

“Woh Paanch Din”

Awareness on Menstrual Hygiene and Management Brochure Guide

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FEEDBACK

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Introduction

In a discussion with my professors I told them about my interest to research and work on Awareness on Menstrual Hygiene Management to young and adolescent girls which is a major concern living in this 21st century. Menstruation and menstrual practices still face many social, cultural, and religious restrictions which are a big barrier in the path of menstrual hygiene management. In many parts of the country especially in rural areas girls are not prepared and aware about menstruation so they face many difficulties and challenges at home, schools, and workplaces. While reviewing literature, we found that little, inaccurate, or incomplete knowledge about menstruation is a great hindrance in the path of personal and menstrual hygiene management. Girls and women have very less or no knowledge about reproductive tract infections caused due to ignorance of personal hygiene during menstruation time. In rural areas, women do not have access to sanitary products or they know very little about the types and methods of using them or are unable to afford such products due to high cost. So, they mostly rely on reusable cloth pads which they wash and use again.

Women, in general, spend about 2000 days of their lives menstruating. and, contrary to that, the subject of menstruation and menstrual hygiene is neglected the most in developing

countries, like ours, owing to myths and misconceptions, religious and socio-cultural practices. Only recently have we, as a society, been able to talk about such issues when Mr. Arunachalam Muruganatham, a mechanic from the south of India, revolutionized the sanitary napkin manufacturing industry to a point where his innovation earned him a prestigious national award. India still doesn't fare well when it comes to menstrual hygiene management. With many debates and discussions came about the initiative wherein the government distributed low-cost sanitary napkins to women in need in rural areas, but was that the solution to the myriad of problems faced by such women when it comes to menstrual hygiene management ? That's a critical question that needs to be asked, and, in addition, the case for maintaining individual dignity of such women needs to be addressed. Apart from the need of a mechanism for ensuring good quality of the sanitary product and a mechanism to address the environmental and hygiene that play along with the issue, this project also advocates for a change in the attitude of the society towards menstruation as a taboo as well.

The project started taking shape at the end of the third semester and I knew that I had to work on the multiple problems faced by young adolescent girls in schools and their homes. The final project mentions the various taboos faced by women and how to manage and keep their surroundings hygienic. The title of the brochure guide is "*Woh Paanch Din*" is written as the main and major days are the 5 days which women go through during menstruation, where women have to follow all the taboos and instructions for the main 5 days.

Problem Statement

The aim of this project is to show that despite numerous menstrual campaigns students do not have access to the right information about menstruation and its hygiene before menarche, the information given to them is inadequate, girls who experienced menarche have problems with basic knowledge. There are other factors as well but I like to address the issue of providing the right information to the girls before experiencing the menarche.

Targeted User

This project aims to invite interest from hindi speaking, young and adolescent girls under the age group of 10-15, who are not aware of menstruation and its hygiene at a very young age. A Brochure Guide format is chosen to illustrate the awareness of Menstrual Hygiene and its measures in all its visual splendor.

Communication Medium

Initially, looking at the nature of the project, communicating through the documentary would have been interesting as it would have been a perfect combination of image/visuals, sound and text to support the narrative and argument of the story effectively.

The final medium chosen was a Brochure Guide. Since they are informative and give out a wide perspective in a simple, precise and crisp yet beautiful and visually appealing manner.

As the project intended to communicate the change, to raise awareness and to learn the management about menstruation, the Brochure Guide lay out a best fit. Information is communicated through eye catching visuals and supporting texts. Since this project talks about awareness and management, Brochure is a good medium revealing a new layer with each page turned as well as gives good understandability among the intended audience in terms of language and literacy.

In terms of dissemination, a guide manual brochure is quite viable at a low cost. This ensures that it reaches a wider audience through NGOs, schools, and various social organizations. However, by sharing this communication initiative with the target groups through workshops and other ways, the efficacy of its dissemination will be increased.

