

LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE REGARDING MENSTRUAL HYGIENE AMONG ADOLESCENTS

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DOI: <http://doi.org/10.47211/idcij.2018.v05i01.004>**ABSTRACT**

Adolescence is the most special period in a girl's life in which the important event of transition from girlhood to womanhood takes place. Menstruation is a major stage of puberty among adolescents. Many adolescents don't have a complete understanding of menstruation and menstrual hygiene. Menstruation is still considered as unclean in the society. Proper knowledge on menstruation and menstrual hygiene is very essential to protect the reproductive health of adolescents - the future mothers. The present study was conducted to assess the level of knowledge regarding menstrual hygiene among adolescents in a selected school in Kanya Kumari district of Tamilnadu. A descriptive cross-sectional research design was used in this study. 70 adolescents were selected using random sampling technique. Structured self-administered questionnaire was used for data collection. Analysis of data revealed that only 1.4% of adolescents had adequate knowledge, 30% had moderate knowledge and 68.6% had inadequate knowledge regarding menstrual hygiene. The study concluded that only very minimal percentages of adolescents have adequate and moderately adequate knowledge regarding menstrual hygiene. Their knowledge level can be increased by giving appropriate education

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INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is the most important and sensitive period of one's life. Today a large variety of morbidities such as nutritional deficiency disorders, menstrual disorders, etc. are prevailing among adolescents. (Biswas. R, 2004).

Menstruation and menstrual practices are still clouded by taboos and socio-cultural restrictions resulting in adolescent girls remaining ignorant of the scientific facts and hygienic health practices, necessary for maintaining positive reproductive health (Mandal. K, 1998). Effective menstrual hygiene is vital to health, well-being, dignity, empowerment, mobility and productivity of women and girls (Environmental Health Group). Poor Menstrual Hygiene Management affects the reproductive tract. In India, majority of girls are at risk for reproductive tract infections (RTI) because of poor Menstrual Hygiene Management (Juyal, etal. 2014). Reproductive Tract Infections (RTI) can lead to health complications with serious consequences. Pelvic Inflammatory Disease can develop from RTI's and cause infertility, ectopic pregnancy, and chronic pain. And recently, researchers have shown that certain infections can increase the chances of HIV transmission (Michele Blacksborg, 2011). Incidence of RTI was found to be 70% among women with unhygienic sanitary practices (Soothe Health care, 2016).

Of the 355 million menstruating women in India, 75 per cent rural women lack adequate knowledge on menstrual hygiene and care. About 97 % of gynaecologists believed that sanitary napkins can act as a preventive measure against reproductive tract infection, while 64 per cent noted that it can act as a precautionary measure to reduce the risk of cervical cancer (AC Nielson and voluntary organisation Plan, 2013). J. Barathalakshmi , P. K. Govindarajan , N. Ethirajan , A. John William Felix (2013) conducted a study on Knowledge and Practice of Menstrual Hygiene among School Going adolescent girls in Chidambaram found that out of 435 individuals surveyed, only 123 girls (28.2%) were aware about menstruation before menarche. Nearly 45.7% girls were frightened and 30.5% were worried on seeing the first menstruation. The main source of information about menstruation and menstrual hygiene were their mothers and elder sisters among 38.2% girls. About 61.3% girls reported that menstruation refers to bleeding from stomach. Only 30.5% girls answered that it is cyclical uterine bleeding. Nearly 62.7% girls did not know the reason for menstruation but 68.1% of girls responded correctly about the duration of the menstrual cycle.

The investigator while conducting the free medical camp in schools identified that the adolescents had poor knowledge on menstrual hygiene and they had the shyness to share the information related to menstruation. As menstrual hygiene is very essential to maintain the reproductive health of adolescents the investigator was interested in assessing the level of knowledge on menstrual hygiene among adolescents in a selected school.

