

Myths Surrounding Menstruation: Breaking the Stereotypes

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Abstract

Equality of Status and of Opportunity and to Promote among them all- these values are enshrined in the Preamble of the Indian Constitution, but even after 70 years of Independence, we still see unequal treatment of women, especially in Rural Areas. Women have to suffer a lot in their life. On one hand, people personally want women of Indian society to get empowered but on the other hand, they don't want to get rid of their illogical and irrelevant customs, faith, and belief that is doing nothing but only proving to be cancerous to the society. Not only women need to be empowered when it comes to education, economic problems, poverty, etc. but also it is necessary to get them out of the chain of myths and taboos in which they are entangled from the origin of mankind. The current paper aims to discuss menstruation-related myths prevalent in India, their impact on women's lives, the relevance of addressing these issues in primary care, and a brief description of various strategies to combat them. Mostly women of rural areas do not have proper access to sanitary napkins or tampons. It is not only the physical health of a woman that is affected by these practices; mental health is also at stake. The recent Sabarimala judgement paved a path in changing the mind-set. The paper also describes the condition of women in Nepal which is even worse than in India.

KEYWORDS: Equality, Women, India, Menstruation, Indian Society.

I. Introduction

In a country like India, from the very start, the main issue which many people in the society faced was of getting unequal treatment. In the history of India, there are many instances of people not getting equal treatment as compared to others. They are denied equality in terms of living with dignity in society, caste, creed, colour, gender, sex, etc. We witness people getting unequal treatment in our day to day life. Debates, discussion, arguments about how to overcome with this is now an everyday scenario. Whenever there comes up any serious core issue like dowry, female infanticide, child marriage, sati, rape, denial of girl's education, and many other evil practices present in the society people always use the term called "equality". As citizens of India, we have always witnessed women getting unequal treatment as compared to men. They were always considered inferior to men. All the above-mentioned evil practices largely affected women only in some or the other way. Hence, reformers, activists, and the general people always tried to uplift the women so that they can come to the mainstream of society. All the efforts in doing the same came out to be successful but still, there are many things left which are needed to be work upon. Our Constitution also talks about equality in Articles 14 and 15. Article 14 speaks about equality before the law and equal treatment before the law² and Article 15 talks about prohibition of discrimination based on caste, colour, creed, sex, place of birth, etc.³ Hence, Indian laws are in the favour of treating both the genders equal as mentioned in Article 15, the prohibition of discrimination on the basis of sex, treating any of the genders unequally is unconstitutional.

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² India Const. art. 14.

³ India Const. art. 15.

Women empowerment, in general, is upgrading women's status and their quality of life and help in providing them with the things/resources/amenities which they were previously denied. On the one hand, people personally want women of Indian society to get empowered but on the other hand, they do not want to get rid of their illogical and irrelevant customs, faiths, and beliefs that are doing nothing but only proving to be cancerous to the society. Not only do women need to be empowered when it comes to education, economic problems, poverty, etc. but also it is necessary to get them out of the chain of myths and taboos in which they are entangled from the origin of mankind. Moreover, all of this is killing women from inside and is hindering them to exercise their rights and freedom properly. They are not even provided with basic human rights. These rights are based on values like fairness, equality, respect, dignity, and independence. India is a country with rich diversity where the different section of people practices different religions. They have different cultures, beliefs, faith, and traditions. India is a country where religion and customs have always overpowered people's thinking and mind-set. Menstruation is something that every woman experience across the world and it is very natural and hormonal. For such a natural thing also, belief and custom play a very crucial role in acting as violence towards the women. People give so much importance to culture and customs that they are forgetting that they need to change with the dynamics and the contemporary needs of the society.