Research Phase

a. Literature review

Once the project topic was finalized I started surfing through the internet about the blogs, journal articles, campaigns and research papers available on the Menstrual Hygiene and Management when I came across the ‘A Sociological Study of the Stigma and Silences around Menstruation’ is a research paper that explains - Menstruation has long been associated with a stigma that has been difficult to overcome in most societies. Women are under pressure from their family, religion, and society to adhere to taboos. Biomedicine has addressed every area of women's reproductive health from menarche to menopause, and women's health has been considerably medicalized. It also contributes to the perception of menstruation as a bad, unwelcome biological process. It is critical to change the focus of this debate to the health of women, as well as women's health. Menstruation should be made more visible, and the stigma connected with it should be removed, so that any woman can utilize locally manufactured, sustainable goods for menstrual management without restriction. Furthermore, as with many others, this study has demonstrated that education on menstruation does not result in a change in attitude or behavior. In India, women do not have access to effective groups or forums where they may share their experiences or learn about the best practices for their health and hygiene. Menstruation knowledge is spread through the media, which helps to normalize it to some level in households and

public settings. I recommend that this topic be incorporated in the school curriculum so that children as young as ten years old have correct and sufficient understanding about it. It is critical to convey this information with both girls and boys in order to de-stigmatize and normalize it among the younger generation. As some schools are doing, schools must give free sanitary napkins and pamphlet guides. The government should aim to make menstruation management products entirely free at the macro level. Menstruation management that is both safe and stigma-free is a basic human right that many women and girls are denied. It is the internalization of traditional and religious standards, not ignorance, that drives women to obey cultural taboos.

I came across blog article “23 Million Women Drop Out Of School Every Year When They Start Menstruating In India” which explains In India, 23 million girls drop out of school early when they start menstruating and many of them end up facing acute health problems. The number of menstruation women in India is 355 million, accounting for over 30% of the country's population. In India, there is still a gender divide when it comes to menstruation. Many girls are forced to drop out of school early or be ostracized for the course of their menstrual cycle every month due to myths surrounding menstruation.

Government schemes and initiatives on Menstrual Hygiene Management in Madhya Pradesh

- The Government of Madhya Pradesh (GoMP) launched the UDITA programme in 2015 to address the society's culture of silence and social taboos surrounding menstruation, to raise awareness about this issue that directly affects the individual dignity of adolescent girls and women in the state, and to provide access to affordable sanitary napkins.
- In June 2018, the Government of India announced "Janaushadhi Suvidha - Oxo biodegradable sanitary napkins" under the Pradhan Mantri Bharatiya Jan aushadhi Pariyojana. As announced by the Union Minister for Chemicals and Fertilizers, sanitary napkins would now be supplied in over 3600 Janaushadhi Kendras in 33 states and union territories across India.
- Swachh Bharat: Swachh Vidyalaya is the national campaign driving 'Clean India: Clean Schools'. One of the campaign's primary goals is to make sure that every school in India has a set of working and well-maintained water, sanitation, and hygiene facilities. In schools, water, sanitation, and hygiene refers to a mix of technical and human development components that are required to create a healthy learning environment and to promote or support proper health and hygiene behaviors. The technical

components include drinking water, hand washing, toilet, and soap facilities for use by students and instructors in the school premises.

Without reading and comprehending the research papers, blogs, and articles, I would be unable to design the Brochure Guide. It aided me in comprehending the factors and formulating the content possible to address all of the issues that may be posed about the subject. All of these articles and research paper were essential in developing and designing the informative brochure and demonstrating the communication to raise awareness, taboos faced and to learn the management about menstruation



Government Naveen Kanya Uchatar Madhyamik Vidyalaya in Nehru Nagar, Bhopal



Toilets in a government school

b. Field Study

I. School - Government Naveen Kanya Uchatar Madhyamik Vidyalaya in Nehru Nagar, Bhopal

Location and Overview:

The school is Girls school and it has an attached pre-primary section. Hindi is the medium of instructions in this school. In this school academic session starts in April. The school has a Government building. It has got 0 classrooms for instructional purposes. All the classrooms are in good condition. It has 2 other rooms for non-teaching activities. The school has a separate room for Head master/Teacher. The source of Drinking Water in the school is Tap Water and it is functional. The school has 4 toilets. 2 for teachers and 2 girls but the girls toilet does not have proper gates and water facilities, there is no roof in the girls toilet. It is an open roof toilet, where girls do not feel safe to use it, because of which they miss their classes while having menstruation. The toilet in school. It does not have a roof and it is in full view of nearby buildings. Girls feel uncomfortable using it. This is the lack of basic facilities in school for girls. The school is not applicable for providing mid-day meals



Open roof Toilet in a government school



Condition of Toilet in a government school



Sukarma Foundation

II. NGO - Sukarma Foundation

Sukarma Foundation is a volunteer-driven non-profit organization dedicated to helping rural Indians improve their lives. The foundation's key initiatives include educating women about the importance of female hygiene and sexual health, empowering them through sustainable business opportunities, providing telemedicine to people in remote areas who lack access to timely, high-quality medical care, and providing basic education to children and adults from impoverished sections of the Indian rural population, among others.

