

SEXUAL & REPRODUCTIVE HUMAN
RIGHTS

2022

REPORT

**MONITORING COVERAGE OF THE ISSUES ON
SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND
HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE LEBANESE MEDIA**



This report was prepared by the Media Research and Monitoring Unit at Maharat Foundation, under the supervision of attorney Tony Mikhael.



Sexual and Reproductive Human Rights (SRHR) aim "to ensure the protection of the individual's health, dignity, private life, choices and lifestyle related to those rights" and correlate to a set of basic human rights that uphold the principles of equality and non-discrimination and the right to access information, services and choices that guarantee these rights, particularly for adolescents and vulnerable communities.

The right to life, the right not to be subjected to torture, the right not to be exploited, the right to health, the right to privacy and respect for private life, the right to education, and the prohibition of discrimination represent the most important and prominent rights of the SRHR. In fact, Sexual and Reproductive Human Rights intertwine with the most prominent civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, recognized by global covenants.

These rights affirm the privacy of women, children, people with disabilities, refugees, and all groups that may find themselves in a position of vulnerability or marginalization because of their social, health, physical, psychological, legal, or security status.



Most significant rights of the SRHR:

- The right to freedom of expression, thoughts and opinions in relation to sexual and reproductive aspects,
- The right to respect for private life (interferences, pressures from family members and those around them...),
- decide freely on matters related to their sexuality without exposure to discrimination and violence (Child marriage, celibacy, LGBTQIAs...),
- the right to found a family (the right to have children, to plan for having a family...)
- The right to enjoy the best possible state of health and access to contraceptives and health care for mothers, regardless of their familial and legal status, (forced pregnancy),
- the right to benefit from scientific progress in the reproductive and sexual field (artificial insemination...),
- the right to benefit from health care and treatment, including treatment for HIV and sexually transmitted diseases. (STIs, pregnant women...)
- The right to be protected from sexual exploitation, harassment and discrimination (human trafficking, sexual exploitation, harassment in the workplace...)
- The right for adolescents and adults to access sexual and reproductive health information and services (consulting a specialist, using condoms...)



1- This study aims to:

- Monitor the media's interest in spreading awareness about Sexual and Reproductive Human Rights
- Monitor the media in covering issues related to the violation of Sexual and Reproductive Human Rights
- Determine the media's interest in covering the governmental and non-governmental institutions' efforts related to Sexual and Reproductive Human Rights. (policies, strategies, action plans, implementation mechanisms, programs...)
- Monitor and analyze the topics of media coverage, the target groups, the people who are the subject of the story, and those who influence it.
- Analyze questionnaires conducted with migrant workers, refugees and the local community regarding media coverage and their sources of information on sexual and reproductive health and human rights.

2- Monitored media:

Seven local TV channels and seven news websites were selected as the monitoring sample, which are the following:

TV media

Television media outlets play a major role in covering the various human and legal aspects related to sexual and reproductive human rights, through news reports in news bulletins. The monitoring process includes evening news bulletins for seven Lebanese TV channels: **TL, MTV, LBCI, ALJADEED, OTV, ALMANAR, and NBN.**



Digital media

Digital media play a growing role in media influence by reaching out to different segments of society, including the youth. In addition to newspapers and news websites that provide traditional journalism content, a group of independent media outlets that provide bold and transparent information that does not necessarily favor the prevailing political, social and cultural system, are active. These media platforms are known as alternative media that focus on priorities and basic rights rather than political agendas.

Across this context, the following newspapers and websites are monitored through their accounts on their most interactive social media pages, whether on Facebook or Instagram.

- **An-Nahar** newspaper Facebook account, <https://www.facebook.com/Annaharlb/>
- **Al Joumhouria** newspaper Facebook account <https://www.facebook.com/AlJoumhouria>
- **Nidaa Alwatan** Facebook account <https://www.facebook.com/nidaalwatan/>
- **Megaphone** instagram account: <https://www.instagram.com/megaphonenews/>
- **Naqdpoliticsinstagram** account: <https://www.instagram.com/naqdpolitics/>
- **Daraj** Facebook account: <https://www.facebook.com/darajmedia>
- **Raseef 22** Facebook account <https://www.facebook.com/Raseef22>



Monitoring period:

During the month of October 2022

4- Monitored media content:

- News reports
- opinions
- Journalistic investigations
- Guiding and directory content
- Personal experiences

5- Monitored topics:

- Sexual rights
- Reproductive rights
- Sexual health
- Reproductive health: Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion
- Sexual and private life choices: Relationships, reproduction, family planning
- Children's rights and Child marriage
- Access to health care and services

The monitoring also includes the media coverage's subjects in terms of their roles, jobs, gender and age groups, to show inclusive journalism within the media coverage.

Additionally, it includes a qualitative evaluation of the coverage in terms of phrases and expressions used and challenging stereotypes.

6- The targeted groups:

- Women and men
- Events
- LGBTQIAs community
- Refugees
- People with disabilities
- Immigrants
- Female prisoners



Terminologies:**sexual health:**

- Children Puberty
- Treatment of transmissible diseases
- sex education

sexual rights:

- Harassment and sexual abuse
- Sexual exploitation of women (prostitution, within the framework of the worker's relationship, within the framework of marriage...)
- The right to live a satisfying and safe sex life

Reproductive Health:

- Favorable physical, mental and social conditions
- Safety from reproductive system diseases
- The ability of the individual to make the appropriate decision regarding reproduction and family planning

Reproductive rights:

- The right to abortion
- The right to treatment and to consult a specialist

Sexual and private life choices:

- Suppression of the LGBTQIAs community
- Violence towards the LGBTQIAs community
- Honor killings (marriage against traditions, sexual relations outside marriage...)

Access to health care and services:

- Consult a specialist in sexual and reproductive health
- Safe health care during pregnancy and childbirth
- Access to menstrual supplies and products



- 14 media outlets were monitored, distributed among the news bulletins of 7 local TV channels, the official social media pages of 3 online newspapers, and 4 alternative media websites, during the specified monitoring period from October 1st to October 31st, 2022.
- 65 media content related to sexual and reproductive health and rights were monitored, distributed among: television news bulletins 8 media content, Digital newspaper pages 20 media content, and alternative media website pages 37 media content.
- 4% of the monitored media coverage took the form of guidance and directory content (three coverages).
- 8% of the monitored media coverage came within the context of a personal experience, as investigations reached 50%, while news coverage reached 38%.
- The majority of monitored media content falls into the category of sexual rights at 51%, followed by coverage categories related to sexual choices and private life at 18%, reproductive health at 12%, access to health care and services at 8%, reproductive rights at 6%, and reproductive health at 5%.
- 32% of the monitored media topics revolve around sexual harassment and violations, followed by the topic of oppression towards the LGBTQIA community reaching 15%, then 13 % for social violence and honor killings, and the issue of child marriage reaching 8%, followed equally by the topics of sexual exploitation of women and menstrual requirements reaching a percentage of 4.5%, then digital sexual extortion and the right to abortion at 3% each. Other covered topics with a lower percentage were related to pregnancy, childbearing and family planning.



- Lebanon came first in the countries subject to this coverage, and the number of coverages on sexual and reproductive health and rights for residents in Lebanon reached 22 coverage, while other countries such as Egypt, Iraq and Palestine collectively received a similar share of 22 coverage. Some of these coverages issued common cases within the Arab community as a whole, and the Bedouin community in particular.
- The monitored media topics were distributed among the targeted groups of the media coverage on sexual and reproductive health and rights with a rate of 68% for issues that bring together women and men in general, followed by topics related to the LGBTQIAs community reaching 15%. The percentage of subjects monitored for the rest of the targeted groups was distributed between 11% for children and teenagers, 3% for migrant workers, and less than 1.5% for both refugees and female prisoners.
- 141 individuals were monitored, appearing in media coverage of 65 issues of sexual and reproductive health and rights.
- The percentage of women appearing in the monitored media coverage was 60.28%, compared to 38.30% for men, and 1.42% for transgender.
- The percentage of women reached 54% of the official spokespeople, experts, commentators and decision makers out of a sample of 74 personalities who appeared in the media topics raised.
- Media coverage of victims, survivors, and personal experiences was mainly distributed among students, family members, content creators, and human rights activists.
- Media coverage of spokespersons, experts, commentators, and decision-makers was distributed first among civil society activists, then politicians, public servants, and experts in law and medical fields.



- The age groups of the people who were subjects of media coverage among victims, survivors and those with personal experiences were distributed as follows: 43% for the youth group between the ages (19-30 years) and adolescents (13-18 years), 22% for middle-aged adults (31-45 years), and about 3% for the elderly over 45 years old.
- The media was found to be the first source of information and news related to sexual and reproductive human rights, according to the results of the questionnaire directed to a sample of 24 people distributed equally between men and women from the categories of migrant workers, refugees and the local community.
- The results of the analysis of opinion poll data showed that 17 of the participants said that the media in their country does not adequately and professionally cover issues of sexual and reproductive health and rights, and five said that the media coverage is satisfactory, compared to 2 who considered it non-existent.
- Social media platforms were found to be the media that are mostly concerned with addressing the issue of sexual rights and reproductive health, according to the results of the questionnaire directed to the categories of migrant workers, refugees and the local community, within a sample of 24 people, followed by TV channels and then websites.