OBJECTIVES

1. To assess the level of knowledge regarding menstrual hygiene among adolescents.
2. To find out the association between the levels of knowledge regarding menstrual hygiene with selected demographic variables among adolescents.

HYPOTHESES

H1: There is a significant association between the level of knowledge regarding menstrual hygiene and selected demographic variables among adolescents.

METHODOLOGY**Research Approach**

Quantitative research approach was used for this study.

Research Design

Descriptive cross-sectional research design was used for the study.

Sample Size

The sample size selected was of 70 adolescent girls and random sampling technique was used to select the samples.

Description of the Tool

The tool consisted of two sections.

Section - A:**Description of demographic variables**

It was used to collect sample characteristics which includes age, grade, domicile, religion, type of family, mother's education, mother's occupation, family income , availability of communication media at home, age at menarche, first source of information on menarche and reaction to menarche.

Section - B:**Structured Self-Administered Questionnaire**

In this section the questionnaire consisted of 32 multiple choice questions to assess the level of knowledge regarding menstrual hygiene among adolescents. Each correct answer carries one mark. The maximum score was 32.

RESULTS

Section I: Sample Characteristics of Adolescents

Table - 1: Frequency and Percentage distribution of Samples according to selected demographic variables

Sl No.	Demographic Variables	Categories	Frequency(f)	Percentage(%)
1.	Age(in years)	12	03	04.3%
		13	34	48.6%
		14	32	45.7%
		15	01	01.4%
2.	Grade	8 th	36	51.4%
		9th	34	48.6%
3.	Domicile	Rural	43	61.4%
		Urban	27	38.6%
4.	Religion	Hindu	24	34.2%
		Christian	44	62.9%
		Muslim	02	02.9%
5.	Family Type	Nuclear	47	67.1%
		Joint	21	30.0%
		Single Parent	02	02.9%
6.	Mother's Education	Primary	01	01.4%
		Secondary	13	18.6%
		Higher Secondary	32	45.7%
		Degree & Above	24	34.3%
7.	Mother's Occupation	Home Maker	57	81.4%
		Office Work	07	10.0%
		Professional	03	04.3%
		Others	03	04.3%
8.	Monthly Family Income	<5000	33	47.1%
		5001-8000	16	22.9%
		8001- 10,000	13	18.6%
		>10,000	08	11.4%
9.	Media at Home	Television only	28	40.0%
		Newspaper only	06	08.6%
		Internet only	-	-
		All the above	36	51.4%
10.	Age at menarche	Before 10 years	05	07.1%
		10-12 years	20	28.6%
		13-14 years	31	44.3%
		After 14 years	14	20.0%
11.	First source of information on menarche	Mother	26	37.1%
		Sister	12	17.1%
		Friends	23	32.9%
		Media	09	12.9%
12.	Reaction to menarche	Happy	06	08.6%
		Scared	21	30.0%
		Cried	14	20.0%
		Emotionally Disturbed	29	41.4%

Section II: Assessment of level of knowledge regarding Menstrual Hygiene**Table - 2: Distribution of Sample subjects according to the levels of knowledge regarding Menstrual Hygiene among Adolescents**

SI No.	Level of Knowledge	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
1.	Inadequate	48	68.6%
2.	Moderately Adequate	21	30.0%
3.	Adequate	01	1.4%

Section III: Assessment of levels of knowledge according to the different Domains**Table - 3: Distribution of sample subjects according to the level of knowledge on Adolescence**

SI No.	Level of Knowledge on Adolescence	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
1.	Inadequate	36	51.4%
2.	Moderately Adequate	32	45.7%
3.	Adequate	02	2.9%

Table - 4: Distribution of sample subjects according to the levels of knowledge on Menstruation

SI No.	Level of Knowledge on Menstruation	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
1.	Inadequate	68	97.1%
2.	Moderately Adequate	02	2.9%
3.	Adequate	—	—

Table - 5: Distribution of sample subjects according to the levels of knowledge on Menstrual Hygiene

SI No.	Level of Knowledge on Menstrual Hygiene	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
1.	Inadequate	40	57.1%
2.	Moderately Adequate	30	42.9%
3.	Adequate	—	—

Section IV: Association of Knowledge score with selected demographic variables

This section deals with the Chi-Square test showing the association of knowledge score with selected demographic variables of Adolescents.

