



Research Paper

Menstruation Hygiene Practices Among Adolescent Girls: A Sociological Study of Chandannagar Village in Aul Block, Kendrapara District, Odisha

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Abstract

Menstruation, also known as a period or monthly, is the regular discharge of blood and mucosal tissue (known as menses) from the inner lining of the uterus through the vagina. . The typical length of time between the first day of one period and the first day of the next is 21 to 45 days in young women, and 21 to 31 days in adult an average of 28 days. Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) is defined as 'Women and adolescent girls using a clean menstrual management material to absorb or collect blood that can be changed in privacy as often as necessary for the duration of the menstruation period, using soap and water for washing the body as required, and having access to facilities to dispose of used menstrual management materials. A good hygienic practice such as the use of sanitary pads and adequate washing of the genital area are essential during menstruation is important. In this paper the researcher uses the simple random sampling from 100 respondents. This study explore the hygienic and health practices of adolescent girls related to menstruation. This study revealed that menstrual hygiene was unsatisfactory among adolescent girls. This was because of low level of education and improper assumptions about the phenomenon of menstruation o find out the awareness level of adolescent girls on menstrual hygiene.

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I. Introduction

Menstruation, also known as a period or monthly, is the regular discharge of blood and mucosal tissue (known as menses) from the inner lining of the uterus through the vagina. The first period usually begins between twelve and fifteen years of age, a point in time known as menarche (Sangeeta Kansal et. al 2015). However, periods may occasionally start as young as eight years old and still be considered normal. The average age of the first period is generally later in the developing world, and earlier in the developed world. The typical length of time between the first day of one period and the first day of the next is 21 to 45 days in young women, and 21 to 31 days in adult an average of 28 days. Bleeding usually lasts around 2 to 7 days menstruation stops occurring after menopause, which usually occurs between 45 and 55 years of age. Periods also stop during pregnancy and typically do not resume during the initial months of breastfeeding (Rabindra Nath Sinha et al 2018). This cycle results in the thickening of the lining of the uterus, and the growth of an egg, which is required for pregnancy. The egg is released from an ovary around day fourteen in the cycle; the thickened lining of the uterus provides nutrients to an embryo after implantation. If pregnancy does not occur, the lining is released in that is known as menstruation (Baishakhi Paria et al 2014). The signs and symptoms of menstruation may include headache, acne, pains in the low abdomen, tiredness, food cravings, breast soreness. Up to 80% of women report having some symptoms prior to menstruation. Common signs and symptoms include acne, tender breasts, bloating, feeling tired, irritability, and mood changes. These may interfere with normal life, therefore qualifying as premenstrual syndrome, in 20 to 30% of women. In 3 to 8%, symptoms are severe (Debadeep Kalita et al 2019). A lack of periods, known as amenorrhea, is when periods do not occur by age 15 or have not occurred in 90 days. Other problems with the menstrual cycle include painful periods and abnormal bleeding or heavy bleeding (Prakash Mathiyalagenet et al 2017).

Menstruation hygiene

WHO has defined adolescence as the period between 10-19 years of life. Adolescent girls constitute about 1/5th of total female population in the world. Adolescence in girls has been recognized as a special period which signifies the transition from girlhood to womanhood (Rajanbir Kaur et al2017). Menstruation is a phenomenon unique to all females. In India generally menstruation is considered as unclean. Isolation of the menstruating girls and restrictions being imposed on them in the family, have reinforced a negative attitude towards this phenomenon (Dr. L.Vijayasree2016). Young adolescent girls tend to be less prepared for MHM and suffer from anxiety, apprehensions, fear and shame during their menses (Gunjan Kumar et al2017). In addition, pre-existing social taboos and cultural restraints during menstruation mean that managing menstruation is a greater challenge during disasters. There is limited access to reproductive health services and safe menstrual hygiene materials during disasters (Shantanu Sharma et al 2017).

