

A Study to Assess the Practice to Menstrual Hygiene among Adolescent Girls in Selected Area, Dehradun, Uttarakhand.

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Abstract: Menstrual cycle is defined as normal physiological process that is characterized by cyclic shedding of endometrium accompanied by loss of blood in adolescent and young girls. Good hygienic practices during menstruation such as the use of sanitary pads rather than cloth pad and adequate washing of the genital area with warm water are essential during menstruation to prevent infections. Methodology: A Quantitative research approach with Descriptive research design was used for the study to assess occurrence of menstrual irregularities among adolescent girls in selected rural area, Dehradun, Uttarakhand. The population comprised of adolescent girls having age group between 10- 19 yrs. The study was conducted in selected rural area of, Dehradun, Uttarakhand. Purposive Sampling technique was used to select the 250 subjects from the population. Self developed structured questionnaire related to age of menarche, type of menstrual absorbant used, changing and disposal of absorbant and personal hygiene during menses were developed and administered to the respondents through interview method.. The method of observation involved personal interaction and questioning of respondent to find out if they had anything peculiar about their cycle.. Results: Out of 250 samples 66% of adolescent girls were using sanitary pad as menstrual absorbant and 57.2% were disposing their pad into the dustbin. 39.2% were wrapping their pad with paper before disposing it. Conclusion : Based on the findings of the study, it is concluded that among two hundred fifty of adolescent girls, majority of the girls were maintaining their proper menstrual hygiene.

Keywords: menstrual hygiene, practice

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I. Introduction

In the journey of life every individual passes through different stages. These stages include infancy, early childhood, adulthood and old age. Age group of the adolescent is not well defined but many literature support the age group of 10- 19 yrs old. ¹ Menstrual cycle is defined as normal physiological process that is characterized by cyclic shedding of endometrium accompanied by loss of blood in adolescent and young girls. ² In Indian society where female child is neglected one, adolescent girls constitute a vulnerable group and menstruation is still regarded as something unclean or dirty. There are many taboos surrounding this issue which prevent girls and women from articulating their menstrual needs. Menstrual hygiene management have been ignored or misunderstood by the society hygiene related practices of girls during menstruation are of considerable important. Today million of girls and women are suffers of RTI and its complications and morbidity. It is transmitted to the offspring of the pregnant mother. ³ Good hygienic practices during menstruation such as the use of sanitary pads rather than cloth pad and adequate washing of the genital area with warm water are essential during menstruation. Women and girls of the reproductive age need access to clean and soft, absorbent sanitary. Products which can in the long run, protect their health. Repeated use of unclean napkins or the improperly dried cloth napkins before its reuse results in harboring of micro-organisms and causing vaginal infections.

Objective: To assess the practice to menstrual hygiene among adolescent girls.

II. Materials And Methods

A Quantitative research approach with Descriptive research design was used for the study to assess the occurrence of menstrual irregularities. The population comprised of adolescent girls. Mothers of pre-school children were selected from rural area, Dehradun, Uttarakhand. Adolescent girls of age group between 10-19 yrs who communicate in Hindi or English, who were willing to give consent and participate in the study, who were having menstruation, who were available at the time of data collection were included in the study. The adolescent girls were selected by purposive Sampling technique. On the basis of standard sample size calculation total 250 subjects were recruited for the study. Self developed structured questionnaire related to ; type of menstrual absorbant used, changing and disposal of absorbant and personal hygiene during menses of adolescent girls were developed and administered to the respondents through interview method. After

explaining the purpose of the study written consent was taken from the participant before starting data collection. Assurance was given to the subjects that the anonymity of each individual will be maintained.

III. Results

Table no. 1 Frequency (f) and percentage (%) distribution of samples according to their selected demographic variables

S.No.	Variable	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Age		
	• 11-13 yrs	15	6
	• 14-16 yrs	109	43.6
2.	• 17-19y	126	50.4
	Menarche age		
	• 11-13 yrs	98	39.2
3.	• 14-16 yrs	152	60.8
	Educational status		
	• Informal education	4	1.6
	• Primary education	22	8.8
4.	• Secondary education	107	42.8
	• Higher education	117	46.8
	School going		
	• Yes	201	80.4
5.	• No	49	19.6
	Type of family		
	• Joint	79	31.6
	• Nuclear	167	66.8
6.	• Extended	4	1.6
	Religion		
	• Hindu	208	83.2
	• Muslim	34	13.6
	• Sikh	6	2.4
7.	• Christian	2	0.8
	Mother's education		
	• Informal	79	31.6
	• Primary	67	26.8
	• Secondary	73	29.2
	• Higher	31	12.4
8.	Education on menstrual hygiene		
	• Yes	215	86
	• No	35	14
	Source of education		n=215
	• Mother	115	54
	• Friend	33	15
	• Neighbor	0	0
	• Sister	67	31
• Mass media	0	0	
9.	Toilet facility		
	• Yes	229	91.6
	• No	21	8.4
10.	Change your pad in school/workplace		
	• Yes	34	13.6
	• Sometimes	52	20.8
	• No	129	51.6
	• Not applicable	35	14.0