1- Monitored media coverage of issues related to sexual and reproductive health and rights

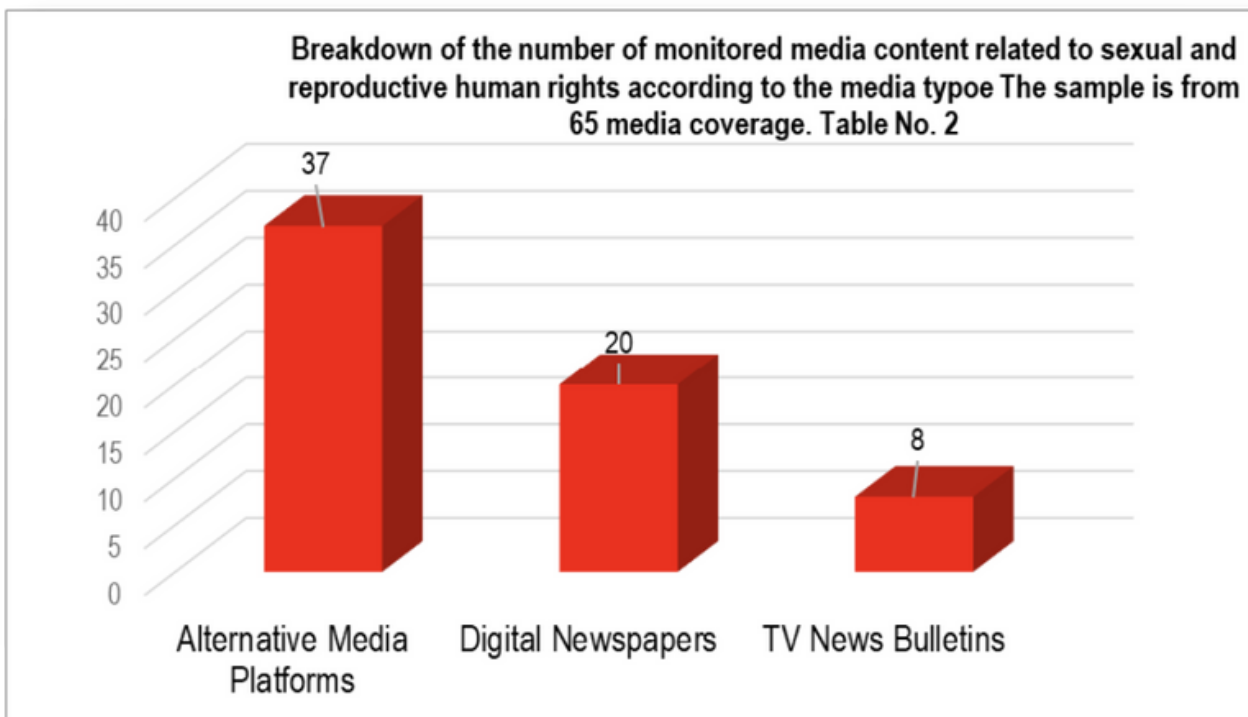
- 14 media outlets were monitored, distributed among the news bulletins of 7 local TV channels, 3 digital newspapers, and 4 alternative media platforms. During the monitoring period, from October 1st to October 31st, 2022, 65 media content related to sexual and reproductive health and rights were monitored, distributed among the monitored media outlets as follows: (Table No. 1)

monitored media	Alternative media platforms	digital newspapers	TV news bulletins	Total content monitored
Aljournhouria		6		6
annahar		14		14
Daraj	14			14
LBCI			3	3
Megaphone	4			4
MTV			4	4
Raseef22	19			19
TL			1	1
Nida al watan		0		
Naqd politics	0			
ALJADEED			0	
OTV			0	
NBN			0	
ALMANAR			0	
	37	20	8	65



The 65 monitored media content related to sexual and reproductive health and rights, were distributed according to the type of media outlet as follows, according to Table No. 2:

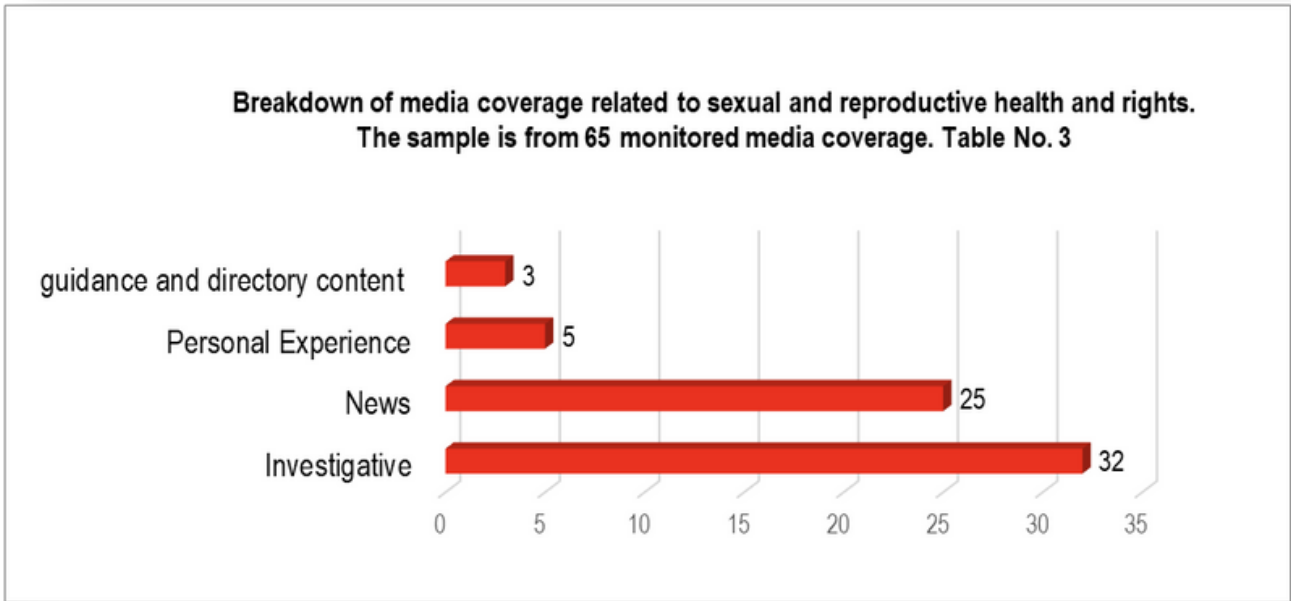
- TV news bulletins: 8 media content
- Digital newspapers: 20 media content
- Alternative media platforms: 37 media content



Breakdown of the form of media coverage related to sexual and reproductive human rights:

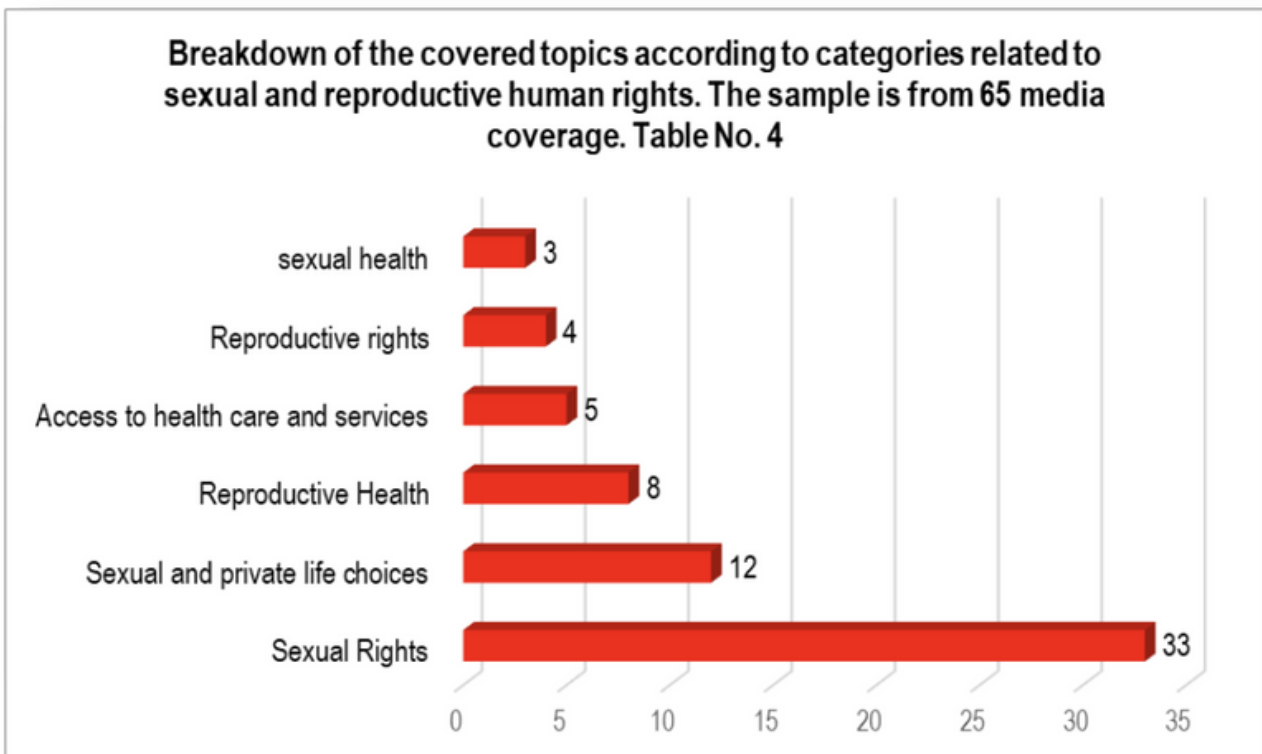
- 50% of the coverage was investigative format (32 coverages).
- 38% of the coverage was news format (25 coverages).
- 8% of the coverage came within the context of personal experience (five coverages).
- 4% of the coverage took the format of guidance and directory content (three coverages).



