



Project Period Adda

15th September, 2022
Brahmo Balika Shikshalaya



RANGEEN
KHIDKI

Rangeen Khidki Foundation conducted its Period Adda Program in Brahma Balika Shikshalaya on the 15th of September, 2022 with 37 adolescent school girls of 11th standard (Commerce) in Kolkata, West Bengal.





The session was conducted in a classroom within the school's premises. All the students present have had their menstruation within an age range of 12 years to 14 years therefore, all of them were aware about what menstruation or period as a bodily process that occurs monthly. As the session progressed, the facilitators could sense that despite being menstruators themselves, the students still perceived period blood as impure or dirty. A thorough discussion on the function of periods and its significance in providing nourishment to the fetus was discussed. Such discussions allowed the students to finally acknowledge period blood is healthy. The facilitators also ensured to explain how abdominal cramps during periods were due to muscle contraction to which the students heaved a sigh of relief. The students however, seemed to perceive excretion of white discharge as a normal process and some of them were even aware about the abnormalities that may occur in case of an infection. A considerable shift in knowledge is noted post the session as students become aware and more confident about the female anatomy.

As the discussions on taboos began, most students expressed themselves following either one or several other restrictions during their menstruation. Most frequently stated restriction was not shampooing one's hair and not touching any sacred item including not being present for religious rituals. Dismantling these taboos from the roots were not possible owing to the limited time of engagement with the students, however, the facilitators urged the students to question and reason out the taboos and myths that were reproduced within families to ensure their first step towards dismantling the harmful myths surrounding menstruation.



