

Assess the knowledge and practices among rural adolescent School going girls regarding menstruation in selected Schools of Haryana.

Ms. Swapna M K

Assistant Professor, Amity College of Nursing, Gurgaon

Abstract

Adolescence is defined as the period of transition from childhood to adulthood the World health organization has defined adolescence as the age group of 10-19 years. The onset of menstruation is one of the most important changes occurring among girls during the adolescent years. Handling menstruation is considered a major challenge for every adolescent girl, which is a normal body function in females. The profile of the woman's reproductive health is greatly influenced by the girl's reaction to menarche, her beliefs and attitude towards menstruation, and more important her behaviour during it. Girls are affected by old women tales, thus, early in the first few years during the puberty period; a young girl is conditioned to the idea of dysmenorrhea. She may be discouraged from somatic, outdoor activities, discontinue bathing, and she may be encouraged to stay at home for a day from school. The aim of the study is to assess the knowledge and practices among rural adolescent girls regarding menstruation. A cross sectional Questionnaire based study among adolescent school going girls was conducted in selected rural schools of Haryana. One hundred adolescent girls of age group 13-17 years were involved in this study. Adolescence is one of the most crucial periods in the life of an individual, because between these ages, many key biological, social, economical, demographic and cultural events occur that set the stage for adult life. During this phase of growth the girls first experience menstruation and related problems which is marked by feelings of anxiety and eagerness to know about this natural phenomenon.

Introduction

Menstruation is a phenomenon unique to the females. Menstrual hygiene deals with the special health care needs and requirements of women during menstrual cycle. Menstrual hygiene and management will directly contribute to the Millennium Development Goal (MDG-2) on Universal Education and MDG-3 on Gender Equality and Women Empowerment. Menstruation is still regarded as something unclean or dirty in Indian society. Isolation of the menstruating girls/women and restrictions being imposed on them in the family, have reinforced a negative attitude towards this phenomenon. Menstrual practices are clouded by taboos and socio-cultural restrictions even today, resulting in ignorance of the scientific facts and hygienic health practices, necessary for maintaining positive reproductive health. During menstruation period, shedding of the blood leaves the genital tract moist and lowered acidity of the vagina making it vulnerable for infections by bacteria and other organisms in reproductive tract. This in turn may lead to discomfort, pain, foul smelling discharge and sense of embarrassment among them. In developing countries like India and other third world countries it is reported that many of the menstruating women/girls do not follow healthy measures for maintaining the menstrual hygiene.

Women belonging to lower socio-economic strata, who cannot afford to buy sanitary napkins, use a cotton cloth which is usually a torn piece of cloth from their old sarees or other dresses and use them throughout their periods with infrequent changing. Sometimes scarcity of water adds up to them depriving them of washing the cloth. Such unhealthy menstrual practice is associated with many complications of recurrent reproductive tract infections like premature births, stillbirths, miscarriages, infertility problems, carcinoma of cervix, etc.

Technology offers sanitary pads, tampons etc. to the women to decide what suits her best. Very few mothers are ready to share the information regarding menstruation which is of paramount significance of their daughters. A key priority for women and girls is to have the necessary knowledge, facilities and the cultural environment to manage menstruation hygienically and with dignity.

Although adolescence is a healthy period of life, many are often less informed, less experienced, and less comfortable in accessing reproductive health information and services. This leads to culmination in repression of feelings which can cause intense mental stress and seek health advice from quacks and persons having inadequate knowledge.

This study was planned to evaluate adolescent secondary school girls' knowledge of menstruation and menstrual hygiene, as well as their practices of menstrual hygiene. In many parts of the developing countries, a culture of silence surrounds the topic of menstruation and related issues. As a result many young girls lack appropriate and sufficient information regarding menstrual hygiene. This may result in incorrect and unhealthy behavior during their menstrual period. Poor personal hygiene and unsafe sanitary conditions result in the girls facing many gynecological problems.

Menstruation and its practices are still clouded by taboos and socio-cultural restrictions resulting in rural adolescent girls remaining ignorant of the scientific facts and hygienic health practices, which sometimes result into adverse health outcomes. Our traditional society discourages open discussion on these issues. Such type of study will help to plan and implement necessary educational program or interventions to create awareness and prioritize problems.