Menstruation is the natural part of the reproduction cycle wherein blood comes from the uterus and exits through the vagina. It is a very natural process that occurs in girls usually when puberty hits them. Despite being a natural process or phenomenon, it is always surrounded by illogical myths and taboos for the girls and women in Indian society. In India, even in the era of the 21st century, it is still a taboo to even talk about menstruation/periods openly. It usually comes in the hush category of Indian society. Even if a girl starts talking about it, which is very natural, people give disgusting looks, just by the name it. What the development is all about when you cannot talk about a concept that is a natural phenomenon and problems related to the same. Many girls even die because they have some menstrual problems. Yet, they never talk about it openly because they consider it a taboo and die with that same problem. Why this taboo is not combated, because it is doing nothing other than restricting the freedom of the women and taking their lives mercilessly. It also plays a great role in social exclusion. It excludes many women and girls from society. Hence, controlling and restricting their social life. This is taking their fundamental right i.e. right to life defined under the Constitution of India. The first and foremost problem is that girls have limited knowledge about it which is due to the taboo created in society. They are not allowed to talk about it freely or question something about it. Also, it is not that someone imposed it on them. They have a strong belief in all the myths related to menstruation. This habit of stereotyping everything when it comes to women or something related to them in Indian society is pathetic. This is more prevalent in rural areas where there is a lack of education among the women. Due to not being educated enough they just do whatever they are told to do from their very birth. It is not their fault; it is all about upbringing and what atmosphere is created in their home or the society. In almost every religion, menstruation blood is considered impure but it is just a natural and healthy body process. How can some natural body process be impure? They are also restricted from going to many places. It does not have anything to do with periods, it is just curbing one's right to freedom in the name of custom and tradition.

Women do not maintain personal hygiene during menstruation. The practices and habits which they adopt during those times are very unhygienic which results in the death of these women.

Menstrual health is also affected by the environment and surroundings in which one lives. In many parts of India, women and girls are not allowed to live in the same house in which their family is living as they are considered impure. So, they live in some small huts that are located in a very unhygienic environment and are even exempted from the necessities of living. All these practices have their origin in the blind belief of people in illogical customs, rituals, and traditions. Menstruation is a phenomenon unique to girls but it has always been attached to various myths and superstitions. Another problem is of the affordability, the cost of the sanitary napkins and tampons is high enough for poor people to not afford it. Further, the tax on it is also high. No matter how much a person tries to maintain perfect hygiene but when he cannot afford, there is nothing much that can be done. The government should start rethinking their taxation policies on necessary and important goods.

II. Impact of Religion on Women in Menstrual Period

India is known for its diversity. People of India are highly influenced by culture, tradition, customs, belief, faith, etc. Religion holds a massive place in the lives of the people. They are very sensitive and static when it comes to their religion. The traditions and customs influence people to a great extent because it is a part of their religion and society also. Different religions are known by different customs and traditions. These customs and traditions are a thousand years, time immemorial old. People not only make this part of their life but also make it their lifestyle. Some of these customs and traditions are illogical and irrelevant at the same time in context to contemporary times and human rights. In the present world, people want to change with the dynamics of society but still, there is a large section of society that is reluctant in changing their mind-set. These institutions are a great contributor in nurturing patriarchy and dominating by putting restrictions on women.

When it comes down to women during their menstruation period, there is a huge baggage of all the myths and superstitions derived from the culture and traditions of women. There are many restrictions imposed on them and they are forced to seclusion without any reasonable, logical, and relevant explanation to that. First of all, even the mention of the period is sin in Indian society. People do not talk about it openly and are hesitant in sharing any views related to it. As they believe or they are compelled to believe from the very childhood that these things cannot be discussed openly. Moreover, girls are even hesitant in calling periods by the name of it. They conceal it by using another term for it. I have heard many women and girls calling it by the name of happy birthday, that time of the month, down, and many more in public places. Women at their periods are not allowed to go to the temples or be part of any religious ceremony because they are considered impure at that time. People fear that God will be angry by that. Some people give an illogical explanation behind it such as menstruating women are so powerful, that their offering to God drowns out the offerings of everyone else present in the room. It is curbing their right i.e. Article 25, freedom of conscience and free profession, practice and propagation of religion granted by the Constitution of India.⁴ There is no logical explanation for that. Women are not allowed to cook, go to the kitchen, touch pickle as it rots away, have sex with anyone, served in a different utensil, cannot wash hair, cannot go near tulsi plant or have good food as all these things come under the ambit of myth and misconception that people have concerning menstruation. In some areas, women are not even allowed to be in touch and converse with other people. They are not