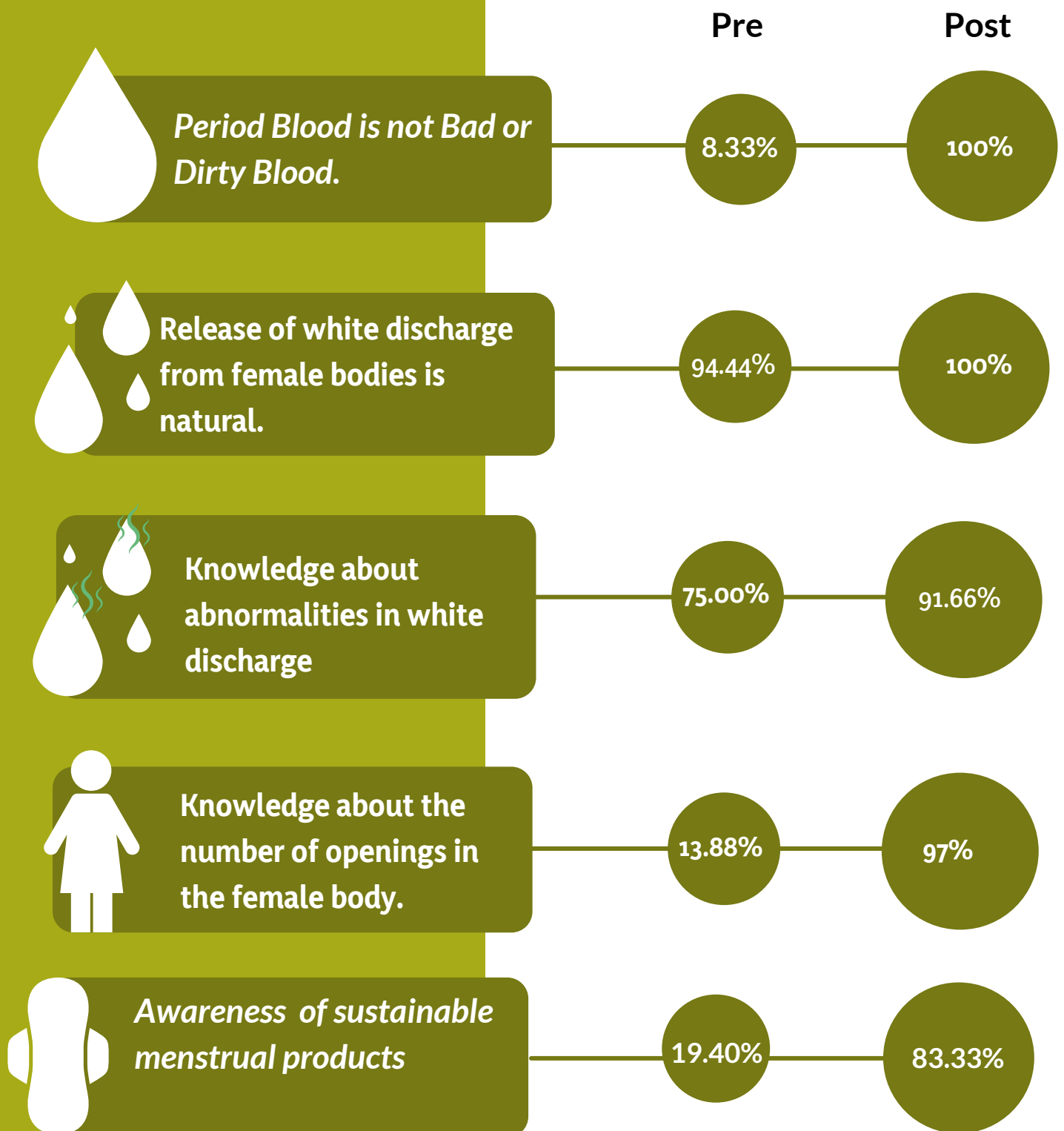


Importance of nutrient rich diets along with exercise or yoga were also discussed with the students as some of them stated not performing any physical activities owing to the fear of heavy bleeding. Towards the end of this interactive session, the students pledged to no longer address periods using euphemisms as “শরীর খারাপ” (illness) but rather address it as menstruation or periods or “মাসিক”. The session ended with distribution of Eco Femme pad kits wherein all 36 students present opted for the kits.

However, post the session a significant shift in the knowledge levels of all the participants are evident as can be seen in the graphs below. Lack of awareness on the types of menstrual products were noted prior the session, which increased as the participants became aware about availability of different kinds of menstrual hygiene products. A positive shift was also recorded in the awareness regarding the release and abnormalities in white discharge which would not only enable the girls to understand their menstrual health but also seek medical attention when needed.

After the session concluded, most of the participants wanted to share the information and knowledge that they earned with their family members, especially mothers, sisters and friends. Some even stated that they would disseminate the knowledge from the session to those who had failed to attend the session. Among the total 105 participants, 93 participants have opted for the Eco Femme Kits while the remaining 12 participants did not opt for the Eco Femme kits.

OVERALL OUTPUT OF THE TRAINING



REFLECTIONS

“

এই আলোচনার মধ্যে আমার ভালো লেগেছে প্যাড সংক্রান্ত আলোচনা , তা ছাড়া এই আলোচনা থেকে আমার অনেক ভুল ধারণা ভেঙেছে , আমাদের শরীরের অনেক ধরণের প্রক্রিয়ার কথা জানতে পেরেছি। সব থেকে ভালো লেগেছে ফ্রি এর ক্লোথ প্যাড।

”

“

আমাদের যা প্রশ্ন ছিল সব কিছুই সমাধান হয়েছে। পিরিয়ড ২৮-৩৫ দিনের প্রক্রিয়া জানতে পেরেছি, প্যাড সংক্রান্ত এবং পিরিয়ড সম্পর্কে আমরা অনেক কিছু জানতে পেরেছি।

”

From today's session, I liked the discussions based on different kinds of pads. Apart from that through this discussion I was able to debunk myths and misunderstanding regarding periods. I also came to know about the bodily processes that occur. The most liked part of this discussion was the free cloth pad kits which I received.

All our questions were answered. We came to know that the period cycle occurs every 28-35 days and also came to know a lot of information about pads and period as a bodily process.



We came to know through today's discussion that period blood is not dirty and that exercising or doing yoga would enhance our physical and emotional well being.

— “ —
মাসিকের সময় শরীর থেকে বেরোনো রক্ত নোংরা না এবং খেলা ধুলো বা শারীরিক ব্যাম করলে শরীর ও মন দুটোই ভালো থাকলে তা আজ আলোচনার মাধ্যমে জানতে পারলাম।
— ” —