Objectives

1. To assess the knowledge of adolescent school going girls regarding menstruation
2. To assess the Practices of adolescent school going girls regarding menstruation

Review of Literature

Adhikari(2007) conducted a study on knowledge and practice regarding menstrual hygiene in rural adolescent girls. This study conducted on 150 adolescents girls of age between 13-15 years from three schools. The study found that they were not properly maintaining the menstrual hygiene. Majority of girls know about Physiologic process. 36.7% knew that is caused by hormones.

Amit kumar singh ,et.al., 2013 conducted a study on knowledge and practices about menstruation among adolescent female in uttrakand. A cross sectional survey of randomized sample of 200 females

were interviewed through Questionnaire method at villages. The study revealed that 32.5% girls had the prior information and knowledge regarding menstruation before attaining the menarche. 32% girls reported uterus as the organ from where menstrual blood comes, 43.5% girls reported mother as the first informant followed by. This study revealed that low level of knowledge and various misconceptions among adolescent girls regarding menstruation which has become a silent epidemic that demolish womens life which is closely interrelated with poor menstrual hygiene.

Dhara J Prajapati(2012) menstrual hygiene a cross sectional study was undertaken in a rural area of Kheda district randomly selected 200 adolescent girls were interviewed using predesigned pretested questionnaire. The result evident that 47.5% participants were aware about menstruation before their menarche and the most important sources of information were mothers in 54% girls and 10.5% respondents used only sanitary napkins during menstruation 77% changed absorbent 1 to 2 times a day.

Anjali Mahajan et.al., 2017 conducted a study on knowledge and practices of menstrual hygiene among rural and urban school going adolescent girls. A community based cross sectional study was conducted in 387 school going girls. The past study was undertaken among adolescent girls. Only 36.5% of the girls were aware of menstruation before menarche. The major source of information about menstruation for them was found to be their mothers. More than three fourth of the girls in the study were not aware of the cause and the source of the bleeding. The mean age of menarche in the study subject was 12.85%.

Santra.S (2017) conducted a study on knowledge regarding menstruation and practices related to maintenance of menstrual hygiene among the women of reproductive age group in a slum. The objective of the study is to elicit the knowledge regarding menstruation among the women of reproductive age group. A community based observational cross sectional study was conducted at slum. A total of 160 menstruating women of the age group between 15-45 years were included. The results shows that only 32 women (28%) had idea before menarche regarding menstruation 65% women used only sanitary pad and cloth piece. Prevalence of sanitary pad use was significantly higher among these aged <25.

Methodology

A cross sectional Questionnaire based study among adolescent school going girls was conducted in selected rural schools of Haryana. One hundred adolescent girls of age group 13-17 years were involved in this study. A predesigned pretested semi a structured questionnaire was prepared for data collection. The adolescent school going girls were explained about the rationale of the study and were assured privacy. The tool was developed by the researcher with the guidance of experts. The questionnaire includes

- I. Demographic data
- II. Source of Information regarding Menstruation
- III. Knowledge regarding Menstruation among adolescent girls
- III. Practices regarding Menstruation among adolescents girls

The Pilot study was conducted before the main study and it elicited that the study was feasible. The tool was found to be highly reliable and valid. During the data collection the researcher introduced herself to each subject and they were informed about the purpose of study

Results

Table. No : 1 Sources of Information regarding Menstrual Hygiene among Adolescent Girls.

Sources of Information	Frequency N= 100	Percentage
Mother	27	27%
Sister	22	22%
Friends	20	20%
Teachers	16	16%
Books	15	15%

Figure. No : 1 Sources of Information regarding Menstrual Hygiene among Adolescent Girls.