⁴ India Const. art. 25.

allowed to be out of a particular room. In Judaism, it is believed that a woman is impure after her menses until she has a ritualistic bath. In Islam, she is not allowed to touch the Quran nor go to the mosque. In the Quran, 2:222 reads, “They ask you about menstruation. Say, ‘It is an impurity, so keep away from women during it and do not approach them until they are cleansed; when they are cleansed you may approach them as God has ordained. Even it explicitly says that she should avoid all sexual activity and cannot approach anyone while on periods. In Assamese culture, on the onset of menarche, she is kept in a confined room for 7 seven days only surviving on milk products, sprouts, and fruits. Many girls did not know about menstruation until they reach menarche. So, there is a desperate need of educating them and creating awareness about the same. Lack of education leads to girls considering it as a disease or illness which even many people think of it in that way. There are women, especially in rural areas who still use a piece of cloth during menstruation but even in urban areas women who use sanitary napkins take the packet of the napkin in a black wrap or are hesitant in taking them from the shopkeeper, especially male. All these things create awkwardness in them about menstruation, their body, and themselves self which leads to a lack of self-confidence. It creates a hurdle to the overall development of a woman.

III. Case Analysis of Sabrimala Judgement

The most recent and debatable issue that the whole nation witnessed is the prohibition of women and girl’s entry aged 10-50 in Sabarimala Temple. Sabarimala is one of the most famous and celebrated sites, located in the hill of Kerala in Southern India. It is a pilgrimage site that is devoted to the Hindu God, Lord Ayyappa. It is not like other Hindu temples; it is not open all year-round. It is opened for all the devotees from all religions. Lord Ayyappa is believed to be Hariharaputra, born of the union of Lord Vishnu in the form of Mohini (Hari) and Lord of Shiva (Hara). Manikandan, prince of the Pandalam dynasty rediscovered the temple in the 12th century. In this temple, the reason behind prohibiting women aged between 10-50 is the menstruating age of women. People consider them as impure and did not want them to enter the temple once she hits the puberty age. The reason given behind the prohibition of women’s entry in the temple is that firstly, Lord Ayyappa has always been a celibate. Secondly, the entry of women affects the sanctity of the principles of Brahmachariyan. They have to carry an age proof and the women in the restricted criteria can also enter the temple if she has removed her uterus with a medical certificate as proof to it.

People around the world have different opinions related to this issue. The people who stood for this ban argue that it is for preserving the ‘purity’. The reason people gave which most people of Indian society believe that menstruating women are not allowed to enter places of worship. They say that it is so because Lord Ayyappa is Naishtika Bramhachari. They contend that Sabarimala has its own rules and they exercise their right of article 25(1) and 26(1) i.e. right to manage their religious affairs granted by the Constitution of India. They argue that it is managed by trusts and is a public place and every public place has its own rules. Hence, this temple also has its rules, customs, and traditions which need to be followed and respected. Rule 3 (b) of the Kerala Hindu Places of Public Worship (Authorization of Entry) Rules, 1965 prohibits women from entering the premises of the temple. The people who are against this ban argue that prohibiting women from entering the temple violates their fundamental right i.e. articles 14, 15, 19, and 25 granted by the Constitution of India which deals with the right to equality, the prohibition of discrimination based on gender, freedom of movement religion respectively. The right to manage their religious affairs

cannot override the right to practice religion itself. These restrictions do nothing, just imposing and glorifying patriarchy. It is always believed that everyone is equal in the eyes of God then why this restriction has to be imposed on the women. Impurity and purity have nothing to do with menstruation. Also, it violates Article 21 of the Indian Constitution which talks about the right to life and personal liberty. Women's liberty is burdened by ample of restriction. Hence, snatching their liberty from them and violating the most important provision of the constitution.

