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SAT Feb 16: Healing Souls- A website on mental health education for the well-being of Pakistani young women (Munir Moosa)

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16 February 2019

Abstract

Mental health is significant to an individual's well-being. Young people with positive mental health contribute constructively in daily life and are less likely to engage in risk-taking behaviors (Knopf, Park and Mulye, 2008; Reynolds et al., 2013).

During recent years, the prevalence of mental health issues has mounted among young Pakistani women (Yusufzai, 2018). In a survey carried out in 2017, 44% of the entire population reported a high frequency of depression of which 57.5% were women (Sarfraz, 2017).

Female higher education students, in particular, are affected by depression and its associated risk factors due to socio-economic and cultural barriers (Ahmed et al., 2016; Saleem, Mahmood and Naz, 2013). In a survey conducted in Karachi, Pakistan 38.07 % of males and 61.00 % of female students indicated severe depression (Ghayas et al., 2014).

According to Sohail, Syed, and Rahman, "In the Pakistani context, traditionally, the oppressive family/community environment is identified by Western-trained psychiatrists as an important cause of mental health problems in Muslim societies" (2017, p.32). Despite women's participation in education and employment, their role in decision making and personal choices are sparse because of patriarchal culture (Gull Tarar and Pulla, 2014; Malik and Aamir, 2017).

There is a lack of awareness among female learners towards mental health due to the stigma associated with mental illness and unavailability of policy intervention (Damani, 2018; Kazmi, 2018; Waqas et al., 2014). To meet this need, "a culturally appropriate mental health awareness intervention" (Ali, et al., 2016, p.1) is believed to have a positive impact on their well-being.

My project takes an innovative approach to open learning. A multimedia object, i.e., a website is designed using a Google site. It intends to empower Pakistani female university students towards mental health without reliant on physical interaction due to widespread prejudice and gender stereotype. Culturally appropriate Open Educational Resources (OERs), Creative

Cloud created by:

Munir Moosa Sadruddin
30 December 2018

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As a part of the 'innovative theme' of the H818 online conference, my presentation will highlight the project rationale and will demonstrate the key features of the website. I will first shed light on the reasons, why I feel this website is the appropriate platform for the target population, and why I consider it as innovative. Moving further, I will brief a website content such as awareness, empowerment, and speak out! Inspirational stories. It will be followed by a few examples of collaborative activities and chat rooms appended within a website. Finally, I will share a testimonial video as a motivational tool. The presentation will be followed by a five minutes question and answer session.

A multimedia tour of the website is available at https://sites.google.com/view/healing-souls/

Keywords: Mental health, well-being, depression, open education, innovation, open educational resources, a multimedia object, female learners, Pakistan

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Abstract is also available at https://www.slideshare.net/secret/cDDS3K4Jkg3rfV

Poster:
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or download ppt poster from https://drive.google.com/file/d/1i3ksyDP-xa0gho2dOvDP7U5Dtz_J2tiX/view?usp=sharing

Alternatives

1. **https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/39423**

2. **https://drive.google.com/open?id=1CmLHC1fcvEqRtpDu9vrKZ_LpBJX03TqD**

Extra content

Would you like to learn more about my website?

Watch this video teaser on Mental Health

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-c1S3YetoKc

[Munir Moosa Sadruddin](#)
09:00 on 10 January 2019 (Edited 07:15 on 16 January 2019)

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Contribute

Discussion (27)   Links (6)   Academic References (0)

Annette Hendley
9:47pm 17 January 2019 Permalink

Your abstract explains your objectives and reasoning very well. I understand that Western-trained psychologist can interpret the community as oppressive due to their specific training. Are there any theories from locally trained psychologists? It will be interesting to see if and how the views differ.

Munir Moosa Sadruddin
6:51pm 18 January 2019 Permalink

Thank you so much Annette for throwing the interesting question. I have read a lot of literature and theories from the western context. Unfortunately, you will not find any theories developed in the local context. But as an ethnography expert, I have observed the socio-cultural context in which Pakistani women are living, and how social and relational identities are dominating their personal identities. I am not the proponent of the western theories as these have many underlying gaps. I had a conversation with two psychologists recently and they shared me that most of their patients are males and only a few females have visited them for mental health treatment but they kept their identities anonymously due to the fear of getting trolled by the society. They are treating patients medically, but I am not in favor of it unless necessary! I really feel that we need to empower women to explore their personal identities by delving down into it! It can give them an optimistic dimension to value their own viewpoints. Pakistani society has liberals and conservative mind-set people. When it comes to mental health, people prefer keeping quiet than sharing their issues with others. It is not about lack of trust but the way we are raised. I myself was the victim of human rights abuses. My mother, despite of having a good education faced mental health issues for d,s issue better than a psychologist

Munir

Kelly Williams
3:54pm 21 January 2019 Permalink

Hi Munir,

Very much looking to forward to hearing your talk on this complex issue.