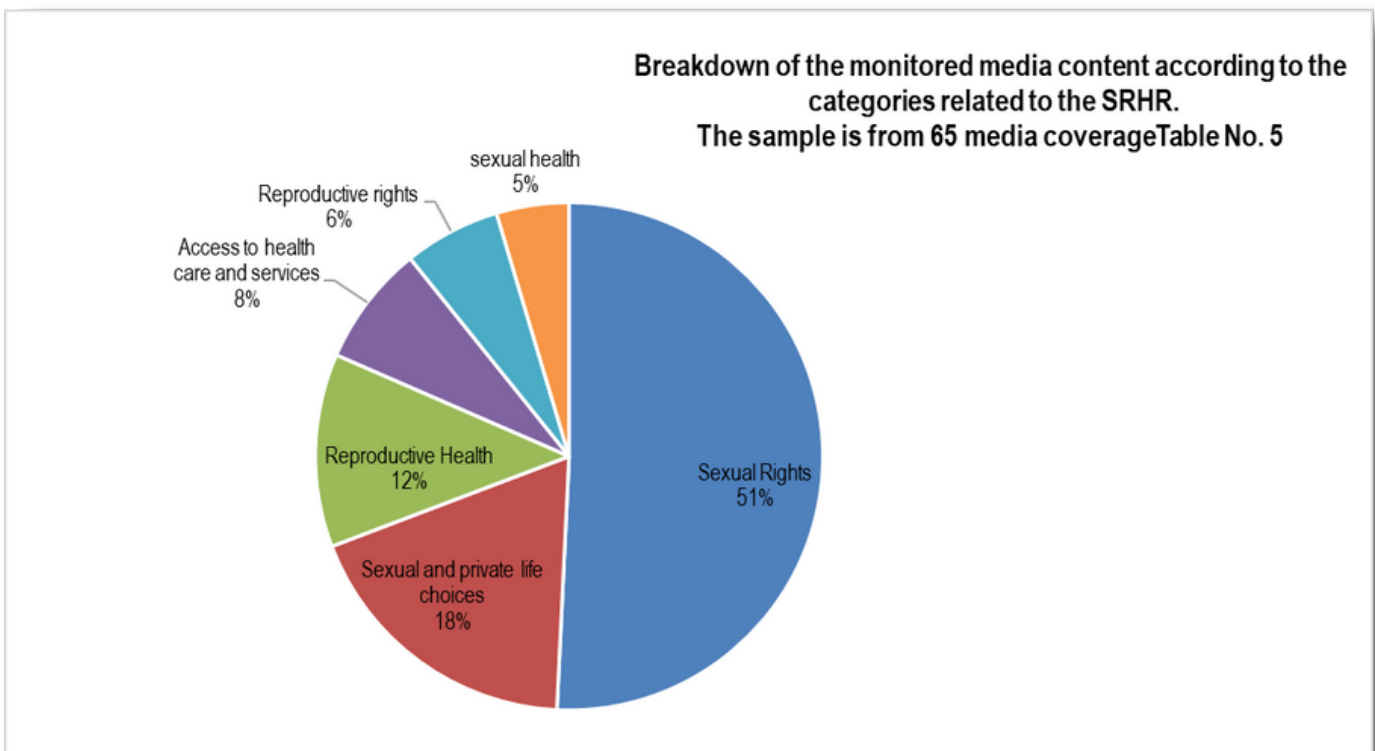


- Breakdown of covered topics according to categories related to sexual and reproductive health and rights:

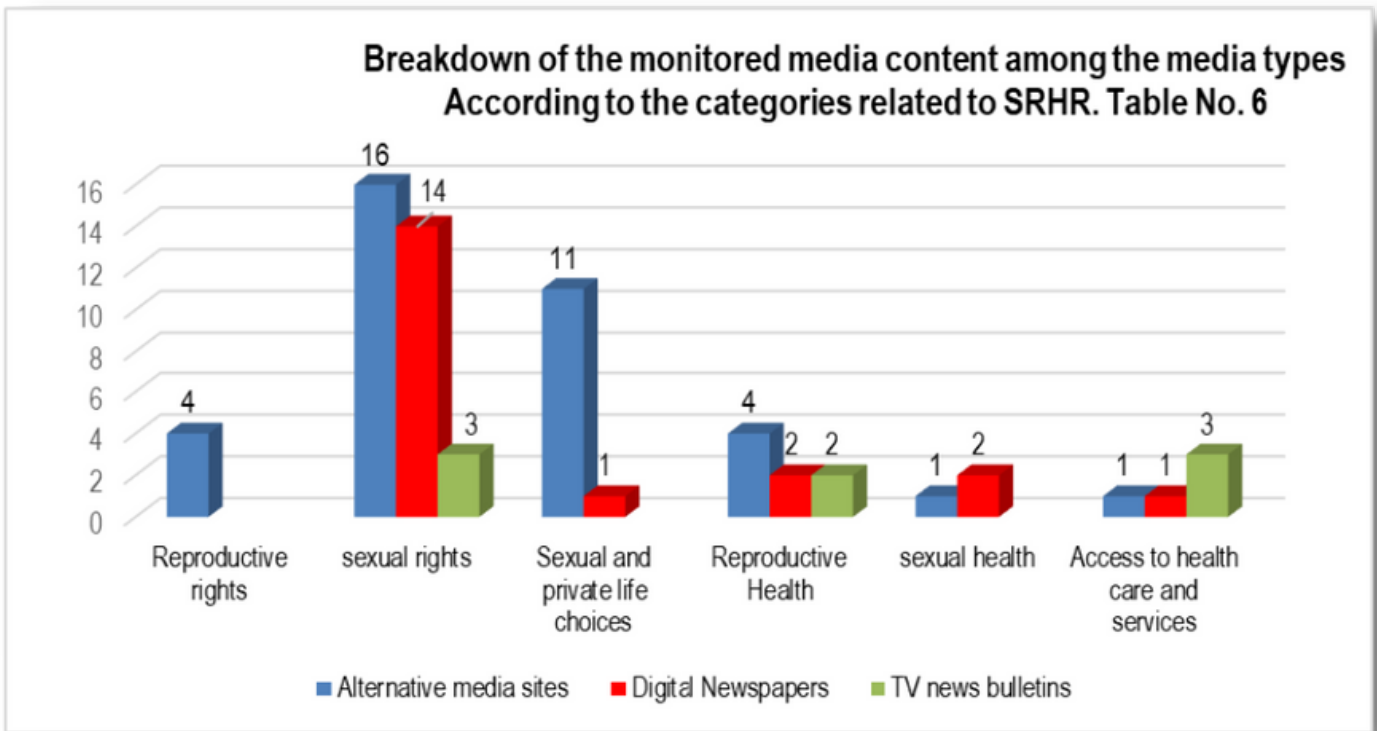
The monitored coverage was divided into six categories related to sexual and reproductive health and rights, and was distributed according to Table No. 4:



- Table No. 5 represents the percentage of distribution of monitored media content according to categories related to sexual and reproductive health and rights. By analyzing the monitored media content, the majority fall within the category of sexual rights at 51%, followed by categories related to sexual choices and private life at 18%, reproductive health at 12%, access to health care and services at 8%, reproductive rights at 6%, and 5 % for the reproductive health category.



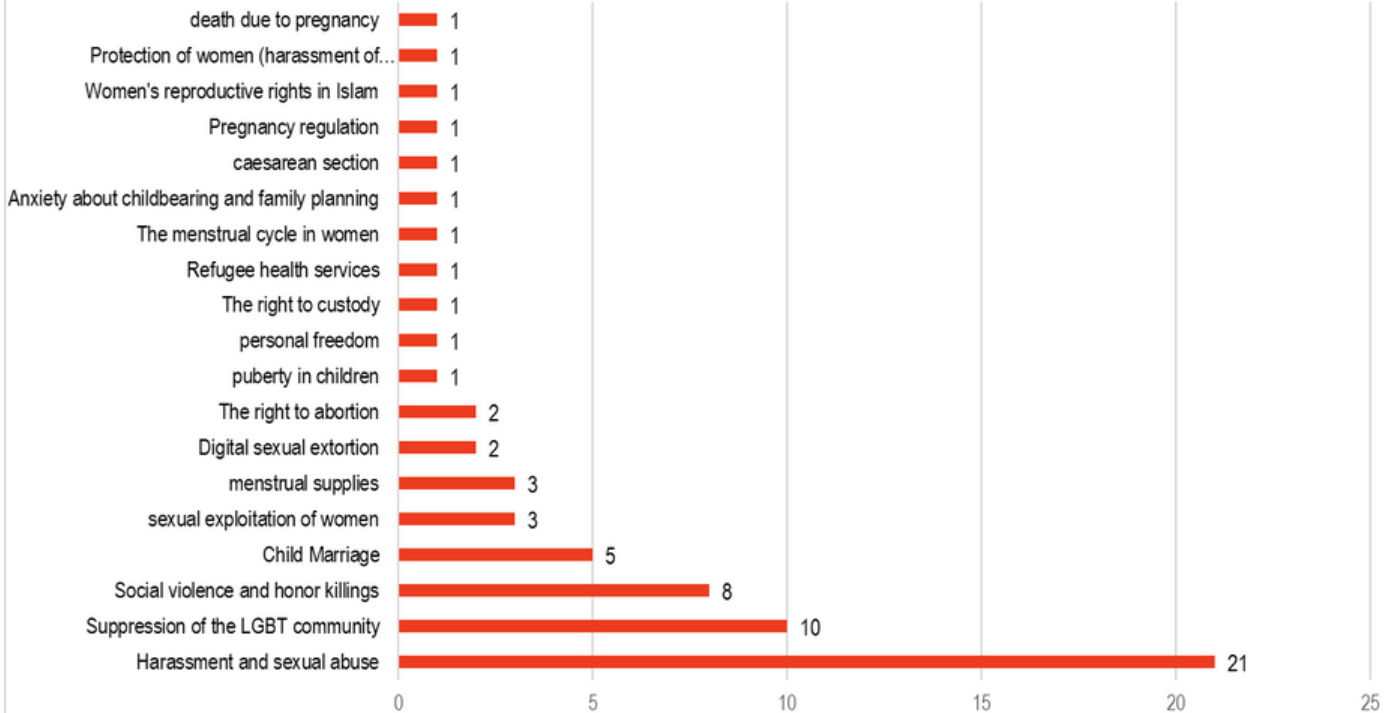
The breakdown of the monitored media content among media types according to the six categories related to sexual and reproductive health and rights, based on Table No. 6:



The most prominent monitored media topics raised and related to sexual and reproductive health and rights were distributed according to Table No. 7: 32% of the topics raised revolve around harassment and sexual violations, followed by the issue of oppression of the LGBTQIA community reaching 15%, then 13% for the social violence and honor killings, the issue of child marriage at 8%, followed equally by the topics of sexual exploitation of women and menstrual supplies at 4.5%, then digital sexual extortion and the right to abortion at 3% each. Other covered topics with a lower percentage were related to pregnancy, childbearing and family planning.