There has been intense discussion, the debate around the nation among people, lawmakers, judges, lawyers, etc. In 2006, a petition was filed in the Supreme Court by Indian Young Lawyers Associations because it violates the freedom to follow and propagate religion and gender discrimination.⁵ Five judges, headed by Deepak Mishra constitutional bench was given the responsibility to look into the matter. The bench gave a 4-1 verdict, saying that the temple rule violated women's right to equality and worship.⁶ The Supreme Court struck down the rule of women aged between 10-50 not allowed to enter the temple which gives a positive ray of hope that people will absorb something from it and will try to change their minds. Rule 3 (b) prohibits the entry of women was struck down. CJI Deepak Mishra was of the view that prohibiting them from entering the temple is curbing their freedom of practice and profess one's religion guaranteed under Article 25(1). He also said that if Ayyapana is Hindus, then this practice is not an essential religious practice of Hindus.⁷ Justice Chandrachud said that the physiological characteristics of women, like menstruation, have no significance or bearing on the entitlements guarantee to them under the constitution. The menstrual status of a woman cannot be a valid constitutional basis to deny her the dignity and the stigma around the same had no place in a Constitutional Order.⁸ Everyone on the bench was of the same view but the dissenting judgment was given by Justice Indu Malhotra. She held that the temple satisfies the requirements for being considered a separate religious denomination. Hence, has the right to manage its affairs and protected under article 26(b).

Another example that we can take is of temple of Kamakhya Devi, the goddess yoni or vagina is worshiped. This temple has an annual fertility festival called Ambuwasi Puja to mark the goddess's yearly menstrual cycle. On one hand there is celebration of menstruation and on the other hand there is restriction imposed on women prohibiting them to enter the temple is contradictory in itself.

IV. Violation of Article 21 of the Constitution

In some parts of India, there is a practice of seclusion that is practiced when women are menstruating. In November 2018 Cyclone Gaja hit Thanjavur district which results in the death of a 12-year-old girl.⁹ The death of that girl could be avoided and she would have been alive if only people never got fooled by the irrelevant customs and tradition. The girl got her first period when Cyclone Gaja hit the district. So, she was sent out to sleep in a thatched barn which was behind her house. The girl died because the coconut tree fell on that thatched room. The girl slept there

⁵ Samanwaya Rautray, Women of all ages can enter Sabarimala Temple, rules Supreme Court, Sept 29, 2018.

⁶ Indian Young Lawyers Association v. State of Kerala, 2016 SCC Online SC 1783.

⁷ Id.

⁸ Id. at 4.

⁹ Balaji C R, Regressive practice causes death of girl during cyclone, The Times of India, Nov. 22, 2018.

because they followed a tradition where a girl has to sleep and stay outside the house during menstruation for a week as she is considered impure. The whole community is responsible for the death of that girl. Sitatola, a village in central Maharashtra has a custom where women and girls going through their menstruation have to live in gaokar (small hut outside the village).¹⁰ They find it problematic as in the rainy season the water leaks through the roof and water come inside. There is no proper kitchen because they are not allowed to cook. There is a lack of basic amenities there, no proper bedding, electricity is there. This practice is more prevalent among the Gond and Madiya ethnic groups. The Gonds are the largest indigenous group in central India and hail from the states of Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh, and Orissa. Many girls do not go to school while they are on their periods and live in the hut.

All the above-mentioned things are the perfect example of inhumane treatment in the name of customs and traditions. These things snatch the right of the women to move freely, curbing their freedom. The practice of seclusion, banishing women on the time of menstruation violates article 21 granted by the Constitution of India which states that no person shall be deprived of his life or personal liberty except according to the procedure established by law. One of the other girls is dying due to this tradition, there is no protection towards that. It includes two right, first, right to life and second is right to personal liberty. It is one of the fundamental rights that is granted to every citizen, even to foreigners also. This is the basic right which is provided and without this right, there is no existence of any other right. It is not only the right to live by breathing, mere existence is not the true interpretation of this right but living with necessities, amenities, environment, physical and mental health that let a person live their life with full dignity and without any mental torture or pressure. Living a dignified life without any exploitation and harassment also comes under article 21. The second aspect of the right to life is personal liberty. Women do not have the personal liberty to do anything while they are on their periods.

