An Appeal for Supporting Individuals with Disorders of Sex Development in Low Middle Income Country Pakistan

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Disorders of Sex Development (DSD) is discordance between gonadal, chromosomal and phenotypic sex. In low middle income countries like Pakistan, people with conditions of DSD face many problems due to stigmatization, low education level, less and misleading information and above all lack of access to medical facilities expert in dealing these issues. Rate of DSD is very high in our country due to consanguineous marriages as most of DSDs are autosomal recessive in origin. We have highlighted importance of support that these individuals need in form of social acceptance, access to medical need and psychological support. Disorders of sexual development (DSD) comprises various groups of congenital conditions that lead to atypical internal and external genital structures. Causative factors include genetic variation, developmental programming, and hormones. The estimated frequency of genital ambiguity is reported to be in the range of 1:2000-1:4500. Most common cause include congenital adrenal hyperplasia, 5 alpha reductase deficiency, Partial androgen insensitivity syndrome, Turnur mosaic and gonadal dysgenesis.

People with DSD often deals with many issues in our society like discrimination, insecurity and non acceptance. Major cause of these issues are societal misconceptions, false beliefs and lack of right information. It is very important to change this scenario and develop a healthy environment for these individuals by educating communities, increasing awareness programs, improving healthcare facilities and multidisciplinary team. Access to Qualified healthcare professional including Pediatric endocrinologists, surgeons, psychologists, geneti-cists, specialist nurses, radiologists, and gynecolog-ists, is needed for peoples with DSD condition. To achieve this goal there are many barriers in Pakistan fragile health care system like limited professionals, lack of standardized protocols, and financial constraints. The psychological impact of DSD is very bad and its important to deal it in right manner to avoid gender identity. People with DSD are prone to experience emotional distress, anxiety, depression, issues of body image and gender identity. Solution to address it is by adopting culturally sensitive psychological support services in order to empower them to lead good lives.

Raising awareness about this condition in form of print and electronic media will eliminate misconceptions and will lead to early health care service seeking behaviour in society.

Supporting individuals with DSD in Pakistan need collaborative efforts from society, healthcare providers, government and DSD support organizations. Lets make enviroment where people with DSD feel safe, secured, educated, productive and indifferent.
References


