

Chapter 3

Cells to Society

Let's Talk About Menstruation

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ABSTRACT

In a world full of technology and modernization, we still live in a society where menstruation and periods are a dirty and negative thing that we hesitate to talk about. Where females are still burdened under the myths and taboos. This research is aimed towards breaking the walls of period related myths and taboos and introducing the IT involvement in the ground level of this field. We can use technology and create huge machines and algorithms that can detect period related diseases within a second. But what is the use of all these if females will yet not be comfortable in coming out and ask for the technology to test them. It's necessary to start working from the ground level so that females can get everything they need to know about periods without feeling uncomfortable or ashamed. This research is aimed towards understanding and looking at the social and technical aspects of menstruation. This project is a combination of society and technology.

INTRODUCTION

Every month, at a given point of day, approximately 1.8 billion females around the world menstruate. Which is 26% of the world population. According to researchers, around 76% of females have no awareness and knowledge about periods before menarche. These 76% girls get terrified when they get their first period and have no information about how to deal with it. In India, these numbers are super high due to the myths and taboos existing in our minds about periods. These taboos and

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myths become a barrier when it comes to hygienic menstrual practices. In India, in a group of 10 girls, 3 have no information about the periods. And in places like

Rajasthan, this number is as high as 69. Such females with lack of information, hide their periods and perform unsafe practices to do so. Buried under the myths of periods, these girls get caught by serious illnesses and diseases that too they hide as they are afraid of visiting a gynaecologist by having the thought of society. This all happens because of lack of knowledge and the hesitation of asking for advice. This hesitation is generated by the myths and taboos of our society. Out of all, 70% females are suffering from menstrual health issues in India. The reason behind the numbers is that females don't talk about their menstrual health and conditions. They do so with the thought of society and the barriers of myths and taboos. These myths and taboos stop these women from seeking out for help. Technology is growing faster and faster, yet we have very little IT involvement in the field of menstruation and period. Currently, 1.13 billion websites are live over the internet. Can you name 5 websites that are properly dedicated towards periods?

This research is aimed towards using technology at the ground level to solve and clear the myths and taboos generated by this society. Menstrual hygiene and awareness is something that people rarely talk about due to the hesitation and fear generated by myths and taboos. Some people think that menstruation is something very private and should not be talked about publicly. Shame, stigmas and misinformation stops people to take stands and talk about periods. Which ultimately results in poor hygienic practices. The process and methodology I am going to follow is that I will reach out to people of different sectors of the society and communicate with them about their experience of this. The goal is to make everyone aware that PERIODS ARE NORMAL and not a thing to be SHAMED about. The approach is to reach out to females and males, and provide them knowledge and information required for them to have about periods. Providing guidance to them and being a society where periods are normal. We will examine the thinking of people of different age groups and sectors, to know what they think about periods? How much do they know about it? How do they handle it?, and What do they experience? This paper includes some experiments, surveys, interviews, and content analysis for the same.

SOCIETY AND PERIODS

Many people think that menstruation and period is a topic that does not need any open talks and discussions. Their taboos and myths are enough and are all they need to know. These myths and taboos have made periods a term of embarrassment which makes a huge impact on many lives and makes them suffer from many different situations. Such taboos can also be life taking. Menstruation Taboo Claims

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