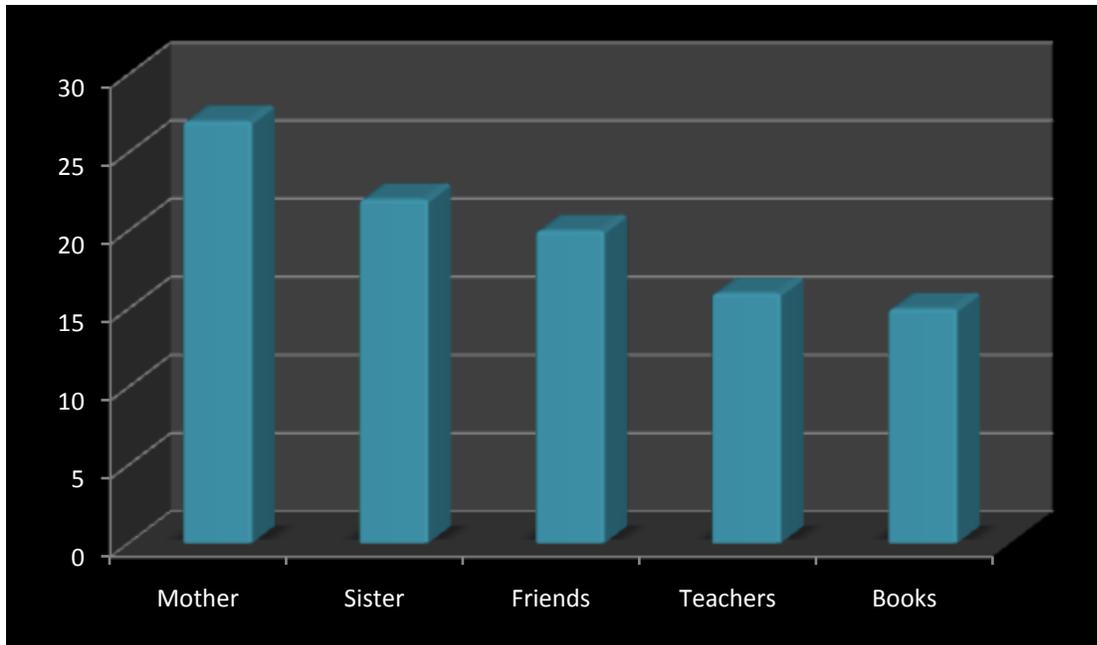


Table.No:2 .Assessment of Level of Knowledge regarding Menstrual Hygiene among Adolescent Girls.

Knowledge Level	Percentage (%)
Adequate Knowledge	35
Partial Knowledge	40
Inadequate Knowledge	25

Figure. No:2. Percentage of Knowledge regarding Menstrual Hygiene among Adolescent Girls.