I've been digging around and considering the theories of intersectionality a 'movement led by women of color (who) disputed the idea, common to earlier feminist movements, that women were a homogeneous category who shared the same life experiences.' Your project and comment above seems to exemlify this https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Intersectionality .

It's an area I'm still thinking about and I'm sure it's a theory base you are familiar with but reading your abstract made it come to mind.

My other thought is have you had feedback from potential users of the site to give them voice within your project?

All the best with the presentation preparation!

Munir Moosa Sadruddin
7:12pm 21 January 2019 Permalink

Hi Kelly

Thank you! Thank you for highlighting the area of intersectionality.

My complete project from the beginning was based on the suggestions and feedback given by potential users. They were the one who participated in a poll and selected depression theme for the project. They also suggested sections and even few of them also demanded to add videos on laughing therapy etc. So amazing! I took them into the loop from the beginning! Even replacing my idea of a discussion forum with chatroom was given by them only.

Munir

patrick shearer
11:01pm 21 January 2019 Permalink

Hi Munir,

Enjoyed watching your topic and poster developing over the past few weeks. At work just now we are adapting to some pretty rapid change in relation go gender diversity. Debates and discussions are moving so quickly - especially relating the number and type of genders and associated labels. Gender pronouns have been part of the recent debate - using terms such as females, women and ladies have been providing some lively chat. Developing something specifically for women would not be frowned upon in my work but we would be asked to justify it. I think the testimonies are excellent and very powerful.

Sonia Pardos
11:22am 22 January 2019 Permalink

Hello Munir, I think this is a very interesting topic and I am pleased to know that it is talked about more nowadays. I believe your project could help many young Pakistani women in the future. I always loved the idea of adding chat rooms to your website because in these type of circumstances is important for women to share their views and realise that they are not alone. Giving them a place where they can give support to each others and obtain information to help them overcome some barriers. I am not surprised that some of your participants suggested you adding videos of laughing therapies. Sense of humomour and

laughing is a very healthy way of coping with stress and depression as it has been confirmed many times in the past. This could be a very successful project. Your project is clearly explained in your abstract and people knows what to expect from your presentation. All the best Munir!

Munir Moosa Sadruddin
8:24am 23 January 2019 Permalink

Hello Patrick

Thnk you s much for the encouraging comments. It is good to learn about gender diversity at your workplace. Thank you for giving me a sense of gender pronouns in your context. In Pakistan, due to cultural constraints, people only talk about binary gender- male or female. With regard to gender pronouns, we mostly call girls to unmarried and women to married lady but I am not in favor of this socially constructed theory. There is a silent movement of women rights in Pakistan, but they do not want to come out of closet due to fear of socio-cultural consequences. I have shared the justification in abstract that we really need to work for them in Pakistan.

My mother was the inspiration for me for this project (teaser for conference). I will share details during conference. Hope my project will be of help for them and for others as well

I look forward welcoming you to my presentation.

Munir

Munir Moosa Sadruddin
8:27am 23 January 2019 Permalink

Hello Sonia

Welcome! Thank you so much for sharing your thoughts! Yes I am a strong supporter of women and children in Pakistan. This project is one of the sustainable ideas for something bigger in the future after H818, hopefully. You are more than welcome to join me in this endevor.

Looking forward to welcoming you to my presentation.

Munir

Potenza Atiogbe
4:04pm 7 February 2019 Permalink

Dear Munir

Well done it is such an interesting project and I think you have done a great job. Your project really exemplifies the strengths of successful digital networking. This brings me to my question was there any particular aspect of the digital networked journey to develop your project that you found difficult? The benefits are clear to see in the outputs but just wondered whether there were many or any difficulties?

Good luck with your presentation.

