



## Original Article

# Mensuration Hygiene among Adolescent Girls: Existing Scenario in Mewat, Haryana

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### ARTICLE INFO

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Adolescent in girls has been recognized as a special period in their life cycle that requires specific and special attention. Rural slums are under Rural Training Health center Nagina in Sheeed Hassen Khan Mewati Medical College in Mewat, Haryana. A Community based survey was conducted to carry out the current scenario of menstrual hygiene in girls of village Nagina, dist-Mewat. For this girls belonging to age group of 10-19 year was studied for parameters like age of menstruation, use of sanitary pads, disposal of sanitary pads, personal hygiene, cultural beliefs etc. Age of attainment of menarche ranged from eleven to sixteen years. Only girls were aware regarding menstruation prior to the attainment of menarche. Peer group, sister/mother were found to be the first source of information regarding menstruation. Many girls reported nothing use old cloth, free days for protection during menstruation. Some girl not taking bath first three days during menses. And most of girl's school absent during menses due to feeling embarrassed and dysmenorrhea. Few girls were restricted to attend religious occasions during menstruation.

**Keywords:** - Adolescent girls, Menarche, Menstrual hygiene, Genital tract infections, Rural area

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In India, there are several cultural traditions, myths and misconceptions related to menstruation.<sup>1</sup> Onset of menstruation is one of the most important changes occurring during adolescence. WHO has defined adolescence as the period between 10-19 years of life.<sup>2</sup> Adolescent girl constitutes about 1/5<sup>th</sup> total female population in the world. Menstruation is the vaginal bleeding that occurs in adolescent girls and women as result menstrual hygiene

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product categories and should be close based on amount of flow experienced.

Adolescent in girls has been recognized as a special period in their life cycle that requires specific and special attention. This period is marked with onset of menarche. Menstruation is a phenomenon unique to all female. It is still considered as something unclean or dirty in Indian society <sup>1</sup>. Menstruation is a major stage in a girl puberty. It is one of several physical signs that a girl is becoming a woman. Menstruation is generally considered as unclean leading to isolation of the menstruation girls and restrictions imposed on them in the family. <sup>3</sup> These practices have reinforced negative attitude towards menstruation in girls. Women having a better knowledge regarding menstrual hygiene and safe menstrual practices are less vulnerable to reproductive tract infections and its consequences. <sup>4</sup> So, the present study was undertaken to study knowledge, status of hygiene and practices regarding menstruation among adolescent girls in the rural slums area mewat.

Challenges: -

- (1) Awareness and practices menstrual hygiene to know level of awareness and practices menstrual hygiene among adolescent girls. To assess the availability of sanitary products means of disposal of these products to adolescents
- (2) To assess the role of interventions' like health education and provision of sanitary products in reusing school absenteeism among adolescent girls.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

The Rural Health training centre at Nagina Mewat is Rural Field practice area, 25 K.m among from SHKMGMC, Nalhar, attached to the Dept. Community Medicine. The field practice area is divided into 4 slum area out of which one are i.e. Choti Ghour, Kasiyawali Masjeed, near chakari.(Saini Mohalla) was selected by simple random sampling method .The population of village Nagina area was approximately 12568. 75 families will be included in survey.

The govt. of Haryana started menstrual hygiene program in May 2014. All unmarried, non-pregnant, non-lactating adolescent girls (10-19 years) with attainment of menarche were included in the study. A community based cross-sectional study was carried out from May 2015 to Nov. 2015. After obtaining informed consent, information regarding menstrual hygiene was recorded in predesigned pre- tested Performa.

## 3. RESULT

Out of total 72 adolescent girls, 17 girls (23.3%) girls have attained menarche at the age group of 10-12 years. Maximum number of girls 38.4% have attained menarche in the age ranged between 13-15 years. Majority of girls received information regarding menstruation from their pear group 35.6% followed by T.V/Media, 16.4% New

paper/other media 14% and from their family members (mother 20.5%, sister17.8%). Only 1.4% girls received information from their teacher and 2.7% girls received information from Asha Worker. 27.4% girls have reported use of commercially available sanitary Napkin and free days as shown in table.1.