V. Menstrual Hygiene Management

Menstrual Hygiene Management is very important for the health of girls and women during menstruation. Poor menstrual hygiene can lead to many health problems. It is more challenging for the women of rural areas to maintain menstrual hygiene. In Stockholm, 2017, it was propounded by Human Rights Watch and WASH united that the simple biological fact of menstruation should not be a barrier to gender equality or stymie women's and girls' realization of their human rights.¹¹ It released guidelines for aid and development groups and others who work with women and girls to address human rights in menstrual hygiene in their programming. One of the problems faced by them is of lack of separate closed spaces used for bathing and excretory purposes in most of the rural households. When they do not have a closed space they use open spaces for the same purposes. They take bath wearing clothes because they can't take bath properly in the open which gives rise to numerous diseases, especially to the genitals. Another problem is the lack of financial resources. It creates hurdle in the creation of a bathroom and not only this it also prevents them from buying other important necessities to maintain hygiene. Their inability of buying sanitary napkins lead them to use clothes. The cloth absorbs the menstrual blood which leads to the accumulation of germs even if it washed regularly. After all, they do not have a proper

¹⁰ Barkha Mathur, Where women are banished to a 'period hut' with no power or loo, *The Times of India*, Nov. 27, 2018.

¹¹ Menstrual Hygiene a Human Rights Issue, *Humans Rights Watch*, August 27, 2017.

place to let it dry because they cannot put it out because of the menstrual taboo attached to it. Lack of education is another problem which is faced by those women. They are not even aware of the problems that are caused due to improper hygiene and what health problems they can suffer from that. In the village people usually never talk about it and consider it a taboo. So, the women usually dump the menstrual waste in the place where they take bath because that is the most probable place where men will not enter. Most of the women in rural areas use unhygienic products such as clothes and wood shavings that can be very harmful to the vaginal area of women. They find no benefit of using pads because they have an alternative that works almost as long as pads work and due to lack of education, they do not consider menstrual hygiene as an important concern. Moreover, most of the low-cost sanitary napkins are smaller in size and are of low quality. There is a lack of water facilities in rural areas which lead them to not be able to wash the clothes properly and then using it again and again.

According to NFHS 2015-16 survey, the number of women using hygienic means of managing menstruation in India is 78% in urban areas and 48% in rural areas and overall 58%. The percentage of using hygienic products in Tamil Nadu, Kerala, and Delhi is 90% while in Bihar is 30%.¹² There are 23 million women drop out of school every year when they start menstruating.¹³ Government who give free pads to girls of rural areas in anticipation of them coming to school daily aggrieved by the percentage of girls dropping school will be of no use as the pad provided by them is of a substandard quality which is of no use and if anyone would provide them sample once they will not start buying it from the next time because of the financial restraint. In the schools, there is no proper toilet and napkin dispensers. Also, there is no proper infrastructure that can provide a hygienic environment. Hence, giving pads as an incentive so that they can come to schools is not enough. The places in rural areas where women are using sanitary napkins, there is no proper way of disposing of it because of the taboo present in society. There is no collection or transportation of waste. Most of the women burn the napkin or dispose of it in the latrine. All these things are not talked or discussed because they find this as a hushed topic and not as a serious issue. When people will discuss it then only, they can derive a definite solution. Under the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan scheme, menstrual hygiene has been considered as a matter of importance and great concern. According to the Swachh Bharat (Gramin) guidelines, funds allocated for information, education, and communication (IEC) may be spent on bettering awareness on menstrual hygiene in villages.¹⁴

VI. Condition of Women during Menstruation in Nepal

All these discriminatory practices such as menstruation huts and superstitions for women during menstruation is not only prevalent in India but is also prevalent in other parts of the world and one of those which is in very pathetic condition in terms of the condition of women during menstruation is Nepal.

In Nepal, especially western Nepal, there is an old aged and largely practiced practice where women are not allowed to stay at their homes while they are menstruating or are on their period.¹⁵

¹² International Institute for Population Sciences and ICF, National Family Health Survey, Ministry of Health and Family Affairs, 2015-16, India.

