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## RESEARCH ARTICLE

# MENSTRUAL HYGIENE AMONG SCHOOL GOING ADOLESCENT GIRLS

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### ABSTRACT

Adolescence is a significant period in the life of a woman. Adolescent girls often lack knowledge regarding reproductive health including menstruation which can be due to socio-cultural barriers in which they grow up. Menstruation is a physiological phenomenon which is unique to females that begins in adolescence. As the girls lack knowledge about menstruation and due to lack of hygiene, they are likely to suffer from RTI's, the investigators created an insight to conduct a study to assess the knowledge and attitude of menstrual hygiene among adolescent girls in 9th standard in selected school at Pondicherry. One group pretest- post test research design was chosen for the study. A formal structured teaching program was conducted after the pre test and later the post test was done. Among the subject there was significant difference between pre and post test knowledge and attitude score with respect to different variables.

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## INTRODUCTION

WHO defines adolescence as the period in human growth and development that occurs after childhood and before adulthood, from ages 10 to 19. It represents one of the critical transitions in the life span and is characterized by a tremendous pace in growth and change next to infancy. Biological processes drive many aspects of this growth and development, with the onset of puberty marking the passage from childhood to adolescence. This period has seen many changes over the past century namely the earlier onset of puberty, later age of marriage, urbanization, global communication, and changing sexual attitudes and behaviors.

It is a period of multiple transitions involving education, training, employment and unemployment, as well as transitions from one living circumstance to another.

Adolescence is a significant period in the life of a woman. Adolescent girls often lack knowledge regarding reproductive health including menstruation which can be due to socio-cultural barriers in which they grow up. Menstruation is a physiological phenomenon which is unique to females that begins in adolescence. Although adolescence is a healthy period of life, many adolescents are often less informed, less experienced, and less comfortable accessing reproductive health information and services than adults. 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 behaviour during their menstrual period. Also, many mothers lack correct information and skills to communicate about menstrual hygiene which they pass on to their children, leading to false attitudes, beliefs and practices in this regard. Learning about hygiene during menstruation is a vital aspect of health education for adolescent girls as patterns that are developed in adolescence are likely to persist into adult life.

### Need For the Study

Today's adolescents (24%) are tomorrow's adults who are the strength of the nation. Today's adolescent girls are our future homemakers. Most of the adolescents tend to be extremely unaware of their own body their physical well being and psychological changes.

Adolescents are an important resource of our country. Adolescents comprises 20% of the total world's population of which 85% live in developing countries. In India, adolescents comprises 21% of India's total population i.e, 190 million adolescents. According to the Indian census report 2011 puducherry had population of 946,600 of which male and female were 466,143 and 480,457 respectively. Total number of adolescent girls in puducherry is 75000. In regards to sex ratio, at present there are 1031 females on average on per 1000

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**Tool For Data Collection**

A structured Questionnaire is drafted for this purpose and the relevant data will be collected from the sample. Structured knowledge questionnaire regarding menstrual hygiene

1. Knowledge= 25 items
2. Attitude= 10 items

**Description of Tool**

The tool consist of section A, B & C

**Section A**

It contains demographic variable includes:

**Section B**

This section contains assessment of knowledge of students regarding menstrual hygiene. Closed ended questionnaire (Multiple choice questions) is used to assess the knowledge regarding menstrual hygiene. It consists of 25 questions.

The possible vital scores for closed ended questions on knowledge related to menstrual hygiene was a score of 25. A score of one mark was given for every correct answer and zero is given for every wrong answer.

**Scoring of knowledge questionnaire**

For the knowledge part, the range of scoring is given as follows

Sl.no	Frequency	Percentage	Category
1.			Inadequate knowledge
2.			Moderately adequate knowledge
3.			Adequate knowledge

**Section C**

This section contains attitude statement regarding menstrual hygiene which consists of 10 statements.

Attitude statements scores developed according to Likert's 5 point scale

i.e. 5- Strongly agree, 4- Agree, 3- Uncertain, 2- Disagree, 1- Strongly disagree.

For the attitude part, the range of scoring is given as follows:

Sl. No	Frequency	Percentage	Category
1.			Negative attitude
2.			Neutral attitude
3.			Positive attitude

**Data Collection Procedure**

Prior permission was obtained from the Principal of Government higher secondary school, Kadirkamam, Puducherry. The study was done for one week. The period of data collection was from 09-03-2015 to 13-03-2015. Students

from 9<sup>th</sup> standard English medium. Totally 50 students were gathered in class room.

On the first day of meeting the students, self introduction to the students was given. The researcher explained the purpose of the study. Oral informed consent was obtained from each student before data collection. Pre test was conducted on 10-03-2015. Pre test questionnaire was distributed to each student separately, 20-30 minutes was given to fill the questionnaire. After collecting the questionnaire, structured teaching programme was given on next day.

After that post test was conducted on 11-03-2015, the students were gathered in the same class room. Totally 50 students participated in the post test. The researcher distributed the same questionnaire and data was collected from the students.