The most of the adolescent girls had incomplete and inaccurate information, and low level of awareness about the menstrual physiology and hygiene. Mothers, television, friends, teachers and relatives were the main sources which provided information on menstruation to the adolescent girls (Subhas S.Thakre et al2011). Good hygienic practices such as the use of sanitary pads and adequate washing of the genital area 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. 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.

Importance of maintaining good hygiene during menstruation

Maintaining good hygiene is vital for health. If hygienic practices are not followed during periods the women face various health problems such as urine infection, rashes, chance of infertility, and rare chance of cervical cancer (Sambodana Mohanty et al 2015). Not keeping clean during menstruation invites lots of disease-causing bacteria's. They not only affect externally but can also lead to urine infection which isn't only painful for stomach and lower abdomen but also affects the functioning of kidneys.

Practices followed in menstruation

Menstruation and menstrual hygiene practices still face many social, cultural, and religious restrictions which are a big barrier in the path of menstrual hygiene management. In some parts of the country there were restrictions on bathing during menstruation. Washing and drying the cloth secretly or in a hidden corner. It was also believed that menstrual fluids may be misused for black magic, so women should wash the cloth only at night when others were asleep (Bekkalale Chikkalingaiah Sowmya et. al2014).

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Here the researcher examined there are lot of cultural traits and restrictions are seen among the girl during the menstruation cycle and also it has been seen that they lack awareness about the scientific and knowledge of menstruation so that many times they suffered from disease. (A Dasgupta M Sarkar2007).

Most of the girls follow the old social customs and further more in many times girls were not going to class during the menstruation cycle. (Bekkalale Chikkalingaiah Sowmya et.al 2014)

Here the research explore that menstruation is still viewed as something unclean or messy in the public eye and it is connected with misconception and social controls. The poor menstrual cleanliness has been a critical issue in the life of a girls. (Sangeeta Kansal et.a(2015).

Here the researcher revealed that most of the adolescent girls had inaccurate information about the menstrual hygiene. Mothers, television, friends, teachers and relatives were the main sources which provided information on menstruation to the adolescent girls. (Subhas S. Thakre et. al(2011).

III. Methodology

In this present study exploratory and descriptive research design was used by the researcher to examine and describe the issues related to the menstruation hygiene of adolescent girls. The random sampling technique was applied for this research work for selecting the respondents and the sample size is 100. The study relies on both primary and secondary data. Primary data was collected from the field by interview schedule and observation and the secondary data was collected from secondary source like books, journal, articles, and newspapers.

Statement of the Research Problem

Due to lack of knowledge and awareness among women, this period of adolescence is marked with onset of menstruation. Among the adolescent girls who experienced menstruation for the first time, menstrual hygiene management (MHM) is constrained by practical, social, economic and cultural factors such as the

expense of commercial sanitary pads, lack of water and latrine facilities, lack of private rooms for changing sanitary pads, and limited education about the facts of menstrual hygiene . World Bank (2005) statistics indicated that students have been absent from school for 4 days in every 4th week because of menstruation.

Objectives

- To study the socio-economic background of the respondents.
- To examine the hygienic and health practices of adolescent girls related to menstruation.

IV. Data Analysis And Discussion

Age of respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage
10-15	50	50%
15-20	50	50%
Total	100	100

Source-Field survey 2019, Chandannagar village, Kendrapara district

The above table revealed that 50% belong to 10-15 age groups and 50% belongs to 15-20 age groups .It was pointed that the majority of the respondents belong to within the age group of 15-20 years.

Social categories of the respondents

Caste	Frequency	Percentage
General	60	60%
OBC	15	15%
SC	15	15%
ST	0	0%
Total	100	100

Source-Field survey 2019, Chandannagar village, Kendrapara district .

The above table shows that 60% respondents belong to General Category, 15% respondents belong to OBC category and 15% belong to SC category.