**Table 1: General information regarding age, onset and material used for menstruation in girls of village-Nagina, District-Mewat.**

Categories		No of responses	Percentage
Age of adolescent	Less then 10 y	1	1.4%
	10-12y	17	23.3%
	13-15	28	38.4%
	More then 15y	27	37.0%
Use of material during menstruation	Clothes New	4	5.5%
	Reuse of clothes	11	15.1%
	Commercial sanitary napkin & Free day	20	27.4%
	None (not used)	8	11.0%
Information sources	Pear group	26	35.6%
	Mother	15	20.5%
	Sister	13	17.8%
	Teacher	1	1.4%
	T.V/Media	12	16.4%
	New paper/other media	1	1.4%
	Asha Worker	2	2.7%

Our survey showed that pain in abdomen 20.5% was found to be most frequent complaint during menstruation followed by headache /irritation 6.8%, Nausea/ vomiting 5.5%, Palpitation/ gidding 2.7% and loss of appetite 2.7% as shown in table.2

**Table 2: Health related problem during menstruation in girls of village-Nagina, District-Mewat.**

Categories		No of responses	Percentage
Health problem during menstruation	Pain in abdomen	15	20.5%
	Nausea/vomiting	4	5.5%
	Headache/irritation	5	6.8%
	Palpitation/gidding	2	2.7%
	Loss of appetite	2	2.7%

It was further noted that 23.3% girls were not going to school, 11.0% were going to school and 24.7% girls school leaving. The main reason for their absence comes out to be that most of the girls feel embarrassed (8.2 %) and rest are due to lack of privacy/ toilet/other (4.1%), cultural factor(1.4%) etc (table. 3).

**Table 3: Reason from Absentism during menstruation in girls of village-Nagina, District-Mewat.**

Categories		No of responses	Percentage
Absent from school	Going to school	8	11.0%
	Not going school	17	23.3%
	School leaving	18	24.7%
Reason from	Cultural factor	1	1.4%

<b>absentism</b>	Feeling Embarrassed	6	8.2%
	Dysmenorrhea	10	13.7%
	Lack of privacy/toilet/other	3	4.1%
<b>Religious</b>	Hindu	38	52.1%
	Muslim	36	49.3%

Table 4 showed that 20.5% girls not know about free days' napkin and 5.5% girls not used free days due to low quality. 8.2% girls not used free day due to family pressure and 5.5% due to religious causes and 15% girls not used free days, due to irregular govt. supply. 6.8% girls feel skin problem/ other irritation from free day.

11.0% girls have reported nothing to use and 15.1% girls have reported use of old clothes (reuse of clothes). Regarding disposal of sanitary napkins, it is commonly seen that pads are thrown in dustbin 12.3%, thrown discriminately 2.7%, burn 1.4%, other (potter) 11.0% and majority by dumping 17.8%.

**Table 4: Disposal of Menstrual Material used during menstruation in girls of village-Nagina, District-Mewat.**

Categories		No of responses	Percentage
<b>Reason for not using free days</b>	Not known	15	20.5%
	Low Quality	4	5.5%
	Family pressure	6	8.2%
	Religious	4	5.5%
	Irregular govt. Supply	11	15.1%
	Skin problem/Other irritation	5	6.8%
<b>Disposal of menstrual material used</b>	Thrown in discriminately	2	2.7%
	Thrown in dustbin	9	12.3%
	Burn	1	1.4%
	Washing& Reusing	12	16.4%
	Dumping	13	17.8%
	Other(potter)	8	11.0%

Table 5 showed that 19.2% girls take bath during menses after 3 days. 23.3% girls' bath regularly and 23.3% girls not bathing during menstruation.

**Table 5: Personal hygiene care during menstruation in girls of village-Nagina, District-Mewat.**

Categories		No of responses	Percentage
Regular bathing during menses	No	17	23.3%
	Yes	17	23.3%
	After 3 days	14	19.2%

#### 4. DISCUSSION

In the present study maximum number of girl have attained menarche between 12-14 years. Few girls have reported blood flow between 3-6 days. Only 28 girls out of 74 adolescent girls were aware about menstruation before attainment of menarche. The mean age of menarche among reproductive age group women was 13-15 years. Similarly, a study by *Kamaljit et al*<sup>1</sup> found that the age of menstruating girls ranged from 10 to 15 years with maximum number of girls falling between 12 and 15 years of age, and the mean

age of menarche of the respondents has been observed as 12.5 years. A similar study conducted by *Deo DS*<sup>5</sup>.