¹³ Saptarshi Dutta, 23 Million Women Drop Out of School Every Year When They Start Menstruating in India, NDTV, May 28, 2018.

¹⁴ Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin) Guideline: Swachh Bharat Mission Gramin; 2017.

¹⁵ Elisha Shreshtha, Everything you need to know about Chhaupadi, the taboo ritual of banishing women to period

They are considered impure, polluted, and toxic and are prohibited to come in contact with anyone. It is a popular belief and superstition there that if anyone will come in contact with them, will be devastated. It is believed that they will bring bad luck and god will be angry if they come in contact with anyone or stay in the house. So, they are forced to live in a small hut or animals such as cow, goat, etc shelter which are very tiny and are made up of mud or rock. They are basically called menstruation foxholes. In general, it is forcing women into seclusion during the menstruation period. This practice is called Chhaupadi (in Nepali it means someone who bears an impurity) and it is going from hundreds of years. According to the people of these castes, god and goddesses becomes angry and infuriated if a woman stays at home during menstruation. It is a Hindu religious myth that Indra, the King of Heaven was accused of his sin. He killed a Brahmin and was indulged in illicit sexual acts with women during his quest. Hence, in order to repent his sin, all women are punished until now in the name of menstrual taboos. They suffer a lot inside those tiny huts which are just 3 feet tall and they have to make it on their own. They are not allowed to cook, have good food, come in touch with anyone, and have to ignore people just for the sake of their “good luck”. They work and do continuous labour in the field without talking to anyone. The girls do their school homework in those small huts only. A farmer said that if a woman enters a family’s home during her period, three things will happen namely a tiger will come, the house will catch on fire or the head of the house will get sick. Even his teenage niece was ready to crawl into storage beneath his house which was dark, cold, cramped, and filled with itchy straw because she didn’t want her parents to die. Women who just gave birth are not exempted from this practice they also have to undergo through the same, leaving their new-born alone. They are not allowed to cook; the family members of their family just slide the food making sure that they do not touch them. They are not even allowed to touch the livestock. Many girls are raped at night in that hut and exposed to many dangers, majorly snakebite.

Earlier society and lawmakers never realised the dire need of law and order for curbing this form of violence until the number of girls dying due to this practice increased. The practice of chhaupadi was ban by the Nepal Supreme Court in 2005, it was declared illegal but due to lack of legislation it was never criminalized and the practice was still on.¹⁶ There was no effect on the people by the ban, people used to still practice the same. After few years, Supreme Court gave guidelines also for the same but there was no scope of improvement as people who force their wife or daughter to seclusion cannot get arrested or there was no penalty imposed on them. The Police did not show active participation and they often saw it as a private family issue. These things affect women’s health also. They suffer from many diseases like pneumonia, diarrhoea, suffocation, and respiratory tract infection during their seclusion period. In 2017, the government formulated the law but it came in effect on 18 August 2018.

According to clause 168(3) of the criminal code, anyone compelling a woman to live in the shed will have to serve three months of jail term and in addition, he/she has to pay Rs 3,000 as fine. The penalty is comparatively higher for the people holding the public position. According to a report, five months after the criminal code came into effect, the local police have not yet received a single case against the offenders for this offence. The main problem is that women and girls are hesitant and reluctant at the same time to complaint against their relatives and parents. They need to be

huts, The Kathmandu Post, Dec 11, 2019.

¹⁶ Danielle Preiss, Law in Nepal Sets Penalties for Forcing A Woman into A Menstrual Shed, NPR, Aug 10, 2017.

educated as they themselves believe in this practice. Some of the women who never believed in this concept are forced to do it due to the pressure of the society burdened by culture, traditions, and superstitions. Local administration and government took no measures to curb this practice. No proper awareness is created among them until now. When we compare it with India, it doesn't have any proper laws to deal with it.

