



MENSTRUAL HYGIENE PRACTICES IN CONTEXT OF SCHOOLING: A COMMUNITY NEED BASED STUDY AMONG RURAL ADOLESCENT GIRLS IN UDUPI DIST.

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ABSTRACT Menstruation is a biological process just like defecation or urination. Maintaining hygiene during menses is important for women's well being, mobility and dignity. Menstrual hygiene is important to prevent infection, local itching and bad odor. "Good personal hygiene" will keep you confident during these days.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY: To assess the level of knowledge regarding menstrual hygiene.

METHODS: The descriptive research design and convenient sampling method was used to select 70 adolescent girls who had attained menarche in a selected school at Karkala, udupi district. Demographic performa and check list were used to collect data from the sample and the data was analyzed by using descriptive statistics. **RESULTS:** The result shows that majority of the students (88.85%) are having good knowledge regarding menstrual hygiene, whereas 8.57% are having average knowledge and 2.85% are having poor knowledge.

KEYWORDS :

INTRODUCTION

Menstruation is a phenomenon unique to the females. The onset of menstruation is one of the most important changes among the girls during the adolescent years. The first menstruation is called menarche and it occurs between 10 to 15 years.

Adolescent girls constitute a vulnerable group, particularly in India where female child is neglected one. Menstruation is still regarded as something unclean or dirty in Indian society. The reaction to menstruation depends upon awareness and knowledge about the subject. The manner in which a girl learns about menstruation and its associated changes may have an impact on her response to the event of menarche. Although menstruation is a natural process, it is linked with several misconceptions and practices, which sometimes result into adverse health outcomes.

Hygiene-related practices of women during menstruation are of considerable importance, as it has a health impact in terms of increased vulnerability to reproductive tract infections (RTI). Today millions of women are sufferers of RTI and its complications and often the infection is transmitted to the offspring of the pregnant mother.

Women having better knowledge regarding menstrual hygiene and safe practices are less vulnerable to RTI and its consequences. Therefore, increased knowledge about menstruation right from childhood may escalate safe practices and may help in mitigating the suffering of millions of women.

NEED FOR THE STUDY

Menstruation is the periodic discharge of blood and mucosal tissue (the endometrium) from the uterus and vagina. It starts at menarche at or before sexual maturity (maturation), in females of certain mammalian species, and ceases at or near menopause (commonly considered the end of a female's reproductive life).

This belief stems from a time when women did not have the sanitary measures we have today. They would use old cloth as napkins and often had to wash and reuse them; apart from that they did not have access to running water and the kind of soaps we have today.

A cross sectional study was conducted among 160 adolescent girls of a secondary school situated in the field practise area of rural health unit and training centre, with a help of a predesigned and pre tested questionnaire data were analysed statistically by simple proportions. Out of 160 respondents, 108 (67.5%) girls were aware about menstruation prior to attainment of menarche .mother was the first informant regarding menstruation in case of 60 (37.5%) girls . One hundred and thirty-eight (86.25%) girls believed it as a physiological process. Seventy-eight (48.75%) girls knew the use of sanitary pad during menstruation. Regarding practices, only 18 (11.25%) girls used sanitary pads during menstruation. For cleaning purpose, 156 (97.5%) girls used both soap and water. Regarding restrictions practiced, 136 (85%) girls practised different restrictions during menstruation.

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, which sometimes result into adverse health outcomes

OBJECTIVES:

1. To assess the level of knowledge regarding menstrual hygiene.

ASSUMPTIONS:

- The study assumes that hygienic practices during menstruation among the adolescent's girls are assumed to be inadequate.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The descriptive approach adopted to find the hygiene practices during menstruation among the adolescent girls, NITTE high School, Karkala,udupi dist

RESEARCH APPROACH:

Evaluator approach was used to determine the hygienic practices during menstruation among the adolescent girls in terms of gaining knowledge scores

RESEARCH DESIGN:

One group pre-test design was adopted to assess the hygienic practices during menstruation among adolescent girls

SETTING:

The study was conducted in NITTE high school, Karkala.

POPULATION:

Population consists of adolescent girls who had attained menstruation and studying in 8th, 9th and 10th standard.

SAMPLE.

In this study , 70 students who had attained menstruation studying in 8th ,9th ,10th standard at NITTE high school , Karkala and who satisfied the inclusion criteria were included as samples.

SAMPLING TECHNIQUE.

School was selected using convenient sampling and subjects were selected using purposive sampling technique.

Inclusion criteria

- Adolescent girls
- Who have attained menstruation
- Who can read Kannada or English
- Who are willing to participate in the study
- Who will be present during the time of data collection

Exclusion criteria:-

- Girls who have not attained menstruation.
- Girls who are not willing to participate in the study.
- Girls who are not available at the time of data collection.