Breakdown of the most prominent topics raised related to sexual and reproductive health and rights. The sample is from 65 media coverage. Table No. 7



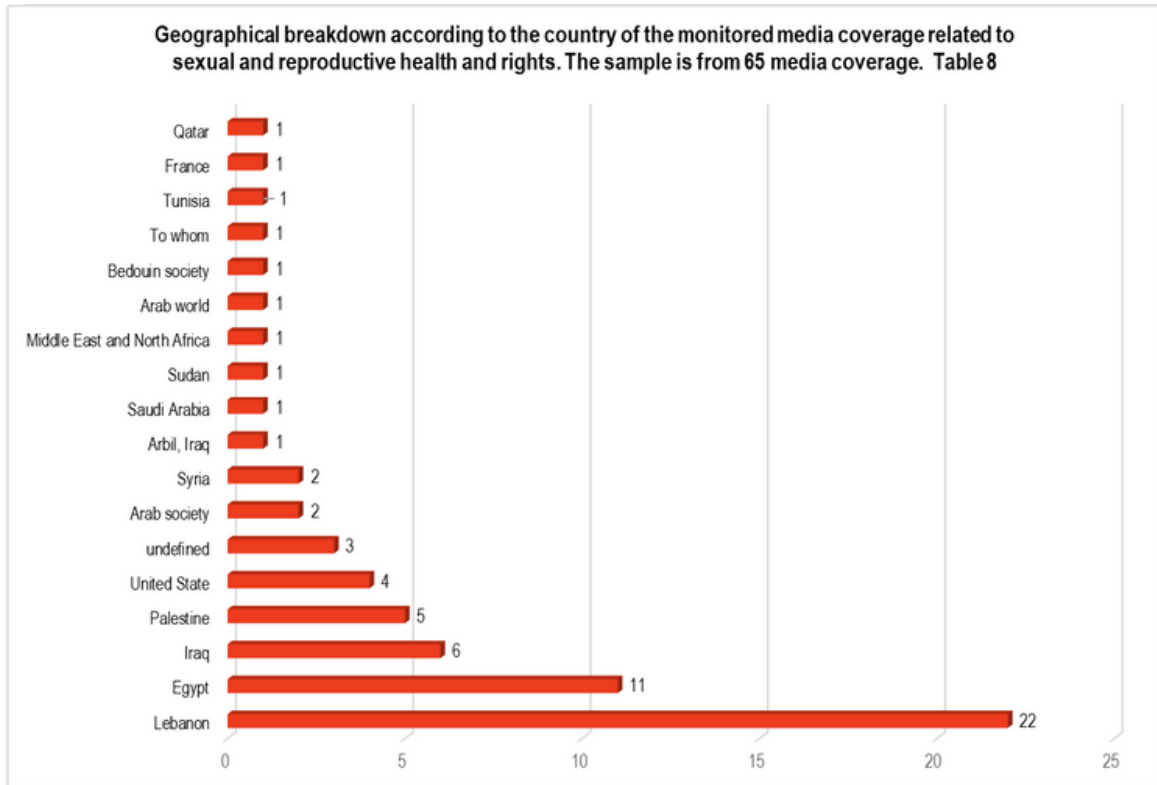
- The geographical distribution of the topics raised through the monitored media coverage according to residents in different countries, came as presented in Table No. 8:

The monitored media are all based in Lebanon, yet some of them have more interests to reach residents within the Arab region and North Africa, such as Raseef 22 and Daraj website.

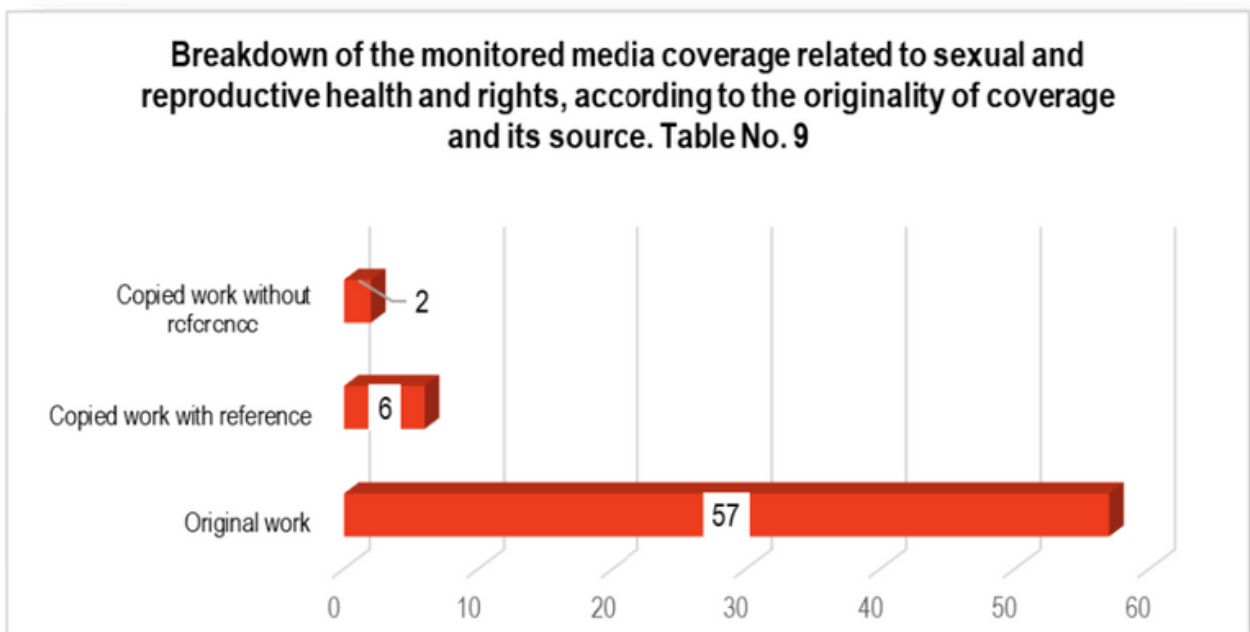
Although Lebanon came first in the countries subject to SRHR coverage, and the number of coverage on sexual and reproductive health and rights for local residents reached 22 coverages, yet other countries such as Egypt, Iraq and Palestine collectively had the same number as Lebanon, reaching 22 coverages.

Coverage of common issues between countries, such as the Arab and Bedouin societies was also observed.



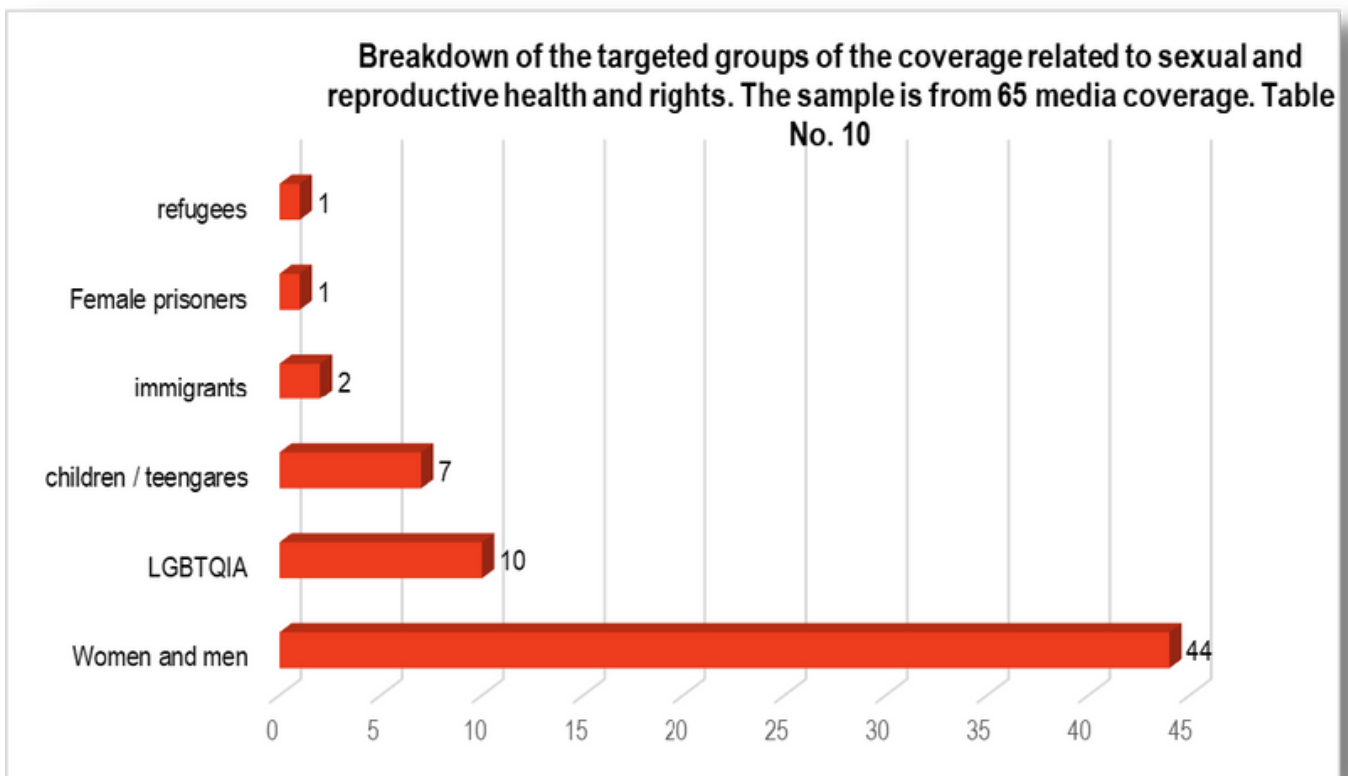


- Table No. 9 shows that 88% of the 65 monitored media coverage represents the original work of the media outlet, 9% is copied with references to the original source, while 3% is used without mentioning the original source.