Our study shows that majority of the adolescent girls preferred cloth pieces rather than sanitary pads as menstrual absorbent.<sup>6</sup> Only 35.13% adolescent girls used sanitary pads during menstruation. It was seen that the typical practice was to wash the material with cleanser after utilize and keep it hidden till the following menstrual period. To repel the material from prying eyes, these are here and there covered up in unhygienic spots. Protection for washing, changing, or cleaning reason for existing is something critical for legitimate menstrual cleanliness. In a study conducted in Rajasthan by *Khanna A.*<sup>4</sup> About 23.3% girls were not going to school. The main reason for their absence comes out to be that most of the girls feel embarrassed (8.2%) and rest are due to lack of privacy/toilet/other (4.1%), cultural factor (1.4%) etc.<sup>7</sup>

Regarding the method of disposal of the used material and 12.3% girls properly disposed the cloth pieces or sanitary pads used, the same finding were revealed in the study of *Dasgupta A & Sarkar M.*<sup>8</sup> Most of the women 15.1% reused cloth pieces. In a similar study conducted among in Mansoura, Egypt by *El-Gilany.*<sup>9</sup> The different aspects of personal hygiene were generally found to be poor, there is significant relationship between hygienic practices followed and presence of continuous supply of water and exclusive toilet of their family.<sup>10</sup> such as not changing pads regularly or at night and not bathing during menstruation, with lack of privacy being an important problem.

14.86% of the girls reused of old cloth during their and only 8.10% reported using readymade sanitary pads. Similarly, a study regarding menstrual hygiene practices by *Kamaljit et al.*<sup>1</sup> found that 68.7% girls used sanitary pads and 30 (10.0%) respondents practicing any cloth or rag/cotton during menstruation<sup>11</sup>. In present study 15 girls reported, mother as a first source of information close relation and better communication between mother and daughter may be the reason for present study finding 13 girls, reported, sister as a first source of information 11 girls out of 74 adolescent girls have, reported use of old clothes and sanitary napkin (nothing used) in menstruation days.<sup>12</sup> Poverty, high cost of sanitary pads, irregular govt. supply, and ignorance may be the reasons for present finding.

Ignorance among girls regarding use of sanitary pads during menstruation similar to present study. Different type of restrictions observed during menstruation similar to present findings.

#### 5. CONCLUSION

Menstrual cleanliness, an essential factor for preventing reproductive tract infection. Is a crucial part of wellbeing instruction for immature young ladies, instructive TV programs, prepared school medical caretakers'/wellbeing work force, spurred teachers, and proficient guardians can assume an essential job in transmitting the fundamental

message of right menstrual cleanliness to the pre-adult young lady of today.

Female educator was the primary wellspring of learning in rustic territories while it was the Mother in urban territory. Learning about regenerative framework, assurance of fetal sex, time of marriage, and so on was better among urban young ladies. Social taboos, for example, isolate sitting, limitation on going to class, and social capacity were more among country young ladies while sterile offices, for example, connected latrine, full divider washroom, adequate water, and so forth were less in rustic zones. This might be because of obliviousness and low level of training among moms of youthful young ladies.

Endeavors, for example, enhancing the female proficiency and wellbeing instruction on the different hazard elements ought to be made the strategy producers to increment menstrual cleanliness among provincial populace. Selection of top notch menstrual cleanliness will assume an essential job in counteractive action of RTI and Cancer of cervix among the ladies populace.

The result of the study revealed the mothers of adolescent girls were ignorant about informing daughter about menstruation prior of menarche. All mother irrespective of their education status should be taught to break their inhibitions about discussing with their daughter regarding menstruation before age of menarche. Thus it is important to encourage safe and hygiene practices among the adolescent girls, education regarding reproductive health and hygiene should be included as a part of school curriculum. Better hygiene practices can be adopted by making sanitary pads available at affordable prices (Social marketing). Government of India is starting a scheme of making available subsidized sanitary napkins to adolescent girls in age group of 10-19 years. Therefore, promoting positive attitudes towards management of menstruation and related problems among the adolescent s is the need of the hour.

#### **Recommendation**

A separate National Health policy concentrating on improvement of menstrual hygiene, thereby prevention of reproductive tract infections, is needed along with continued health education to measure the success of interventions aimed at improving the menstrual hygiene practices among women. Establishment of a comprehensive school health education program with instruction in hygienic practices related to menstruation. Universalized use of sanitary pads or absorbent material needs to be advocated to every adolescent girl by making the easy availability through social marketing.

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