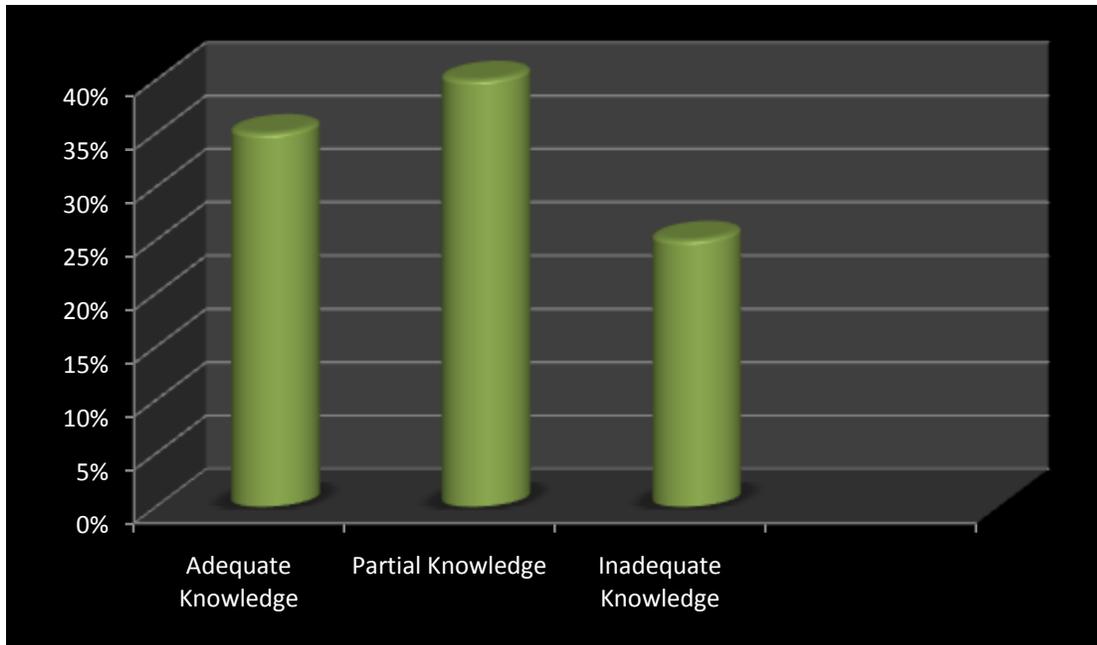
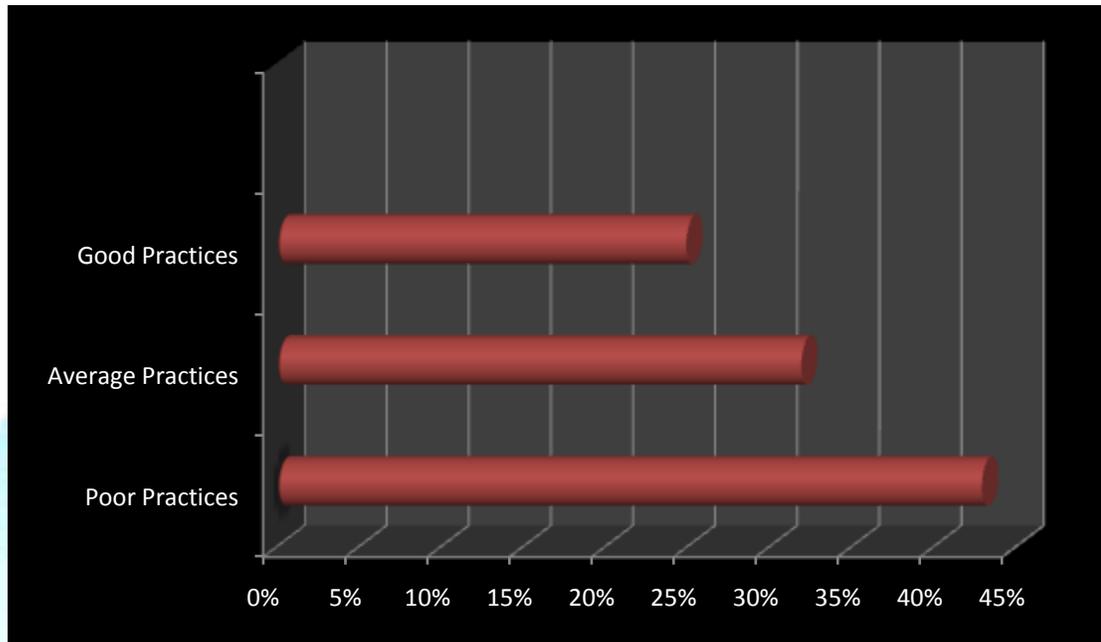


Table.No: 3 Assessment of Level of Practice Regarding Menstrual Hygiene among Adolescent Girls

Knowledge Level	Percentage (%)
Poor Practices	56
Average Practices	23
Good Practices	21

Figure.No: 3 Assessment of Level of Practice Regarding Menstrual Hygiene among Adolescent Girls



Discussions

The present study reveals that the majority of adolescentschool going girls were under the age group of 13-17years. About 27% of respondents reveals that their source of Information regarding menstruation is from their mothers. The respondents have only 35% Knowledge on menstruation and only 21% were practicing right method at the time of menstruation. The hygiene related practices of adolescent girls during menstruation are of very important and it affects their health by causing infections. Most of the respondents also have misconception about the menstruation.

Conclusion

Since the knowledge regarding menstruation was not adequate for the respondents and also poor practices among girls regarding menstruation is identified and majority responds as their source of

information regarding menstruation is mothers. The knowledge and right practices during menstruation can be discussed by teachers also. Awareness regarding the importance of menstruation and how it affects the health is very important. The adolescent girls should be educated about the facts of menstruation physiological process and also about the significance of menstruation and very important menstrual hygiene.

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