In 2017, the Sukarma Foundation opened a micro factory in Narsinghpur district to manufacture sanitary napkins under the brand name "No Tension," giving jobs for local women and boosting menstruation awareness. The goal of this initiative is to protect tribal and rural girls and women against diseases including RTIs (Reproductive Tract Infections), UTIs (Urinary Tract Infections), and Cervical Cancer by teaching them about menstrual hygiene and giving them with sanitary, low-cost sanitary pads.

In places where there is a lack of medical professionals, Sukarma Foundation has expanded into rural health camps and Telemedicine clinics.



From left to right - Naina, Mamta, Chaya, Me

c. Interviews

A pilot survey of the girls at the Government Naveen Kanya Uchatar Madhyamik Vidyalaya in Nehru Nagar, Madhya Pradesh, was undertaken. The information was gathered during January and February of 2022. Seven girls over the age of ten who had reached menarche were chosen as research volunteers based on particular menstrual hygiene and health criteria. For the extensive interviews, the suitable females were chosen from school. The number of females chosen is divided into age categories. The purpose of choosing different age groups was to see how health practices, health conditions, and geographical conditions of women in different age groups differed. The information on hygiene behaviors was gathered through interviews with respondents. Women's comments on personal hygiene awareness, concerns, and understanding of good hygiene during the menstrual period, as well as strong beliefs and attitudes, were noted in the survey results. After discussing the study and obtaining signed informed permission from all participants, all data was recorded.



Mamta

Mamta

Mamta is 15 years old and studies in class 7th in Naveen Kanya High School. She lives with her parents in the nearby slum from her school. She spends 10 am to 4 pm in her school studying and the rest of the time at home doing household chores with her family. She likes to make new friends and go to school. She likes to play “Sitolia” and take part in school games activities, but while menstruating she misses those activities. She got her menarche at the age of 13 when she was attending her school.

Dissapointment -

- School washroom does not have separate waste bin
- School washroom does not have roof, it is roof open
- School does not have sanitary vending machine
- Afraid to dispose of my use pads

Needs -

- Ease access and good quality sanitary napkins in emergency
- Clean washrooms and proper place to change sanitary napkins as it is open roof



Shama

Shama

Shama is 17 years old and studies in class 9th in Naveen Kanya High School. She lives with her guardian in the nearby slum from her school. She likes to dance. She got her periods very early at the age of 11. She didn't know about menstruation when she was 10. Her mother told her this is the disease we all go through.

Dissapointment -

- There is no water facility in washrooms, we use the drinking water to flush the toilet
- The toilets are not clean to change the pads, so we do not attend school while menstruating
- There is no separate bin for throwing pads
- I do not enter kitchen while menstruating

Needs -

- Proper facility for sanitary napkins disposable.
- She wants a correct knowledge of menstrual education as our teachers are not open to talk about it



Maya Vishwakarma - The Padwoman

Maya Vishvkarma

Maya Vishwakarma, popularly known as the Padwoman of MP, is a native of a hamlet in the Narsinghpur area of MP. She is an excellent example of the taboos surrounding menstruation in India, since she admitted in an interview with the New Indian Express that she had never heard of sanitary napkins until she was 26 years old. Coming from a family of agricultural farm labourers, the family was trying to make ends meet, and during her first period, a female cousin of the family advised her to use an old cloth.

After returning to India two years ago, Maya established the "SUKARMA" foundation in her hometown. This organization makes and sells sanitary napkins to women in the neighborhood at low prices. Approximately 2,000 women's lives have been altered in the two years since the organization began its work. I interviewed Maya Vishvkarma, founder of Sukarma Foundation. It was an on - call interview. After asking her how her foundation works and creating workshops. I jotted down a few important points that helped in my research.

- They start conversation by doing some activities to make them feel comfortable. They will feel awkward if they directly talk to them so they starts talking to them by initiating a conversation with their background.

They conduct activity sessions where they ask girls to clap for 2 minutes a number and they have to clap for that particular number of times just to make them comfortable and to give the understanding of unity and then trick them and say 0. Some of them will clap and this will make them laugh it helps in setting the mood

They also distribute an Information flyer which is exclusive for menstrual hygiene - which they give them and ask them to take it to their home so that girls can update themselves from time to time by reading this. They said they show the real path of how to use the pad, how to attach, how to detach, how to roll it, how to throw it. Also, they share a flyer consisting of information about making the pad by themselves.