2- People who are subjects of media coverage related to sexual and reproductive health and rights

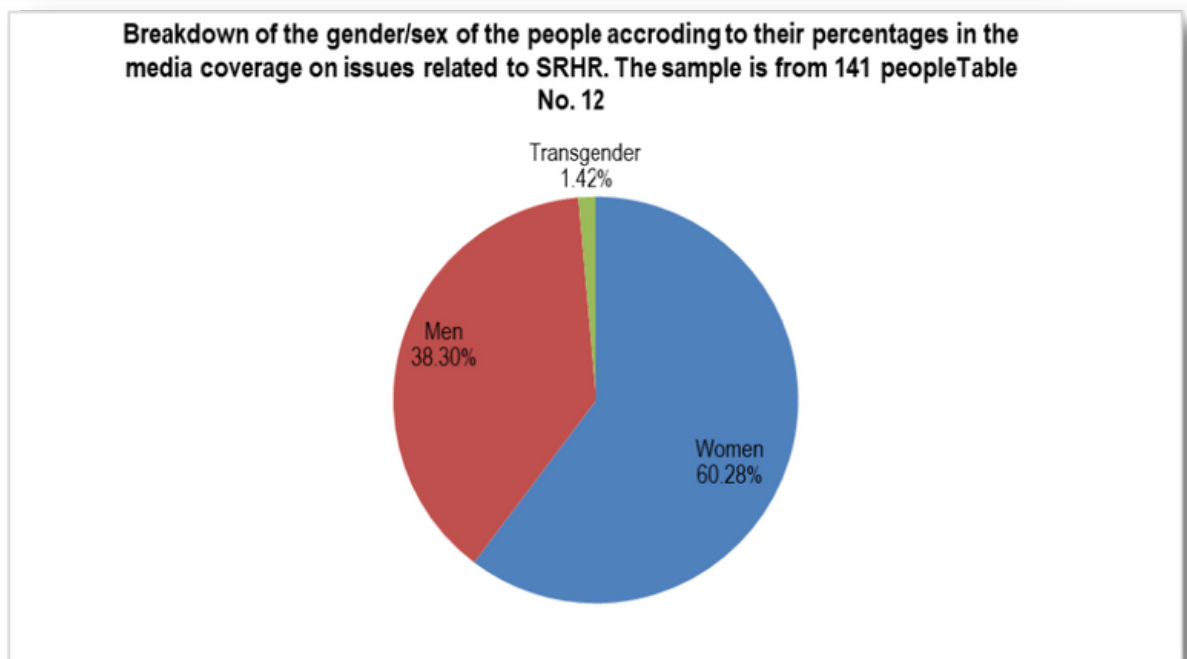
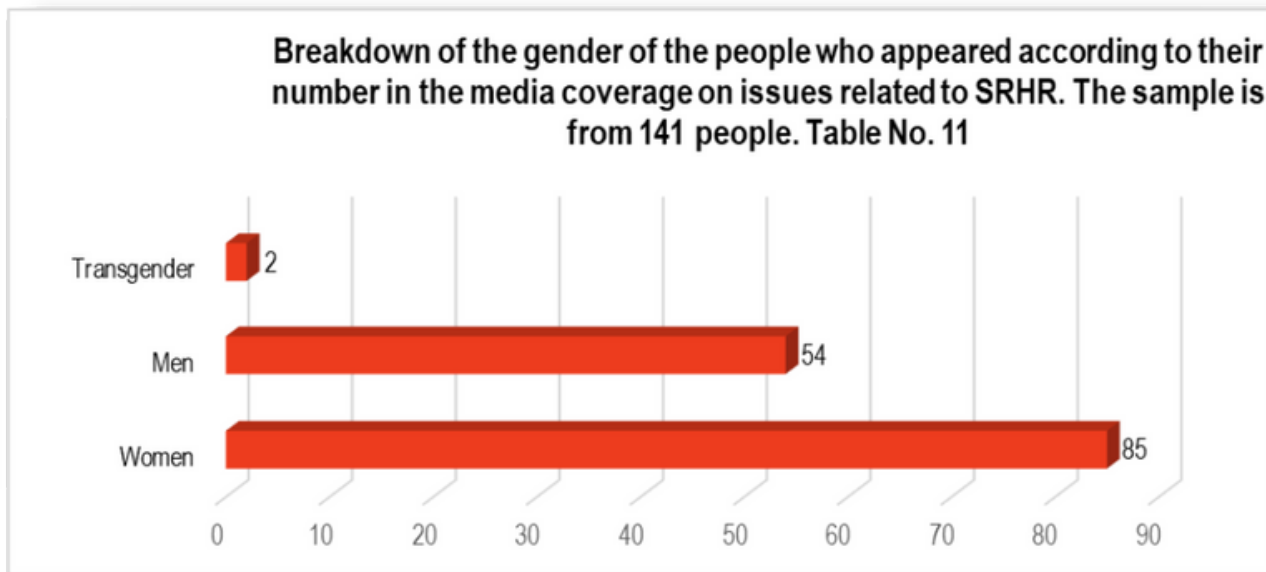
- The breakdown of the targeted groups within the coverage on sexual and reproductive health and rights in the monitored media according to Table No. 10: following cases involving women and men in general, which accounted for 68% of the total raised issues, the LGBTQIA community category seemed to be the one targeted by inclusive coverage the most, with 15%. The percentage of the other targeted groups was distributed between 11% for children and teenagers, 3% for migrant workers, and less than 1.5% for both refugees and female prisoners.



141 individuals were monitored appearing in media coverage of 65 cases of sexual and reproductive health and rights. (Refer to the above tables No. 1-2-3.)

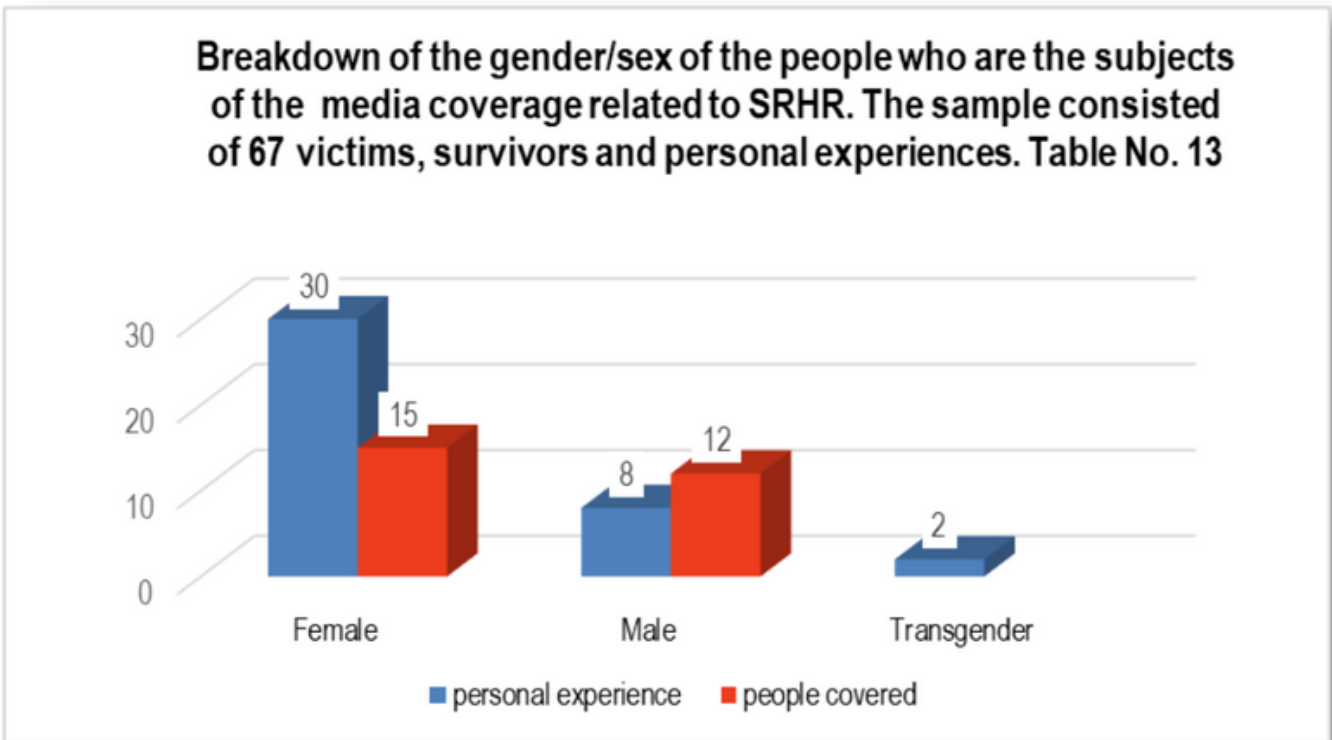


Table No. 11 and 12, represent the presence of women in the monitored media coverage reaching 60.28%, compared to men’s appearances at 38.30%, and the appearance of Transgender reaching only 1.42%. These data include all the people who appeared within the media coverage, either as speakers, commentators, experts, and officials, or as individuals who were the main subject of the coverage being discussed or their personal experiences.

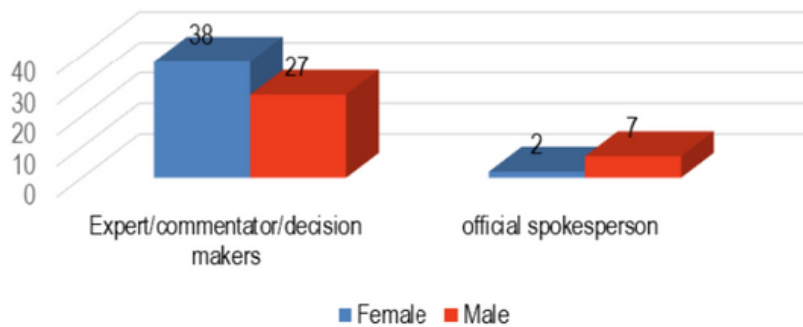


In a detailed analysis of the gender data of the people who were the subject of the media coverage, this study showed that females among the categories of victims, survivors, and those with personal experiences in issues related to sexual and reproductive health and rights reached higher than twice the number of men from the same targeted group, according to the sample of 67 individuals who were monitored. (Refer to Table No. 13.) This percentage indicates that women in the Arab region are the most affected in the various contexts related to sexual and reproductive health and rights.