Instruments used

In this study instruments used are:-

- Demographic Proforma
- Checklist

Data collection method

- Investigator will obtain permission from the concerned authority.
- Explain the purpose and need for study and informed consent had taken.
- Purposive sampling technique was used to select the samples.
- Data will be collected from the participants with the help of demographic Performa and checklist.

RESULTS

The analysis and interpretation of the data was collected from 70 girls those who attained menarche in 8th, 9th and 10th to assess the knowledge of girls regarding menstrual hygiene practices in selected school in Karkala taluk.

ORGANIZATION AND PRESENTATION OF DATA

The data were analyzed and presented under the following headings:

Table 1: Distribution of the Demographic Characteristics

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS		FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
Age	8- 10years	0	0
	11-13years	11	15.71
	14- 15years	59	84.28
Class	8 th standard	6	8.57
	9 th standard	36	51.42
	10 th standard	28	40
Siblings present	yes	66	94.28
	no	4	5.71
Along with parents	Yes	68	97.14
	no	2	2.85
Have any health education	Yes	68	97.14
	no	2	2.85
If got yes then through	Friends and family members	64	91.42
	Mass medias	6	8.57
	Health education	0	0

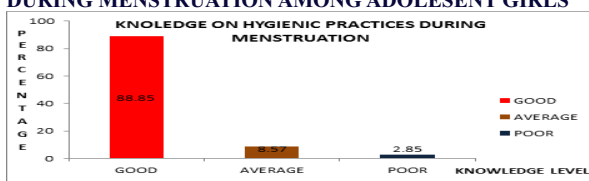
- The study revealed that out of 70 students, 59(84.28%) was in the age group of 14- 15 years and 11(15.71%) was in 11-13 years.
- It is observed from the present study that majority 36(51.52%) was from 9th standard, 28(40%) from 10th standard and 6(8.57%) from 8th standard.
- It is found in the present study that 66(94.28%) had siblings and remaining 4(5.71%) had no siblings.
- The present study depicted that 68(97.14%) were staying along with parents.
- The present study revealed that 68(97.14%) had been attended health education, in that 64(91.42%) of them were getting education from friends and family members and 6(8.57%) were attended through mass media.

TABLE 2:-DISTRIBUTION OF CHECKLIST KNOWLEDGE SCORE OF ADOLESCENT GIRLS

N=70

	YES		NO	
	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Q1	69	98.57	1	1.42
Q2	68	97.14	2	2.85
Q3	68	97.14	2	2.85
Q4	57	81.42	13	18.57
Q5	67	95.71	3	4.28
Q6	59	84.28	11	15.71
Q7	56	80	14	20
Q8	41	58.57	29	41.42
Q9	68	97.14	2	2.85
Q10	56	80	14	20

Fig1: KNOWLEDGE REGARDING HYGIENIC PRACTICES DURING MENSTRUATION AMONG ADOLESCENT GIRLS



The above table depicted that 62(88.85%) students are having good knowledge regarding menstrual hygiene, 6(8.57%) are having average knowledge and 2(2.85%) are having poor knowledge

DISCUSSION

The study was undertaken to assess the knowledge and practices related to menstruation among tribal adolescent girls. The sample comprised of 70 girls in the age group 13-15 years. The result revealed that sample girls lacked conceptual clarity about the process of menstruation before they started menstruating due to which they faced several gynecological problems, 98% of the girls believed that there should be no regular bath during the menstrual cycle.

CONCLUSION

Reproductive tract infections, which has become a silent epidemic that devastates women's life is closely interrelated with poor menstrual hygiene. Therefore, proper menstrual hygiene and correct perceptions and beliefs can protect the womenfolk from this suffering. Before bringing any change in menstrual practices, the girls should be educated about the facts of menstruation, physiological implications, about the significance of menstruation and development of secondary sexual characteristics, and above all, about proper hygienic practices with selection of disposable sanitary menstrual absorbent. This can be achieved through educational television programmes, school nurses/health personnel, compulsory sex education in school curriculum and knowledgeable parents, so that her received education would indirectly wipe away the age-old wrong ideas and make her feel free to discuss menstrual matters including cleaner practices without any hesitation. All mothers irrespective of their educational status should be taught to break their inhibitions about discussing with their daughters regarding menstruation much before the age of menarche. Lack of privacy is an important problem. In resource poor contexts, where women do not have access to basic facilities such as water, bathroom and privacy, the standard of hygiene one can maintain is severely compromised. There is a need to improve the housing conditions with respect to basic facilities. Universalized use of sanitary pads can be advocated to every girl only by making it available at affordable prices (social marketing).

This study reveals that menstrual hygiene is far from satisfactory among a large proportion of the adolescents while ignorance, false perceptions, unsafe practices regarding menstruation and reluctance of the mother to educate her child are also quite common among them. Thus, the above findings reinforce the need to encourage safe and hygienic practices among the adolescent girls and bring them out of traditional beliefs, misconceptions and restrictions regarding menstruation

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