Table - 6: Association of level of Knowledge of Adolescent girls regarding menstrual hygiene with their demographic variables

SI Nos.	Demographic Variables		Level of Depression			df	χ^2	P value
			Inadequate	Moderately Adequate	Adequate			
1.	Age (in years)	12	03	—	—	6	6.400	NS
		13	25	09	—			
		14	20	12	—			
		15	—	—	01			
2.	Grade	8 th	26	09	01	2	0.811	NS
		9 th	21	12	01			

ARTICLES

SI Nos. (Contd.)	Demographic Variables		Level of Depression			df	x ²	P value
			Inadequate	Moderately Adequate	Adequate			
3.	Domicile	Rural	24	19	—	2	0.055	NS
		Urban	19	06	02			
4.	Religion	Hindu	22	02	—	4	6.102	NS
		Christian	26	17	01			
		Muslim	01	01	—			
5.	Type of Family	Nuclear	30	15	02	4	3.171	NS
		Joint	13	07	01			
		Single Parent	01	01	—			
6.	Mother's Education	Primary	01	—	—	6	7.931	NS
		Secondary	09	04	—			
		Higher Secondary	20	10	02			
		Degree & Above	14	07	03			
7.	Mother's Occupation	Home Maker	40	17	—	6	9.958	NS
		Office Work	03	03	01			
		Professional	01	01	01			
		Others	02	01	—			
8.	Monthly Family Income	<5000	27	06	—	6	0.0001	NS
		5001-8000	12	03	01			
		8001-10,000	10	03	—			
		>10,000	06	01	01			
9.	Media at Home	Television only	18	08	02	6	5.102	NS
		Newspaper only	06	—	—			
		Internet only	—	—	—			
		All the Above	15	15	06			
10.	Age at first Menstruation	<10 Years	03	02	—	6	0.0001	NS
		10-12 Years	12	05	01			
		13-14 Years	18	12	02			
		>14 Years	10	04	01			
11.	First source of information on menarche	Mother	16	09	01	6	0.008	NS
		Sister	08	04	—			
		Friends	15	07	01			
		Media	06	03	—			
12.	Reaction to first menstruation	Happy	03	02	01	6	0.0008	NS
		Scared	06	04	—			
		Cried	23	11	—			
		Emotionally disturbed	11	08	01			

Key: NS - Non Significant

DISCUSSION

The present study revealed that only 1.4% of adolescents had adequate knowledge, 30% had moderate knowledge and 68.6% had inadequate knowledge regarding menstrual hygiene.

This finding was supported by the study conducted by Sasmita Ghimire which depicted that only 5% had good knowledge, 70% had average knowledge and 25% of them had poor knowledge regarding menstrual hygiene.

On considering the different domains the study discloses that 2.9% of the adolescents had adequate knowledge on adolescence. Looking into the level of knowledge on menstruation and menstrual hygiene the study depicts that 2.9% had moderately adequate knowledge on menstruation and 42.9% had moderately adequate knowledge on menstrual hygiene.

This result concurred with the result of the study conducted by Sasmita Ghimire that adolescent girls had the highest mean percentage (70%) knowledge in information on concepts of menstruation.

CONCLUSION

The study concluded that only very minimal percentage of adolescents had adequate and moderately adequate knowledge regarding menstrual hygiene. It showed that it is crucially essential to provide the adolescents with access of knowledge regarding menstrual hygiene. It is mainly the responsibility of the parents and teachers of the adolescents to create awareness through various audio-visual aids in home and schools.

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