

## MENSTRUAL HYGIENE AMONG SCHOOL GOING ADOLESCENT GIRLS

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### ABSTRACT

#### Background

*In order for women and girls to live healthy, productive and dignified lives, it is essential for them to manage menstrual bleeding effectively. Menstrual hygiene is a taboo subject, many women in South Asia are uncomfortable discussing menstruation in public. The first experience of menstruation is often associated with shame, fear, and agony. Several studies have indicated that menstruating girls are not aware of the biological reasons associated with menstruation.*

#### Aim and Objectives

*To evaluate adolescent school girls' knowledge and practice of menstruation, menstrual hygiene, and sanitation.*

#### Materials and Methods

*This is a cross-sectional study conducted on a study population of 486 school going adolescent girls studying 8th to 12<sup>th</sup> standards. The sample was derived from a Government Girls High School, Bengaluru. Girls who have attained menarche were included in the study. The study was carried out between June and September 2016.*

#### Results

*Out of the 486 girls studied 73.8% (n=359) of the girls were aged between 13-15 yrs. of age with a mean age of 14.2±1.3 years. The mean age of menarche was 12.6±1.1 years. Only 31.06% (n=151) girls were aware of menstruation before menarche. Among the girls without prior knowledge of menstruation 58.5% (n=196) girls were frightened and 41.5% (n=139) were worried on seeing the first menstruation. The main source of information about menstruation and menstrual hygiene was their mother (46.5%, n=226). 58.23% (n=283) girls reported that menstruation refers to bleeding from the stomach, 33.5% (n=163) girls knew that menstruation is uterine bleeding. 58.7% (n=285) girls did not know the reason for menstruation. 73.1% (n=355) of girls knew the duration of the menstrual cycle. 89.3% (n=434) girls used sanitary pads during menstruation, 8.1% (n=39) girls used cloth pieces and 2.7% (n=13) used tampons. 97.3% of the girls were not allowed to go to temple, 83% girls were not allowed to cook and 92% percent girls were not allowed to take rest during the day*

#### Conclusions

*The present study highlights the need for adolescent girls to have accurate and adequate information about menstruation. The study revealed that the knowledge on menstruation is poor and the hygiene practiced is often sub-optimal. Awareness among adolescent girls regarding menstruation has increased in recent times but there is a lot more to be done to improve menstruation and menstrual health management awareness among adolescent girls for addressing poor menstrual health*

**KEYWORDS:** *Menstruation, Menstrual Hygiene, Awareness & Healthy Practices*

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