**Data Analysis And Interpretation**

In this study, descriptive statistics like frequency, percentage were used. Collected data findings have been organized and analysed, percentage and tables and graphs and have been interpreted in following sections.

Majority of samples 44% are in the age group of 14. Age group of 13 is 18% and age group of 15 is 38% of samples had participated in this study.

Majority of samples, 40% had attained menarche at the age of 13 years, 34% in the age of 12, 14% in the age of 11 and 6% in the age of 14 & 15.

Majority of the students 88% are from nuclear family. Only 12% of students from joint family.

54% of the students have female siblings and 66% not having female siblings.

Majority of samples fathers 44% are educated up to the level of high school. 24% samples fathers are uneducated. 20% samples fathers are educated up to primary, 8% are up to higher secondary & 4% up to degree.

Majority of samples 66% fathers are non professional & 12% samples father is professional.

22% samples father has no income, 14% samples father has the income below 3000, 36% has income between 3000-5000, 6% has income between 5000-10000, 2% has income between 10000-15000 and 20% samples father has the income of above 15000.

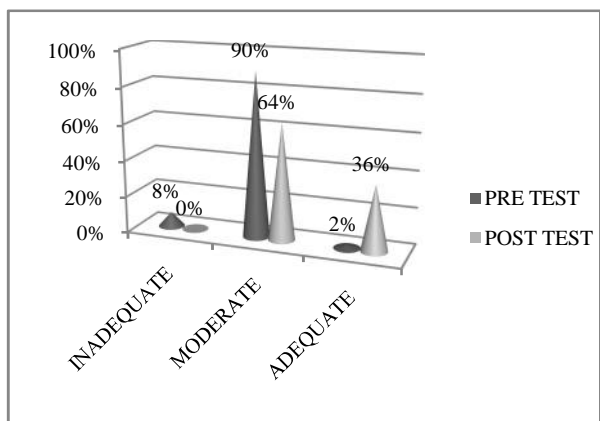
Majority of samples mothers 48% are educated up to the level of high school. 22% samples mothers are uneducated. 14% samples mothers are educated up to primary, 16% are up to higher secondary & 0% up to degree.

Majority of samples mothers have no occupation. 32% of mothers comes under non professional occupation

74% samples mother has no income, 6% samples mother has the income below 3000, 8% has income between 3000-5000, 0% has income between 5000-10000, 10% has income between 10000-15000 and 2% samples mother has the income of above 15000.

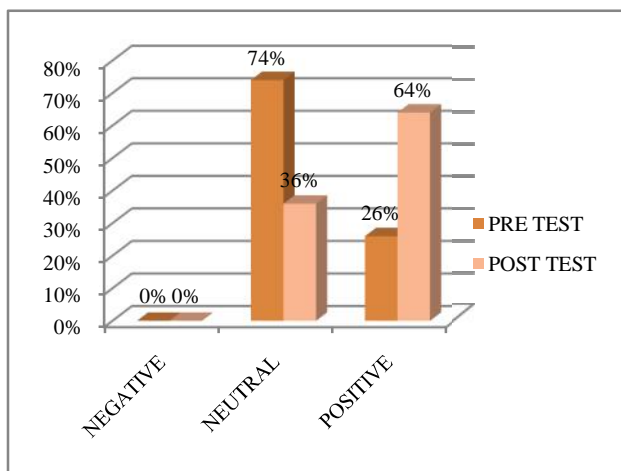
**Inference**

Majority 90% had moderate adequate knowledge in pre test, 8% had inadequate knowledge and 2% had adequate knowledge.



**Inference**

Majority 64% had adequate knowledge in pre test, 0% had inadequate knowledge and 36% had moderate adequate knowledge.



**Significant Findings of the Study**

- Majority adolescent girls were in the age group of 14 years.
- Majority adolescent girls belong to Hindu.
- Majority of adolescent girls attained menarche at the age of 13-14 years.
- With regard to the type of family 44 belongs to nuclear family.
- With regard to the siblings 22 have female siblings.
- Majority of the adolescent girls father educated up to high school level.
- Majority of subjects have non professional father.

- Majority of samples father’s income between 3000-5000.
- Majority of samples mother’s have no occupation.
- Pre test data findings shows that 1(2%) had adequate knowledge regarding menstrual hygiene.
- Pretest data findings shows that 13(26%) had positive attitude toward menstruation.
- Post test data findings show that 18(36%) had adequate knowledge, 32(64%) had moderate knowledge and no one had inadequate knowledge regarding menstrual hygiene.
- Post test data findings shows that 32(64%) had positive attitude, 18(36%) had neutral attitude and no one had negative attitude toward menstruation.

**CONCLUSION**

The study revealed that the knowledge and attitude level in pretest was inadequate but after the structured teaching programme the subjects had adequate knowledge and attitude in the post test improved significantly. Among the subject there was significant difference between pre and post test knowledge and attitude score with respect to different variables. Hence adolescent girls need awareness of menstrual hygiene.

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