**NEEDS ASSESSMENT FOR REUSABLE PADS AT PATAKO COMMUNITY, OYO STATE**.

***DISCUSSION***

A pilot study was done by administering a total of 31 questionnaires to 31 women and girls at the patako community, Sango, Ibadan. The method of administering the questionnaire took an interview guided form as the majority of the beneficiaries could not properly answer the questions on their own.

Personal and demographic data took the first section of the questionnaire. According to the needs assessment analysis, the majority of the participants (51.6%) were within the age range of 17-30, 29% are within the age range of 31-44, while the remaining 19.4% fall into the age range of 44-57.

Section B of the questionnaire focused more on the level of knowledge of participants as regards menstrual health and hygiene practices. The needs assessment analysis shows that none of the participants are aware of reusable sanitary pads, however, 90% of the participants know about industrial sanitary pads while the remaining 10% are conversant with other sanitary products. The fact that the majority of the participants know about industrial sanitary pads can be a result of the fact that industrial sanitary pads are what they easily find around. This can be backed up with the data from the needs assessment result which shows that 90% of the participants responded that out of all sanitary products, industrial sanitary pads are what they easily find around. The preference for sanitary pad products also saw industrial disposable pads as the most preferred sanitary pad product (90%).

Furthermore, the major method of disposal of sanitary pads is by burning. 50% of the participants responded that they burn after use, 15% use the dustbin and toilet as their method of the disposal respectively, 5% throw inside the river while the remaining 15% use other methods of sanitary pads disposal. Most of the respondents spend between #100-#500 on sanitary pad product, 15% spend between #500-#1000 while the remaining 5% spends nothing on sanitary pad products. Even though about 40% reported that the intensity of their period pain falls between 5-10, 70% of the participants reported that the pain does not affect their cleaning, and also 70% of the participants reported that they haven’t miss classes or work due to menstrual cramps or hygiene issues. The majority (85%) of the participant did not consider menstrual hygiene and the purchase of pads as too much financial burden while 15% thought otherwise.

Reusable pads can save menstruating girls and ladies #500 yearly, 80 % agreed to this, 15% did not agree while the remaining 5% were indifferent about it. Approximately half of the participants responded that they will not feel disgusted while washing their reusable sanitary pads, 35% responded that they will feel disgusted while washing their reusable and the remaining 5% were not sure. The majority (70%) of the participants are ready to give reusable pads a try while 205 of them are not ready to give it a try. This is however bound to change after proper education and exposure to reusable sanitary pads.

As regards the possible difficulties that can be faced by the users of reusable sanitary pads, the following result was obtained ;

- 90% strongly disagree that lack of access to clean water is a difficulty

-85% strongly disagree that not enough soap is a difficulty

-50% strongly agree that the embarrassment that comes with washing the pads where people can see is a difficulty

-40% strongly disagree that pads not drying quickly enough is a difficulty

-50% strongly disagree that their culture and belief is not a difficult

This means that the embarrassment that comes with washing the pads where people can see it is the major difficulty that could hinder them from using reusable sanitary pads.

Most of the participants (50%) had their first exposure in JSS1, 15% had in JSS2, 15% had in primary school and 20% had no prior knowledge. 85% of the participants are willing to partake in any opportunity that would give them more knowledge and exposure to menstrual health and hygiene practices. 15% of the respondents feel reusable pads are not hygienic, 20% think reusable pads are great, 30% think reusable pads are okay, 15% think they are good while 25% have no answer.

***CONCLUSION***

According to the needs assessment result and the discussion above for participants of the patako community, the knowledge attitude and practice towards menstrual health, menstrual hygiene, and reusable sanitary pads is poor. Therefore, proper advocacy and sensitization are needed to achieve the main goal of the SNAPP project, which is to eradicate period poverty.