Uses of sanitary napkins and clothes

Types of Use	Frequency	Percentage
Napkin	65	65%
Cloth	12	12%
Both	23	23%
Total	100	100

Source-Field survey 2019, Chandannagar village, Kendrapara district

The above table shows that 65% of the respondents use sanitary napkin, 12% of the respondents use cloth and 23% of the respondents use both cloth and napkin.

Frequency of changing napkins

Frequency of changing napkin/cloth	Frequency	Percentage
2	20	20%
3	46	46%
4	34	34%
Total	100	100

Source-Field survey 2019, Chandannagar village, Kendrapara district

The above table shows that 20% of the respondents change their napkin twice in a day, 46% of the respondents change their napkin thrice in a day and 34% respondents change their napkin four times in a day.

Products use for cleanliness

Product use for cleaning vagina	Frequency	Percentage
Soap	85	85%
V wash gel	5	5%
Only water	5	5%
Total	100	100

Source-Field survey 2019, Chandannagar village, Kendrapara district.

The above table shows that the 85% of the respondents use soap for clean her vagina and the 5% use V wash gel and 5% use only water .

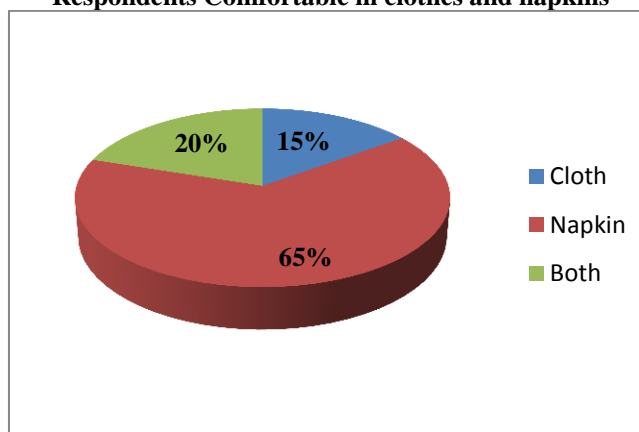
Vaginal infection during menstruation

Vaginal infection	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	24	24%
No	76	76%
Total	100	100

Source-Field survey 2019, Chandannagar village, Kendrapara district

The above table revealed that the 24% respondent face vaginal infection during menstruation and 76% respondent don't face any vaginal infection during menstruation.

Respondents Comfortable in clothes and napkins



Source-Field survey 2019, Chandannagar village, Kendrapara district

The above chart shows that 15% of the respondents feel comfortable in cloth, 65% of the respondents feel comfortable in napkin and 20% of the respondents feel comfortable in both cloth and napkin.

V. Findings and Conclusion

Menstruation is an important indicator of reproductive health and development, thus menstrual hygienic practices are of major concern. The study shows that age of menstruating girls ranged from 12 to 18 years with maximum number of girls between 15 to 18 years of age. In the present study, the main age of menarche of the respondents was 12.7 years. 65% of the respondents use sanitary napkin, 12% of the respondents use cloth and 23% of the respondents use both cloth and napkin. Total 20% of the respondents change their napkin twice in a day, majority (46%) of the respondents change their napkin thrice in a day and 34% respondents change their napkin four times in a day. Majority (85%) of the respondents use soap for clean her vagina and the 5% use V wash gel and 5% use only water .24% respondent face vaginal infection during menstruation and 76% respondent don't face any vaginal infection during menstruation. Majority (65%) of respondents are feeling comfortable to use both napkin and clothes. This study revealed that menstrual hygiene

was unsatisfactory among adolescent girls. This was because of low level of education and improper assumptions about the phenomenon of menstruation. Hence, it is very crucial to educate girls about the physiological facts of menstruation, wipe off false taboos, and lead them to proper hygienic practices to safeguard themselves against reproductive tract infections. Various schools, Anganwadi health centers, social welfare foundations, and non-government organizations should stand to disseminate awareness about menstrual hygiene, pattern, and problems. In our study, since the majority of the girls were school dropouts, parental awareness plays a vital role in implementing hygienic practices among adolescent girls.

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