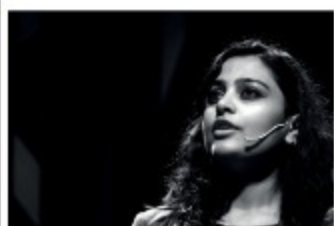




Menstrupedia



Ever thought that a comic book could ease you off the hassle of explaining your child about 'Menstruation Cycle'? Well, don't think, just get ready to act upon with Aditi Gupta, Founder, Menstrupedia, who has giving rise to this amazing concept of instilling in your child's mind the phenomenon of menstruation and grab her a copy of this comic if she has not yet begun with her periods. Let her know the little secret of her body, through an easy talk of a comic book.



ADITI
GUPTA



Why a comic book on periods? How has been the response? This is because periods have been a 'taboo' in our society and any material which you are giving to kids on periods is going to cause much of discomfort to their parents. But if you are giving a comic book to kids and if they are reading it out in front of their parents, it doesn't seem to be a concerning issue for them and not even unsuitable to kids. Menstrupedia comic books have been so successful with schools, NGOs that the book right now is in 14 different languages since we first launched the book. Andhra Pradesh government has distributed these comics in all its 13 districts and 122 government schools. The government of different states are using these comics at different levels in the schools as well and not only in rural India but also in some very famous private institutions. Apart from India, we ship these comic books to 18 different countries. Were there any apprehensions before starting up with Menstrupedia? While studying at National Institute of Designing, we had thought of this idea there and then. Menstrupedia was of course setup in 2012, but the vivid research over this project had been an ongoing process for many years before its establishment. When we decided to teach people about it, we had very little apprehensions, because our concept was already a proven one. What is that one bizarre myth you heard about periods? So hearing something like; 'menstruating women are impure', is like very common to hear. There were two, first came from a semi-urban area from a 'I' standard girl, 'if a boy gets to know that I am on my periods, they would rape me', and to my great dismay, the second one came from a very posh school in Ahmedabad and they were told that if they swim during menstruation, they would get pregnant. Since Menstrupedia is more about generating awareness, do you also have a business model? We started by selling books, last year the count went upto 21,000 on many e-commerce portals. Also schools, NGOs, and government have been our biggest buyers. A very interesting fact about Menstrupedia was that we did crowd-funding on Milap fir getting Menstrupedia in the market. We aimed at raising 4 lacs for our Menstrupedia comic books and ended up raising 5 lacs it. While we were in talks with the investors, they did question us that who would buy these comic books on Menstruation and our response was very smooth that



even before the book is on stands in the market, through crowd funding people are investing in devising this concept. We know people here in India shy away from talking about periods. So is the condition same in other countries or any worse? From 2012 till date, after the launch of Menstrupedia, I feel our country has come a long way now. Menstrupedia has actually made it cool amongst people in a way that people feel comfortable while talking about periods. As I recall the time of 2014-15 when our menstruation blog was one of the finest platforms to talk about these issues openly and today they are talking about it openly and expressing their views. Trishle Khanna wrote a book about it, and recently even directed it, so even actors are not shying away from talking about this in very general. This has actually become an air of positivity in the minds of folks. What is the hardest decision you have taken so far? While working on this cause, I and Tuhin had extremely highly paid jobs and it was a hard decision for us to let go of the money hunger and build something impactful like Menstrupedia. Where do you see Menstrupedia in next five years? I see Menstrupedia being translated into all Indian regional languages. At present, we are even working on a book for boy's puberty hence the translation for the same will also be held.

