

Point of View/Argument

Call to Action

• Educational programs that teach women about family planning, different types of contraceptives, sex education, and the types of sexually transmitted diseases.

• Provide funding opportunities for educational programs.

• Provide educational pamphlets about reproductive education in different languages.

• A campaign broadcasted in popular locations (i.e. billboard).

• Create a symbol about this issue for people to wear and represent.

References