Table No. 14 represents the gender breakdown of the influential people in the monitored media coverage of sexual and reproductive health and rights. In fact, the percentage of women reached 54% from official spokespeople, experts, commentators, and decision-makers out of a sample of 74 personalities who appeared in the media topics raised.



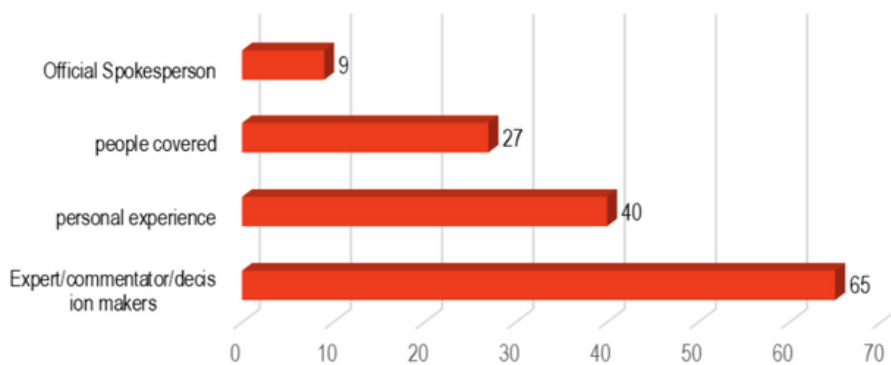
Gender breakdown of the influential people in the media coverage related to sexual and reproductive health and rights. The sample is from 74 spokespeople, experts, commentators and decision makers. Table No. 14



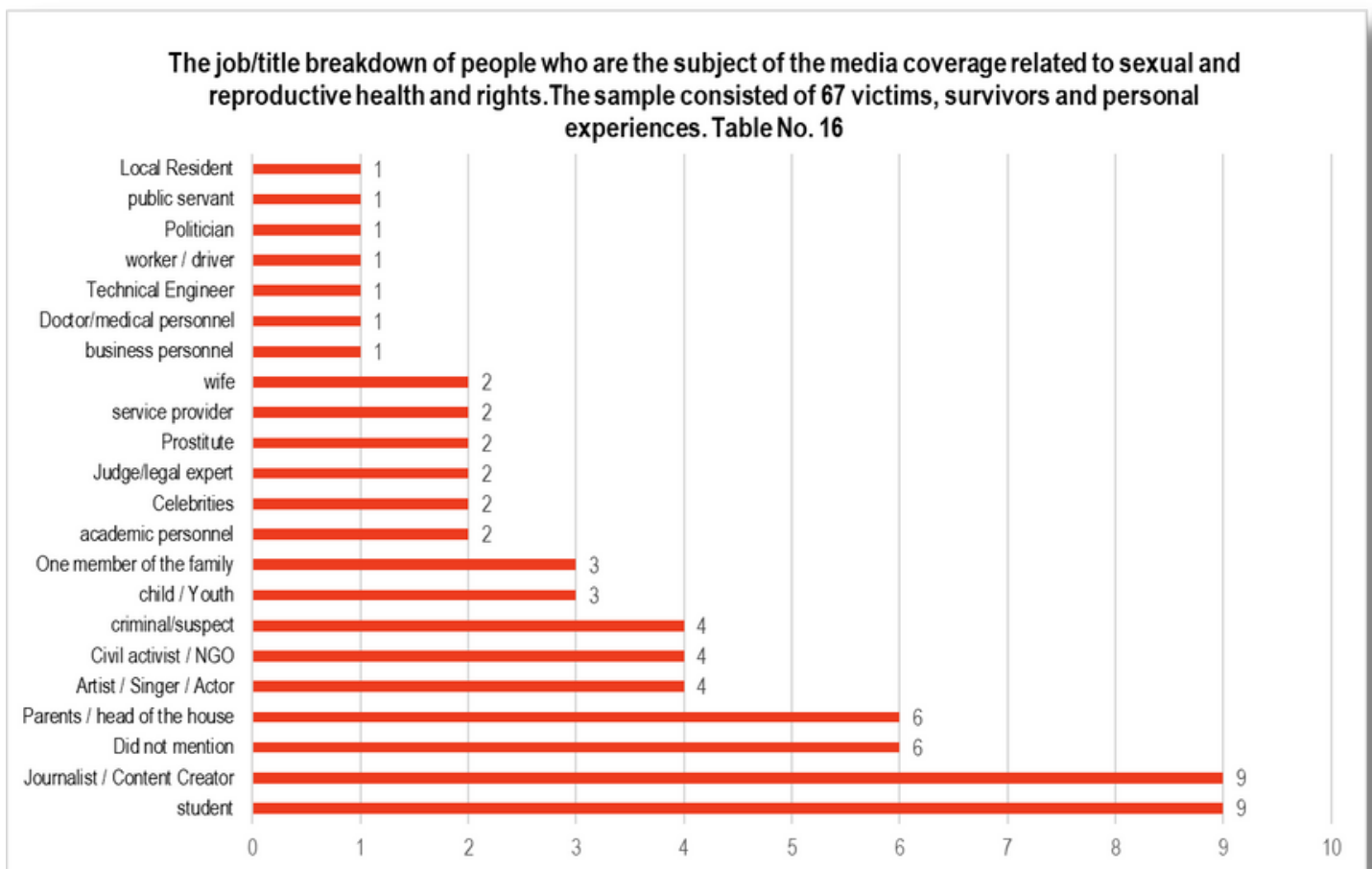
The characteristics of the individuals who were subject to media appearances in the coverage related to sexual and reproductive health and rights were distributed according to the sample of 141 people as follows, according to Table No. 15:

- Expert/commentator/decision makers: 65 individuals
- Personal experiences: 40 individuals
- Individuals as main subjects of media coverage: 27 individuals
- Official Spokesperson: 9 individuals

Breakdown of the characteristics of the people subjects of media appearances in the coverage related to SRHR . The sample is from 141 people. Table No. 15

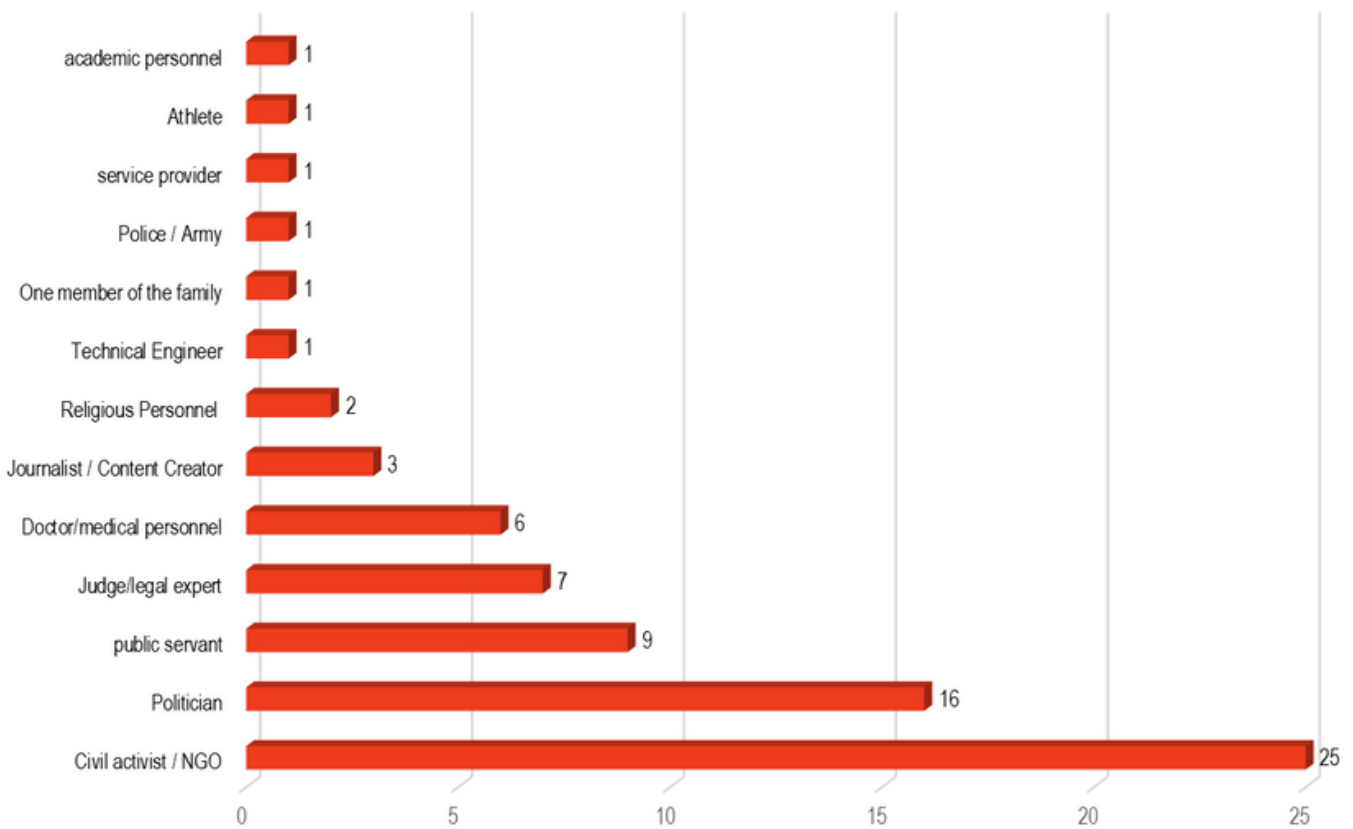


The breakdown of the appearances of people who were the subject of media coverage was distributed according to their jobs, their social status, and/or their appearances in the issues raised and related to sexual and reproductive health and rights among the social segments, occupying different jobs and titles including victims, survivors and personal experiences which were mainly distributed among students, family members, content creators, and human rights activists. (check Table No. 16)