Table no .1 Illustrates that approximately more than half (50.4%) of participants were within the age group of 17-19 yrs. Approximately half (43.6%) of participants were with in the age group of 14- 16 yrs.(6%) of girls were with in the age group of 11- 13 yrs. Two third (60.8%) participants were having menarche age between 14 – 16 yrs. One third (39.2%) participants were having menarche age 11- 13 yrs . Approximately half (46.8%) of participants were having higher education. Approximately half (42.8%) of participants were having secondary education. Majority (80.4%) of the participants were having toilet facility in their home . Every fifth (19.6%) participants were not having toilet facility in their home. Majority of girls were belonging to nuclear

family that is (66.8 %).Two third (66.8%) participants were having nuclear family .One third (31.6%) were having joint family .Majority (83.2%) of the participants were belongs to hindu religion .Every sixth (13.6%) of participants were belongs to Muslim religion. One third (31.6%) of the participants were having informal education .Every fifth (29.2%) of participants were having secondary education .Every fifth (26.8%) of the participants were having primary education. Majority (86%) of the participants were having education on menstrual hygiene .Approximately more than half (54%) of participants were having information from their mother regarding menstrual hygiene .One third (31%) of participants were having information from their sister regarding menstrual hygiene.

Table no.2 Frequency (f) and percentage (%) distribution of samples according to their menstrual hygiene

S.No.	Variable	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Daily bath during menses		
	• Yes	137	54.8
	• No	113	45.2
2.	Cleaning of perineal area		
	• Only water	11	4.4
	• Warm water	203	81.2
	• Soap and water	9	3.6
	• Antiseptic solution	27	10.8
3.	Pubic hairs removal		
	• Yes	102	40.8
	• No	148	59.2
	Specify the method for removing hairs		n = 102
	• Hair removing cream		
	• Saving with razor	79	77.45
	• Trimming your hairs	16	15.68
	• Other methods	0	0
		7	6.86
4.	How often do you Change your panty		
	• Stained with blood	46	18.4
	• Once in a day	133	53.2
	• Twice in a day	59	23.6
	• As per my wish	12	4.8

Table no. 2 illustrates that the more than half (54.8%) of participants were taking bath during menses. Approximately half (45.2%) were not taking bath during menses. Majority (81.2%) were cleaning their perineal area with warm water. Approximately more than half (59.2%) of the participants were not removing their pubic hairs. Approximately half (40.8%) of participants were not removing their pubic hairs. Majority (77.45%) were using hair removing cream for removing their pubic hairs . Approximately more than half (53.2%) were changing their panty once in a day during menses.

Table no.3 Frequency (f) and percentage (%) distribution of samples according to their menstrual absorbant

S.No.	Variable	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Type of menstrual absorbent		
	• Sanitary pad	165	66
	• Old cloth	15	6
	• New cloth	15	6
	• Both (cloth and sanitary pad)	55	22
2.	Dispose used cloth / sanitary pad		
	• cloth	Burn the 94	37.6
	• routine dustbin	Throw it in 13	5.2
	• Throw it on road side		
3.	Wrap your pad after using it		
	• Yes	226	90.4
	• No	24	9.6
	Material used for wrap the pad		n=226
	• Paper	89	39.2
	• Plastic	57	25.1
	• Paper than plastic	80	35.7

Table no.3 Illustrates that the approximately more than half (66%) of participants were using sanitary pad as menstrual absorbant. Approximately More than half (57.2%) of participants were disposing their pad into the dustbin. One third (37.6%) of participants were disposing their pad by burning .Majority (90.4%) of participants were wrapping their pad before disposing it One third (39.2%) of participants were wrapping their pad with paper before disposing it. One third (35.7%) of participants were wrapping their pad paper and plastic before disposing it .