[Munir Moosa Sadruddin](#)
4:55am 8 February 2019 [Permalink](#)

Hi Potenza

Thank you so much! Yes the most difficult phase was to accept my digital identity. I always use net very consciously and earlier I cutoff using Twitter because of fears and bad experiences. But after learning about all these networking, I was able to dive into it. One thing is for sure, cyber laws in Pakistan is very strict so I always have to be conscious while writing or commenting on any thing

Munir

[Bina Howard](#)
1:52am 10 February 2019 [Permalink](#)

Hi Munir,

I found listening to Sue Beckingham (H818 Conference 2017) talk on the issues regarding professional and social profiles and the impact on digital identity very enlightening. It certainly raises the choice of how public one wants to be in the face of social media and the anxieties that come with it. You have a really interesting topic and as someone from the same cultural background, many of your points resonate with my own upbringing. Thank you for shedding a very important light to this matter, great to see you have added the video about Deepika.

All the best, Bina.

[Munir Moosa Sadruddin](#)
7:40am 10 February 2019 [Permalink](#)

Hi Bina

Thank you so much for your comments. I agree with Sue Beckingham. Each socio-cultural context have a great influence on digital identity. It is good to learn that you felt connected to my project.

I look forward to welcoming you to my presentation

Catherine Penny James
7:07pm 10 February 2019 Permalink

Hi Manir

I think you are proposing a novel approach to a very serious problem here. I can see that you mention in a comment further up that cyber laws in Pakistan are very strict; do you think that concern about these laws will affect how women engage with your website?

Samantha Bennett
9:40pm 10 February 2019 Permalink

Hi Munir I've been very impressed with your commitment and passion for your project. It's clear that it is very close to your heart and you have obviously drawn strength and guidance from your networks within and beyond H818. Through your website, you don't just provide information, but support services too - via the chat rooms. I'm interested to know if you are planning to continue this support after completing this module and how much time you envisage this taking up? What if you receive more requests for help than you have time to respond to by yourself? Are you planning to create a network of counsellors who can help to provide this support? I'm interested to know where this website sits with your future plans and how you plan to sustain it. Kind regards. Sam.

Munir Moosa Sadruddin
7:48am 11 February 2019 (*Edited 7:52am 11 February 2019*) Permalink

Dear Catherine

A very pertinent question! I have noted down this to answer during Q/A session as I feel this question could be raised by many.

Till then have a look at the bill

http://www.na.gov.pk/uploads/documents/1470910659_707.pdf

 Hope to see you during my presentation

Munir

Munir Moosa Sadruddin
8:01am 11 February 2019 Permalink

Hello Samantha

Thank you! Yes, I am consistently receiving support and guidance from networks within and beyond H818.

I plan to expand this project as I only worked on one of the areas, i.e., depression. I plan to network with potential people who can collaborate with me. I also plan to crowdsource to get some help to launch an official website with more components. I think it will take a year. I am planning to start working this summer for website.

Regarding support, since it is for the pilot purpose, I want to approach counsellors to support me so I can launch a separate counselling website, if possible. Else I plan to have a dedicated email id where they can send in comments any time to receive private replies.

I don't want to end this project after H818 and welcome you all to be the part of this good cause after the end of module.

Munir

Phill Grimes
12:41am 13 February 2019 Permalink

Hi Munir,

I have already said my thoughts on the development of this project through open studio. I wish the project every success in the future. It is a model that could be followed in many other countries. Are you collecting data on views?

Munir Moosa Sadruddin
7:10pm 13 February 2019 (*Edited 7:20pm 13 February 2019*) Permalink

Hello Phill

Thank you! Very Important question and I have noted. Will answer during the presentation

Munir

Bernadette Laffey
11:36am 18 February 2019 Permalink

This work is so worthwhile. Well done Munir for your getting your website up and running. And I loved your presentation. I think this website can help a lot of people, even just knowing that they are not alone will help women experiencing depression to feel less isolated.

I do have a question about domestic violence and control. If women in oppressive situations access your website, is there a possibility that their search activity could be scrutinised by family members and possibly lead to bad consequences for them? Will they have guidance about how to delete their search history or are they more likely to access the website on public computers in education establishments?