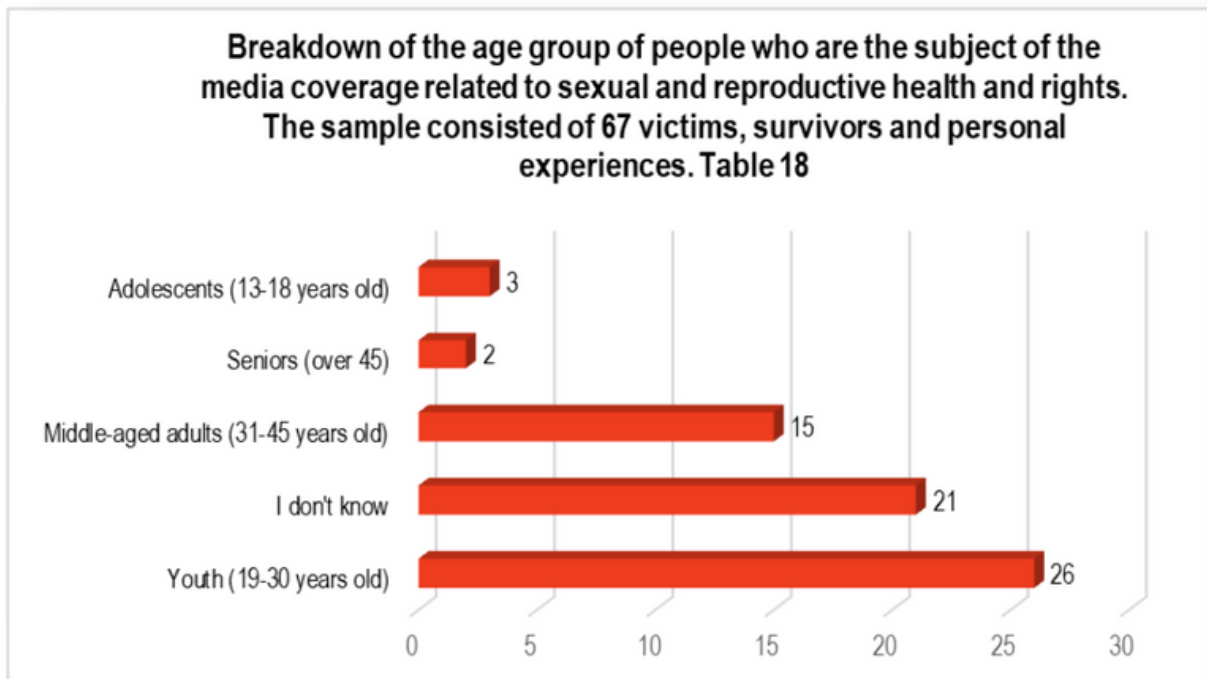


On the other hand, the positions of those influential people who appeared in the monitored media coverage were distributed among official spokespeople, experts, commentators, and decision makers, firstly among civil society activists followed by politicians, public employees, and specialists in the law and medical fields. (Refer to Table No. 17).

Breakdown of the positions/titles of the influential people who appeared in the media coverage related to sexual and reproductive health and rights. The sample is of 74 spokespeople, experts, commentators and decision makers. Table No. 17



- The age groups of the people who were subjects of media coverage among victims, survivors and those with personal experiences related to SRHR were distributed as follows: 43% for the youth group between the ages (19-30 years) and adolescents (13-18 years), 22% for middle-aged adults (31-45 years), and about 3% for the elderly over 45 years old.



3- Analysis of the questionnaire's data directed to categories of migrant workers, refugees and the local community regarding media coverage and sources of information on sexual and reproductive health and rights.

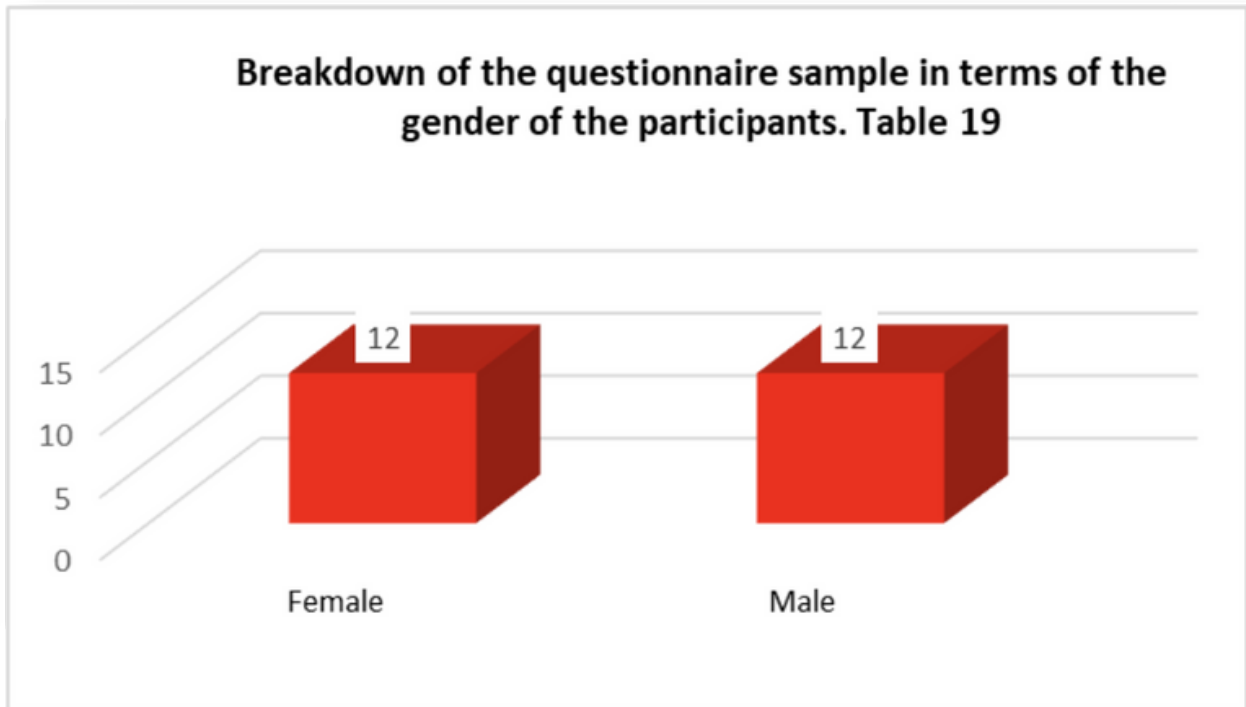
The questionnaire targeted a sample of 24 people constituted of migrant workers, refugees and the local community from eight different Arab and foreign nationalities (Lebanon, Sudan, Syria, Egypt, Ethiopia, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and the Philippines).

The questions focused on the media and sexual and reproductive human rights (the text of the questionnaire in Appendix No. 1).

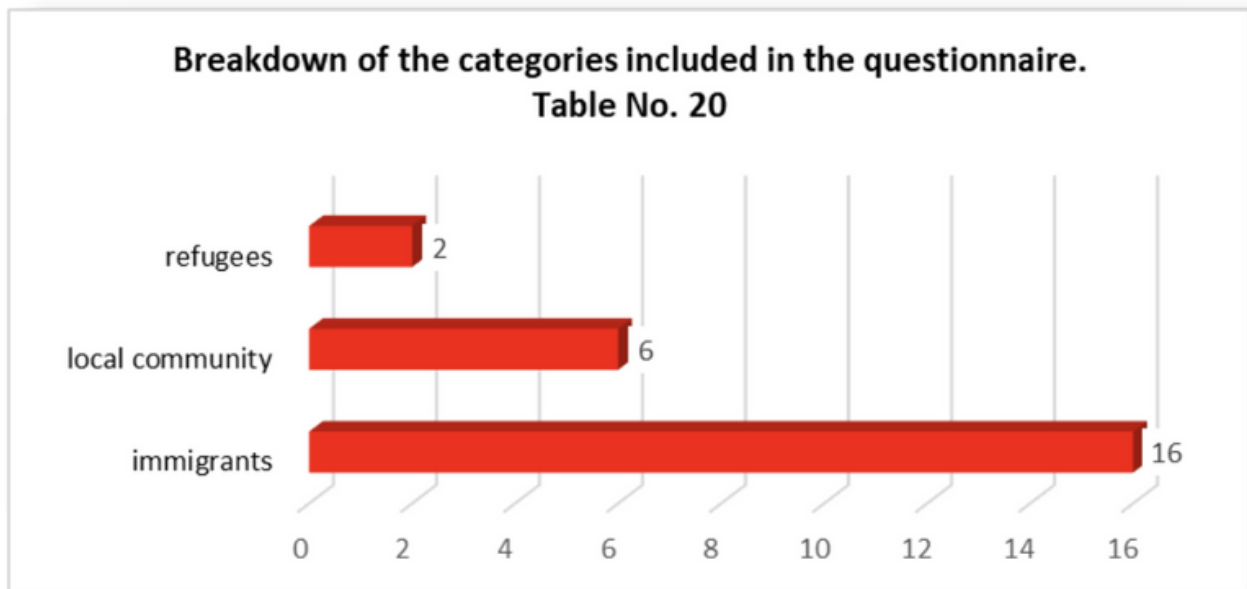
The most prominent results of the questionnaire analysis were as follows:

- Distribution of the questionnaire's sample in terms of the gender of the participants:

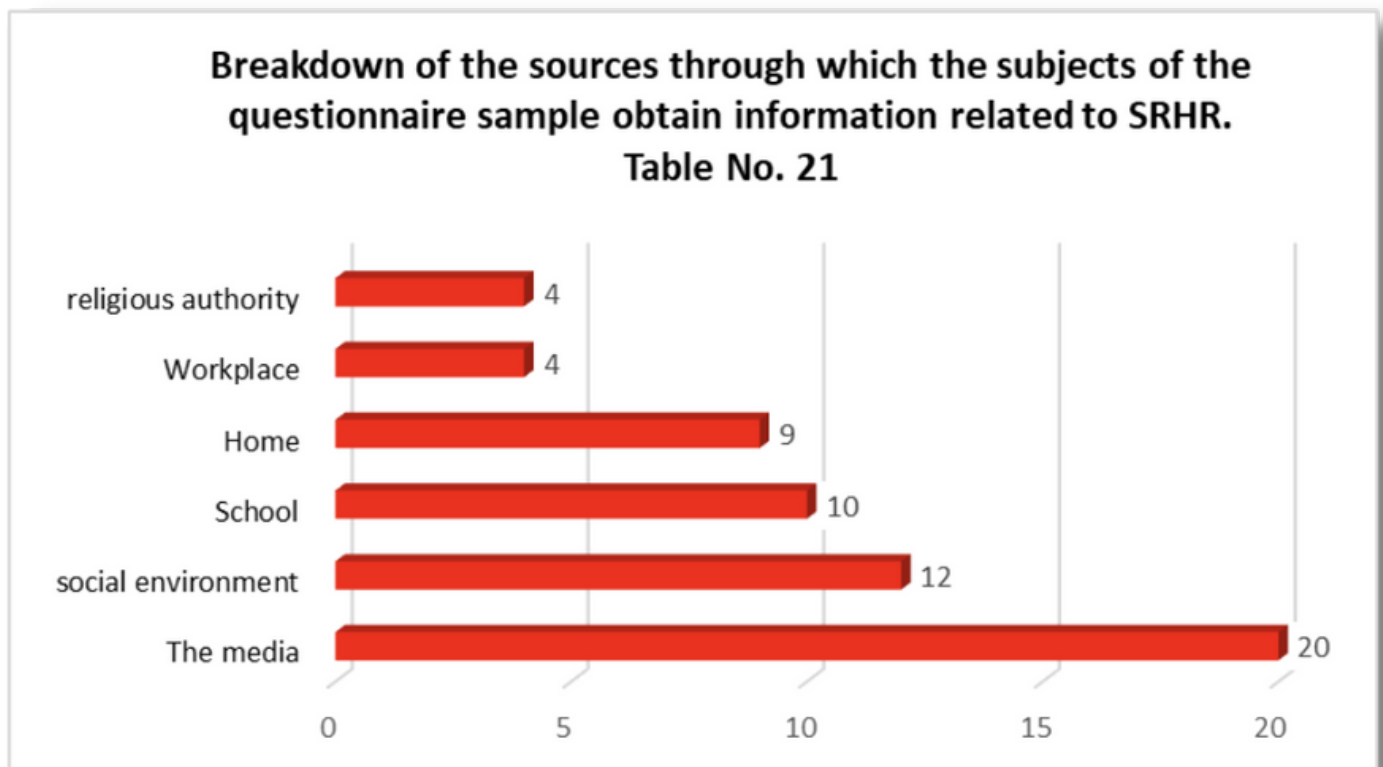




Distribution of the categories included in the questionnaire



-Breakdown of the sources through which the participants obtain the information related to the sexual and reproductive human rights. By extension, the analysis showed that the media outlets are the primary sources of information and news on topics related to sexual and reproductive health and human rights.

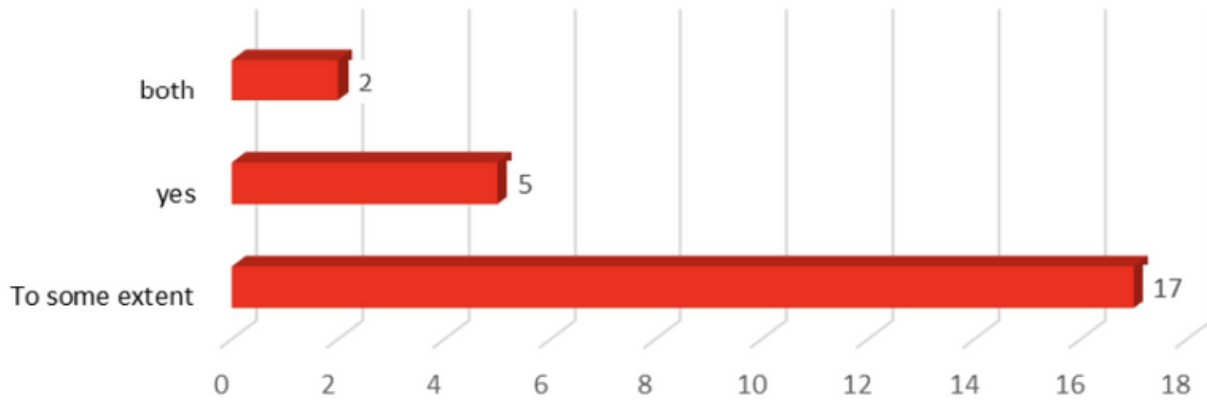


The results of the analysis of opinion poll data showed that 17 of the participants claimed that the media in their country does not adequately and professionally cover issues on sexual and reproductive health and rights, while 5 stated that the media coverage is satisfactory, compared to 2 who considered it non-existent.



The extent to which issues of sexual and reproductive health and rights are raised in media coverage in the sample countries targeted in the questionnaire.

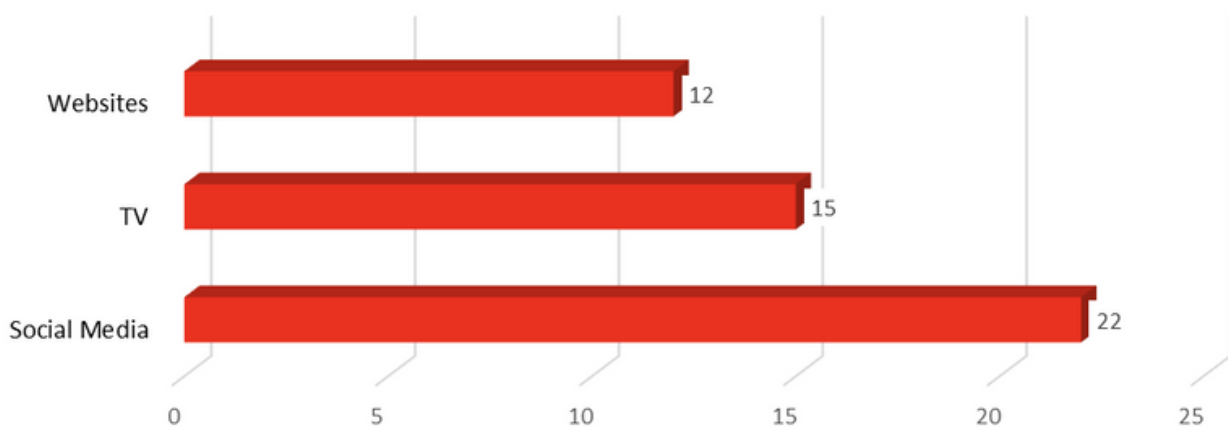
Table No. 22



The study showed that social media platforms represent the media that is mostly concerned with covering issues on sexual rights and reproductive human rights, according to the results of the questionnaire’s data targeting migrant workers, refugees and the local community, consisting of a sample of 24 people, followed by TV channels then websites.

The media outlet most concerned with the issues of sexual rights and reproductive human rights according to the results of the questionnaire for the categories of migrant workers, refugees and the local community from the sample of 24 people.

Table 23



- Issues related to sexual and reproductive human rights are greatly influenced by **the prevailing economic, social and legal environment**,
- **Women in the Arab region are the most affected** in the various contexts related to sexual and reproductive health and human rights,
- **The media owned by the state or those affiliated with political and sectarian parties** do not give importance and attention to issues related to sexual and reproductive health and rights in their media coverage, particularly cases of violations and basic rights,
- During the monitoring period, **the monitored media did not show interest in spreading awareness** on sexual and reproductive human rights,
- According to the monitoring process, alternative media websites (Daraj, Raseef22 and Megaphone) **were the only platforms that dealt with issues of rights violations related to marginalized and vulnerable communities** such as the LGBTQIAs community, refugees, immigrants and female prisoners. (A total of 14 coverages out of a total of 65 coverages of the various media monitored),
- **Social media platforms are the primary media means** for accessing news and information related to sexual and reproductive health and rights.



Questionnaire on Sexual and Reproductive Human Rights

Gender:

- Male
- Female
- Other

Community:

- Local community
- Refugees
- immigrants

The most important rights of the SRHR are:

- The right to found a family, reproduction and family planning
- The right to health care during pregnancy and childbirth
- The right to custody and childcare
- The right to a healthy sexual relationship free from violence and exploitation (protection from harassment in the workplace or in the street, rape, child marriage, employment in prostitution...)
- Freedom of sexual choices and private life (protecting LGBTQIAs community from oppression and discrimination in society)

Do you know that the above mentioned are basic human rights and relate to the right to health and personal freedoms?

- yes
- No

How did you accumulate your knowledge of these rights? What are the sources through which you obtain information related to sexual and reproductive human rights?

- School
- Home
- Workplace
- The media
- social environment
- Mosque/Church/Temple

Do you think that the media in Lebanon or in your country cover this issue adequately? Are these topics raised in the media, discussed and/or promoted?

- yes
- No
- To some extent
- I don't know

If your answer is yes, what do you think is the medium which is most concerned with the issue of sexual and reproductive human rights?

- Television
- Newspaper
- Radio
- Websites
- Social Media Platforms

Do you have suggestions for improving your access to information on sexual and reproductive human rights?

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT US

hivos.org
maharatfoundation.org