Table no.3 (a) Cloth pad practice

S.No.	Variable	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Reuse of menstrual absorbent cloth		
	• Yes	22	25.88
	• Some times	16	18.82
	• No	47	55.29
2.	Wash your cloth pad		n= 38
	• Plain water	0	0
	• Soap and water	31	81.57
	• Warm water	0	0
	• Antiseptic solution with water	7	18.42
3.	Dry the cloth pad		
	• Outside house in the sun light	28	73.68
	• Inside the house	10	26.31

Table no: 3 (a) Illustrates that more than half (55.29%) of participants were not reusing their cloth pad. Every fifth (25.88%) of participants were reusing their cloth pad. Majority (81.57%) of the participants were washing their cloth pad with soap and water .One third (73.68 %) of participants dried their cloth pad outside the house in sunlight. One fifth (26.31%) of participants were dried their cloth pad inside the house.

Table no. 3(b) samples using only cloth pad

S.No.	Variable	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Change your sanitary pad per day		
	• ≤ 2 times	2	6.6
	• 3-4 times	21	70.0
	• 4-5 times	4	13.4
	• ≥ 5 times	1	3.3
	• As per need	2	6.6

Table no: 3 (b) Illustrates that approximately one third (70%) of participants were changing their cloth pad 3-4 times in a day.

Table no. 3(c) Samples using sanitary pad

S.No.	Variable	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Change your sanitary pad per day		
	• ≤ 2 times	12	7.29
	• 3-4 times	95	57.57
	• 4-5 times	30	18.18
	• ≥ 5 times	17	10.3
	• As per need	11	6.66

Table no: 5 (b) Illustrates that approximately more than half (57.57%) of participants were changing their cloth pad 3- 4 times in a day.

IV. Discussion

Findings related to socio demographic variables and practices to menstrual hygiene of present study are supported by different studies such as N. Karout, S.M. Hawai and S. Altuwajri ⁴, also stated the similar findings that menarche age was 14 years and maximum of girls were having age between 17- 19 yrs and their educational status was higher education. P.J. Parameaswari, P.M. Udayshankar, S. Cynthia, M.D. Vidhyashree,

A. Abiselvi and Syed Iqbal Sultan⁵, also stated similar findings that majority of the girls were hindu . Subhash B. Thakre, Sushama S. Thakre, Monica Reddy, Nidhi Rathi, Ketaki Pathak, Suresh ughade⁶ also concluded that girls preferred home rather than school to change their pad. Divya Raina & Geeta Balodi⁷ finds similar result that in majority of girls were having source of education was mother and has toilets in their home .Findings of the study showed that More than half of the girls were taking bath during menses . majority of the adolescent girls were cleaning their external genitalia with warm water. This study was done in Uttarakhand and weather of this place was cold for maximum months so for this reason majority of the girls were using hot water for cleaning their external genitalia .More than half of the adolescent girls were not removing their pubic hairs. Approximately one third of adolescent girls were using hair removing cream for removing their pubic hairs . More than half of adolescent girls were changing their panty once in a day during menses. The result supported by Anju Ade, Ramesh Patil⁸, support the findings of present study that majority of girls were taking bath during menses. Findings of the study showed that one third of girls were using sanitary pad .The commonly practiced methods of disposal of the used absorbent were, wrapping it in paper and disposing it in a routine dustbin. The result was also supported by J. Parameaswari, P.M. Udayshankar, S. Cynthia, M.D. Vidhyashree, A. Abiselvi and Syed Iqbal Sultan⁵, that one third of the girls were using sanitary pad and maximum of girls were wrapping it and disposing it into the dustbin. Findings of the study showed that more than half of the adolescent girls were not reusing their menstrual absorbant cloth .Majority of girls were washing their cloth pad with soap and water. One third of participants dried their cloth pad outside the house in sunlight. One fifth of participants were dried their cloth pad inside the house.

The result supported by Singh Amit Kumar, Bandhani Aradhana, Malik Nidhi⁹, reported similar findings that majority of the girls were washing their reused cloth pad with soap and water. Findings were further supported by study done by Divya Raina & Geeta Balodi⁷, reported similar findings that one third of girls were dried their used cloth under sunlight. In present study one third of the adolescent girls were changing their pad 3- 4 times in a day. Singh Amit Kumar, Bandhani Aradhana, Malik Nidhi⁹, support the findings of present study that girls were changing their pad 3 times in a day.

Recommendations

(1) A similar study can be conducted on a large sample. (2) An experimental study can be conducted by giving structure teaching programme on menstrual hygiene to experimental group.

Limitations

The study was confined to specific adolescent girls and with small sample size and limited area. Hence the generalization of the findings outside of the study area is limited.

V. Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it is concluded that among two hundred fifty of adolescent girls ,majority of the girls were maintaining their proper menstrual hygiene.

Ethical clearance : Ethical committee permission was obtained from the Ethical committee of Swami Rama Himalayan University, Dehradun.

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Conflict of Interest : Nil

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