Design Process

Structure of the information guide

The main aim of the project is to highlight the awareness and management of menstrual hygiene with the calendar to track the periods and mark the symptoms. To understand the whole process of menstruation. The information in the guide is divided into 5 parts -

1. How do we grow up and how does menstruation begin?
2. What are the different ways to manage menstrual flow and maintain hygiene?
3. What is PMS, its Symptoms and its Treatment ?
4. What are the myths and facts about menstruation?
5. Make sure to mark the date of the period every month

The very first part of the brochure guides introduces the physical changes which appear while growing up during puberty continuing when women starts their first menstruation, how it is started, with the help of illustration, uterus and its parts are explained, the process of ovulation and the blood discharge is explained in the last part of the first section. Below are the sub points of the first section. What is adolescence / puberty? Why do we have to undergo physical changes for these five days? What is menstruation ? How do menstruation happen? How long does menstruation last?

The second chapter in the brochure guide talks about the different ways to manage menstrual flow and maintain hygiene. Types of sanitary products are available like

disposable pads, cloth pads, tampons, menstrual cups.. What is a sanitary pad? How does it look? How to use the sanitary pad with the help of illustration. This section also explains multiple ways to maintain cleanliness during periods which come under hygiene management.

The third part of the brochure explains about the PMS which includes pain in the bottom section of the abdomen, pimples occurring on face, going through mood swings, feeling of nausea and headaches in intervals. It also explains some measures to be taken while bleeding heavily or irregular periods like performing different yoga asanas Tips to relieve pains during periods while performing types of yoga poses to relieve the symptoms of periods, drinking lots of water to feel hydrated and taking rest at regular intervals.

The fourth part of the brochure guide explains about the taboos and their myths with the actual facts. The first step toward dispelling menstruation myths is to discuss them. It's a good idea to inquire if the information you're given regarding your periods has any scientific backing. Once you've figured out how to tell a myth from a scientific fact, you may aid others by providing accurate information.


The last part of the guide talks about taking care during periods. The last part of the guide talks about how period tracker is helpful and the calendar is given with the symptom key to mark period dates and keep a track.

Illustration and Storyboarding

Storyboarding is the visual representation of character illustration and text flow in the information guide brochure which helps to give a better understanding of the flow of the narrative and sections. I made a storyboard with the illustrations and text keeping in mind the flow of the narrative which helped me to get a better understanding to choose the right illustrations and to serve the purpose and how the information will unfold in the brochure guide for the best understanding of the process.

यह पांच दिन हमें शारीरिक बदलाव से क्यों गुजरना पड़ता है ?


कुदस्त में जीवन देने की शक्ति केवल महिला को दिया गया वरदान है। एक औरत तभी बच्चे को जन्म दे सकती है जब माहवारी होना शुरू होता है।



यह महिला प्रजनन प्रणाली है। मध्य भाग को गर्भाशय कहा जाता है। इसके दोनों ओर दो अंडाशय होते हैं। अंडाशय में कई हजार अंडे मौजूद होते हैं।

मासिक धर्म एक माहवारी के पहले दिन से अगले माहवारी के पहले दिन तक रहता है। एक वयस्क महिला का सामान्य चक्र 28 दिनों का होता है, हालांकि कुछ 22 दिनों तक छोटे और 45 दिनों तक लंबे होते हैं। मासिक धर्म आमतौर पर लगभग 3-7 दिनों तक रहता है, जो भिन्न भी हो सकता है। एक अर्धचंद्र के दौरान, एक महिला मासिक धर्म के रक्त के लगभग 2-4 बड़े चम्मच (30-60 मिलीलीटर) घास करती है।

मासिक धर्म कितने समय तक चलता है ?