Munir Moosa Sadruddin
12:06pm 18 February 2019 Permalink

Hi Bernadette

Thank you for your question. Domestic violence is routinely practised in Pakistan. I want to work for that area but since my website has not included content which can promote anger, hatred among female, I don't think there is an issue of negative consequences

I have not included content like police and security official numbers or training how to control complain about it as my focus was on the website to empowering women towards depression through internalizing the mechanism and stay positive. But yes, chatroom could be dangerous if they are caught using it in their homes, but educated women who know how to use internet know how to delete history, I think. They can use my site on public computers or on mobile and stay safe! But I am thankful to you for raising an important issue on awareness of women towards deleting history. I need to look at this area when formally launching a website.

Munir

Munir Moosa Sadruddin
12:14pm 18 February 2019 Permalink

Hi Samantha

I will be continuing my project post H818. I plan to resume the project during summer or as soon as my last module will end by October 2019. I am receiving lots of views and comments on Twitter and Facebook that I must expand the scope of my project for all genders, It can benefit so many people.

I think it will take 3 months to formally launch this website and yes regarding counsellor, it is a tough commitment but it was for a pilot study and I found it successful, Now I can network with counsellors who can volunteer and can run a separate website or make an app to facilitate females.

[Munir Moosa Sadruddin](#)
12:19pm 18 February 2019 [Permalink](#)

Hi Catherine

As shared during the presentation, laws are strict but I filtered all the content so nothing exists which can breach freedom of speech. There is no discussion forum to trace by others. And this website will be for personal use so I will not be linking it up with any active women organization as I fear they will scrutinize and will add any content of their choice, which might create issues. I plan to network with individuals and volunteer organizations to help me promoting and expanding this website without any barrier or limitations

Munir

[Munir Moosa Sadruddin](#)
12:24pm 18 February 2019 [Permalink](#)

Hi Phill

I have so far collected a few data through networking where people have suggested to me that they like my work and it should be open to males as well.

Munir

[Dr Simon Ball](#)
6:00pm 18 February 2019 [Permalink](#)

Hi Munir

Well done on a great presentation! Here is a summary of the comments and questions you received following your presentation (including those you may have addressed verbally). Please respond in whatever way you choose - I suspect you may wish to deal with the first few in one response!

Best wishes

Simon

- You have shown the power of networking and how people want to support others
- It is great because they won't feel so isolated with their difficulties. Any security issues for women using the website?
- It's a shame that the therapies do not solve the basic problems causing the depression. Is anything being done to address that?
- Is the website live and open now?
- Have you had any feedback from users of your website?

- Munir I wondered whether you have reached out to womens charitable groups currently existing in Pakistan?
- What do local Clerics think of your work Munir?
- How safe is it for the women to contribute to your website?
- Also maybe create guidelines for women to hide their browser/search history if using home computers

[Munir Moosa Sadruddin](#)
6:00pm 19 February 2019 (*Edited 6:23pm 19 February 2019*) [Permalink](#)

Hi

I have the following answers:

1. True, networking is an asset!

2. There is no security concern as discussed during the presentation because all the resources are scrutinized and are culturally appropriate.

3. My research-based experience suggests that we can help individuals exploring and understanding their personal identity along with empowering them with awareness and skills. Depression is like death! It never goes! But we can reduce its intensity by promoting positivity and engaging in healthy activities like Yoga

4. Yes, the website is active. Please feel free to visit https://sites.google.com/view/healing-souls/

5. Yes throughout my project I was engaged with female learners in Pakistan they have given me lots of feedback in fact also peer review the resource I put on the website. Recently, the users of my website have filled online survey form and most of them have really liked the website. I will share the results after EMA

6, I am not willing to reach out charitable organization as I don't want to get trap into their agenda. I reached out one mental health group in Pakistan but had a bitter experience. I will continue networking until I find potential people to network with. I also plan to crowdsource. You are welcome to support me in any way.

7. I never thought, and haven't reached them yet!

8. There is no discussion forum. They can only contribute by adding their tips and stories through a few collaborative activities on site. It is an anonymous work so anyone can add in and contribute without letting others know. There are few brave women also who have shared testimonials available on the site.

9. Yes, I can add guidelines in the coming months after discussing it with female learners.

Munir

Dr Simon Ball
8:13am 28 February 2019 Permalink

Many Congratulations Munir! Your presentation has been voted by delegates to be one of the most effective of the H818 Online Conference 2019 and you are officially one of our H818 Presentation Star Open Badge Winners! Please see how to Apply for your Badge here: http://cloudworks.ac.uk/badge/view/33

Well done!

Simon

H818 Conference Organiser

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