VII. Conclusion And Recommendations

In conclusion, I would like to say that the first and foremost thing that the people of our Indian society should be doing is changing their mind-set and mentality. The seed of every evil has its roots in the mind-set of people. Secondly, the people, especially the girls and women need to get educated about menstruation properly that it is not a disease and the myths/taboo surrounding it is simply vague, illogical and irrelevant in the present times. People should not carry the baggage of customs and traditions that did not change with the dynamics of society and are in violation of human rights. For instance, practices such as child marriage, sati pratha, the prohibition of widow remarriage, etc. are abolished now. These practices are also changed with the time and at that time people were against these reforms but at the end of the day, they accepted it. So, all these things will take time but people should not be static when it comes to their views. Every coin has two sides to it. So, people should try to understand from the other perspective also. They should not be rigid in their thoughts. Even the advent of Hindu Code Bill also created a lot of controversies but it made a great difference and change in the life of Hindu women.

Our country has been developed a lot as compared to previous times but there is yet a lot to get changed. Earlier in 1990, the advertisement for sanitary napkins was banned but the ban was uplifted later on. The movie Padman was a great initiative by the Indian Cinema, it gave a great message about menstrual hygiene and why it is important for women. The most uneducated and illiterate i.e. the people of the rural areas need to get educated about the importance of menstrual hygiene and more awareness campaigns should be conducted in the rural areas to educate them. The main problem with them is the inability to buy sanitary napkins. Low-cost and tax-free sanitary napkins should be made, so that poor people can also afford it. Posting stories on social media will not help until and unless something will be done for the one who needs it the most. Proper toilet and sanitation facilities should be provided in rural areas. More and more workshops should be conducted so that maximum information reaches them. In schools also there is not much information in the book related to menstruation, there should be a separate chapter for the same. The seclusion of women during the time of menstruation should also be discouraged and there should be a proper piece of legislation to deal with that as it is a serious issue like, there is legislation in Nepal for it. There are many sections of the society where there is a concept of banishment of women during periods which is not known till now. So, firstly the target group should be known then only something can be done for the same. There is a dire need to identify which are the places where there is a practice of practices such as chhapupadi, gaokar, basically menstrual huts. It is of no use it is just taking the life of innocent girls and women. Sabarimala temple judgment is also a great step towards the change as this encourages women to go to the normal temple also while they are menstruating. Winning documentary Period. End of Sentence also showed the patriarchy mentality of the society. It covers the story of a village 60km away from Delhi where people address it as a disease or illness and girls were reluctant in talking about the same. Some of the people were not familiar with the concept of sanitary napkins and some of

them were not financially capable enough to buy it. Even when the pad machine was installed there, men there knowingly described it as Huggies and pads. The taboo there is also creating a large gap between both the genders of society. When girls are given information about menstruation in school before menarche, boys are not given the same. Even they should also be educated about the same, it is just a natural process that comes under the subject of biology. Even if they are given information about the same, there is a separate lecture on this topic for both of them. When from the very start girls are taught that they can't talk about all these things to a boy they will consider it as taboo something that can't be talked about freely. For the emancipation of women, it is necessary to free them from the chain of myths, taboos, and superstitions. People perceive menstruation as a limitation to a woman's ability to do things and they are incorporating the same things to women from generation to generation. In reality, contrasting it is not a source of inability for the women. Indian society needs to stop stereotyping and hyping petty issues for no reason. There is a dire need of getting rid of the cultural taboos, myths, social stigmatization, and historical misunderstanding that is there in the society for so long and is dangerous for women both physically and mentally. People not wanting to get rid of their rigid thought and beliefs is a different thing but making fun of something like that is very disgusting and disturbing at the same time. Hypocrisy is on another level, on the one hand, people don't want to talk about it openly and just accept the fact that it is very natural but on the other hand they want to make fun of it publicly. There is a correlation between hormonal levels at certain periods in the female menstrual cycle and emotional states such as anxiety, tension, and mood swings. The PMS jokes which people make verbally and on social media are not fine, it's very discouraging and demotivating. It is a shame for the Indian society that they cannot address any problem related to the same thing and hush things up but they wanted to make jokes on that very same thing, just for fun sake. The root for everything is, was and always will be the mentality and mindset of the people.

“We want more Padman, Sabarimala Temple Judgement and Period. End of Sentence documentary”.