औसतन एक अर्धचंद्र 3 से 5 दिनों के बीच रहती है। एक लड़की के लिए शुरुआत में अनियमित पीरियड्स होना सामान्य बात है। इस समय के दौरान, उसके पीरियड्स की अर्धचंद्र 2 दिनों से लेकर 7 दिनों तक हो सकती है। पीरियड्स को नियमित होने में एक साल तक का समय लग सकता है।

Colors

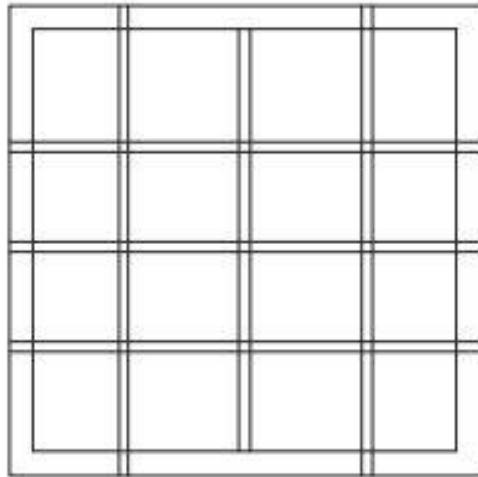
The goal behind the color palette was to symbolize the notion of purity and cleanliness. These colors were inspired by femininity, sanitation and hygiene and reflect the process in a unique way. These colors are used in a way which helps users to focus on text and illustration separately. The primary blue and pink are the main colors which symbolize friendly nature and good health respectively.

Primary Colors

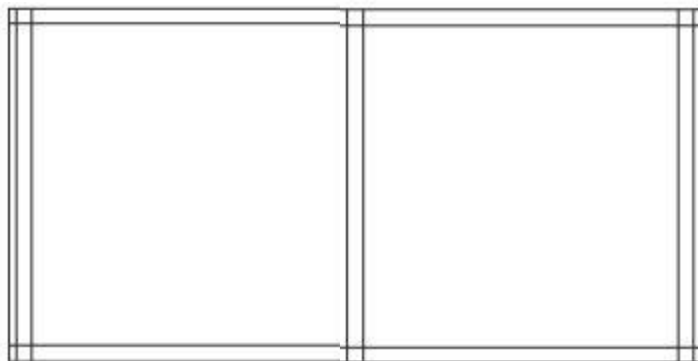
	#EF8080
	#FED9B9
	#608ABC
	#4C4C4D

Secondary Colors

	#F7B3A6
	#EDEDEE
	#4A494A



Grid for Layout



Grid for Cover Page

Layout

A square brochure format is eye-catching and is best used for the educational purpose and makes the brochure look unique and cost effective as well. I have chosen a square layout for the Brochure.

The dimensions of the brochure with multiple pages are 8 x 8 inch.

Margins-

Top : 0.5 inch

Bottom: 0.5 inch

Sides : 0.5 inch

Cover Page -

For the Cover Page I am using Matte Coated Paper, which is the best pick for educational brochures.

The dimensions for the cover page is - 19.5 x 9.75 inch. with end to end print, keeping spine width: 0.2 inch, as for binding Saddle Stitch is chosen.

Margins-

Top : 0.5 inch

Bottom: 0.5 inch

Sides : 0.5 inch

Visual Design

पीरियड्स ≠ समस्या



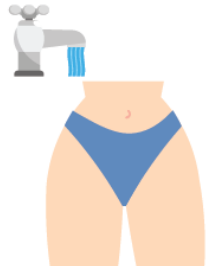
भुजंग आसन करें और योग आसन को 5 गहरी सांसों के लिए पकड़ें



रोज नहाएं



कुछ लड़कियों को सिरदर्द हो सकता है।



शौचालय का उपयोग करने के बाद अपने आनुवंशिक क्षेत्र को सादे पानी से धोएं और क्षेत्र को सूखा रखें

Visual Design - Moodboard

A mood board is a visual presentation or "collage" that includes photographs, illustrations, text, and samples of things in a composition. It might be based on a certain theme or any random stuff. A mood board is a visual representation of a broad notion or emotion about a subject. They might be real or digital, and they can be useful for presentations.

The illustrations are made in a way that the user can relate to the character and get help in better understanding of postures and emotions.

देवनागरी

शीर्षक (26,regular)

उप शीर्षक (22,regular)

मुख्य भाग (17,regular)

Typography

Typography is the art of written communication, a good typography invites the people to read it smoothly with noticing and the bad typography is a hindrance to the eye of the reader. I wanted to make the brochure easy to read and understand, aslo with keeping users in mind who have an inclination towards hindi reading and writing feel and therefore, here I've chosen the 'Adobe Devanagari' typeface. I have used Adobe Devanagari because of its better readability and legibility. Another advantage of choosing this font is that it is available in 4 weights which help to emphasize the important words and headings easily.



Brochure Guide Cover

Final Layout

अगर आपके पेट में दर्द है, चेहरे पर पिंपल्स, मिजाज हो तो आप क्या करें ?



5. बज्जानन करें और योग आसन को 5 गहरी सांसों के लिए पकड़ें



6. पेट में ऐठन से खुद को मुक्त करने के लिए, पेट के निचले हिस्से में गर्म पानी की थैली लगाएं



7. खूब पानी पिएं



8. भरपूर नींद लें

लो जिंदगी का पुरा स्वाद,
खुद का ध्यान रखो हमेशा याद !

मासिक धर्म से चलता जीवन
दूर करो अपने सारे भ्रम

कल्पित कथा	तथ्य
5. जिन लड़कियों को मासिक धर्म हो उन्हें अलग कमरे में सोना चाहिए।	5. मासिक धर्म संग्रामक नहीं है और एक ही कमरे में किसी और को कोई मुकसान नहीं पहुंचता है।
6. किसी भी प्रकार की शारीरिक गतिविधि प्रवाह को बाधित कर सकती है।	6. व्यायाम और खेलकूद वास्तव में दर्द को दूर करने में मदद कर सकते हैं।
7. एक लड़की को अपने पीरियड्स के बारे में पब्लिक में बात नहीं करनी चाहिए। अगर वह ऐसा करती है तो उसे सार्वजनिक रूप से शर्मिंद किया जाएगा।	7. एक लड़की को अपने पीरियड्स के बारे में पब्लिक में बात नहीं करनी चाहिए। अगर वह ऐसा करती है तो उसे सार्वजनिक रूप से शर्मिंद किया जाएगा।

User Testing and Feedback



After the completion of my brochure , I went for user testing to see how comfortable the users are with using the guide brochure. It included the brochure guide with a calendar comfortable for the users who were using and reading the brochure

Goals

- Observe how users are using brochure guide
- Observe if they can read the brochure without hesitation
- Taking their suggestions and feedback
- To see if they can relate to the content and find it useful

User 1

Name: Siddhi

Profession : School Girl

Brief: Siddhi received her period at the age of 10, now she is 13, she got to know about periods from her mother. She does not go in front of her father when she on her periods

Feedback:

1. There was a keen interest in girls for going through the product as it was an accumulation of balanced textual context and illustrations for easy reference

2. The girls stated that the calendar at the end of the product will be very helpful to them as they tend to forget their dates of cycle
3. The product helped them to know the correct way of pad hygiene
4. The exercises and poses illustrated were quickly picked up and were kept for trying to ease the pain in their future menstrual cycle.

User 2

Name: Riddhi

Profession : School Girl

Brief: Riddhi is 10, she has not received her period yet, but her friends started getting their period. She is in school and does work at home after school.

Feedback:

1. There was keen interest to know about the lesser known alternative products like menstrual cups and tampons as they were only known to commonly used pads. This also helped them to understand the need for sustainability and for betterment of nature
2. The girls resonated with the myths and was very satisfied with the actual fact related to it . They understood as to how some traditions were lost in translation and became myths which they too used to face and see in their surroundings . This helped in clearing some myths for them and to straight away give reasons for the actual truth.
3. Some girls told of how they didn't have the correct diet and



would ask their mothers back at home and show them the product as well to spread a word among the elders of society.

4.. The quotes present in the product resonated with girl as they found ease in communicating as they did understand that they are not alone who face mood swings , pain and uneasiness during their cycle, that their peers too face it and had a community to share the same gave them confidence to vocal their issues related to cycle

Conclusion

The project helped to understand that extensive research on MHM in India is a very encouraging practice, showing that at least among academics, there is a rising interest in the subject area. It should be mentioned that the majority of this research discovered that females are ignorant of menstruation prior to menarche, resulting in emotions of tension, anxiety, despair, unease, dirtiness, and rage. While the need for puberty and reproductive health education is largely accepted, the subject of "who should educate young girls in the country about it?" becomes a point of contention in our society.

This project has been a big journey for me and I learned a lot of things on the way.

The process of finalizing the topic, research, structuring information, deciding a medium, its design process was interesting but challenging. It would not have been possible without the professors of M.Des department who guided me at every step. I admit that I made mistakes, slowed down, got stuck numerous times but because of their guidance. I was rescued and able to complete the project on time. I'm indebted to Prof. Madhumita Mazumdar for guiding me and making me learn at each step. If given the chance I would definitely like to take this project further and publish the Brochure Guide and tie up with NGOs so as to distribute this guide to the rural schools and the girls in need.

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