



Knowledge Of Healthy Practices During Menstrual Cycle Among The Preadolescent Females

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Abstract: This study aims to explore the knowledge of healthy practices carried by preadolescent females during their menstrual cycle. as it is understood that menstruation is a very important physiological event that happens in a young girl, life it is very crucial to understand their awareness and attitude towards menstrual hygiene and health. a sample of preadolescent girls typically aged from 13 to 16 years were involved in the study to assess their understanding the key menstrual hygiene practices which includes diet, sanitation, absenteeism. results indicate that most of them have sufficient understanding of menstrual hygiene.

Key words: Preadolescent, Menstrual Health, Healthy Practices

Introduction

Preadolescence is the period of human development that falls between childhood and adolescence, usually between 9 and 12 years. Preadolescence may also be defined as the period from 10 to 13 years. During this stage of development many changes will happen in the individual they are physical changes like rapid growth leads to changes in height and weight body structure itself gets changed. cognitive changes like individual develops abstract thinking, logical reasoning, problem solving abilities and improved memory and learning abilities. emotional changes include frequent mood swings, being highly sensitive, challenges to regulate one's emotions and more self-consciousness. social changes include easily gets influenced by the peer pressure, they look for being independent, they develop strong and close friendships and they explore social roles.

Menarche, or the first menstruation, occurs between the ages of 10 and 16, with an average age of 12.4 years. But every girl's body has its own schedule and there is no perfect age for a girl to hit it. A normal menstrual cycle is once a month, every 21 to 40 days. However, it is normal for the period to be irregular, especially in the first two years after a girl's period starts. Menstruation is a natural occurrence characterised by the periodic release of blood cells and mucous cells from the uterine lining through the vagina. Blood cells such as red blood cells or erythrocytes transport oxygen from the lungs to tissues and organs throughout the body and transport carbon dioxide back to the lungs for exhalation. Other cells include white blood cells and platelets. Mucous cells are specialised cells that produce mucus, a thick and slippery fluid that serves as protection in different parts of the body. This is the first sign that a woman has started her reproductive years. It usually lasts between two and seven days. Menarche first appears between the ages of puberty and adolescence and is the defining event of the teenage female experience.

Menstrual health knowledge or literacy is especially essential for school-aged individuals, as the teenage period begins throughout this period. Girls many a times are not having adequate sexual and reproductive health knowledge, which leaves them unprepared for menstruation. Most of the preadolescent females do not have a proper understanding about menstruating and maturation, this may lead to unhealthy practices and the ignorance may also lead to humiliation, loneliness. It is easily observable that most of the school adolescents have deficiency in menstrual health literacy. There is a greater need to literate the preadolescents about the menstrual hygiene which means educating the adolescent females on the proper and clean management of

menstruation. The available literature suggests that a significant proportion of adolescent females possess inadequate and wrong knowledge regarding the physiological aspects and hygiene practices associated with menstruation.

Literacy of menstrual health just refers to preadolescent having knowledge and understanding about the different aspects that are concerned to menstruation. To promote overall wellbeing, reducing stigma and ensuring individuals can manage their menstrual health effectively and safely every female girl child need to have improved literacy about menstrual health. This serves as a base to understand and recognise normal menstrual patterns, understand the importance of menstrual hygiene, and address any menstrual-related challenges or issues they may encounter. This will also empower young girls, to make decisions regarding their menstrual health.

Research Methodology

Objectives

- To Identify awareness of hygiene practices during menstruation
- To Evaluate understanding of the menstrual cycle's impact on daily activities
- To Evaluate attitudes towards menstrual health education
- To Promote healthy practices

Population and Sample

The population was chosen from St. Antony's school Gangondanahalli, Bangalore, there are totally 150 preadolescents in school and out of which 56 preadolescents were chosen using convenient sampling.

Data and sources of data

The primary data was collected from the respondent's using questionnaire which consists of 10 questions relating to the Healthy Practices followed by Preadolescent Females during Menstrual Cycle. Secondary data was collected from the previous studies and articles.

Data analysis

The primary data was analysed using excel sheets and data is presented using pie charts, bar graph and percentage.

Results

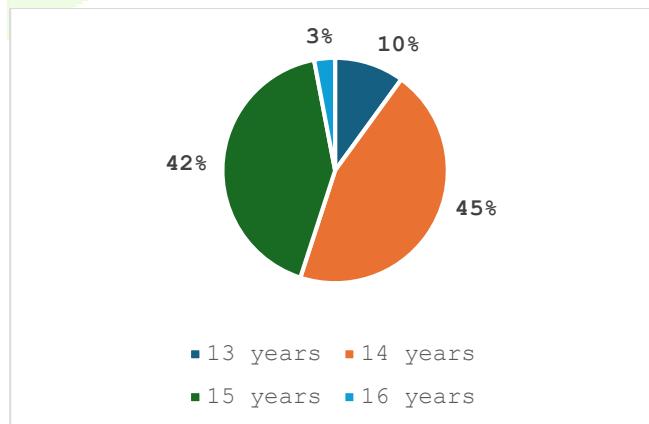
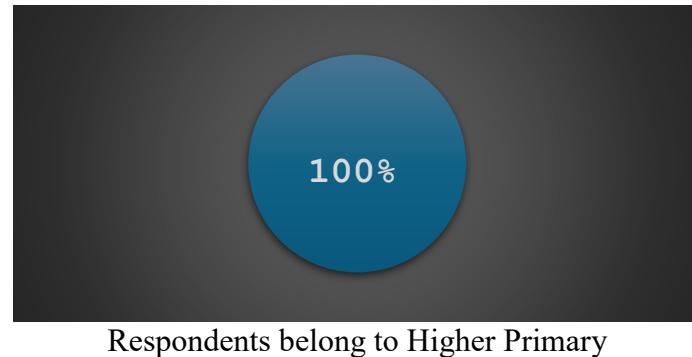


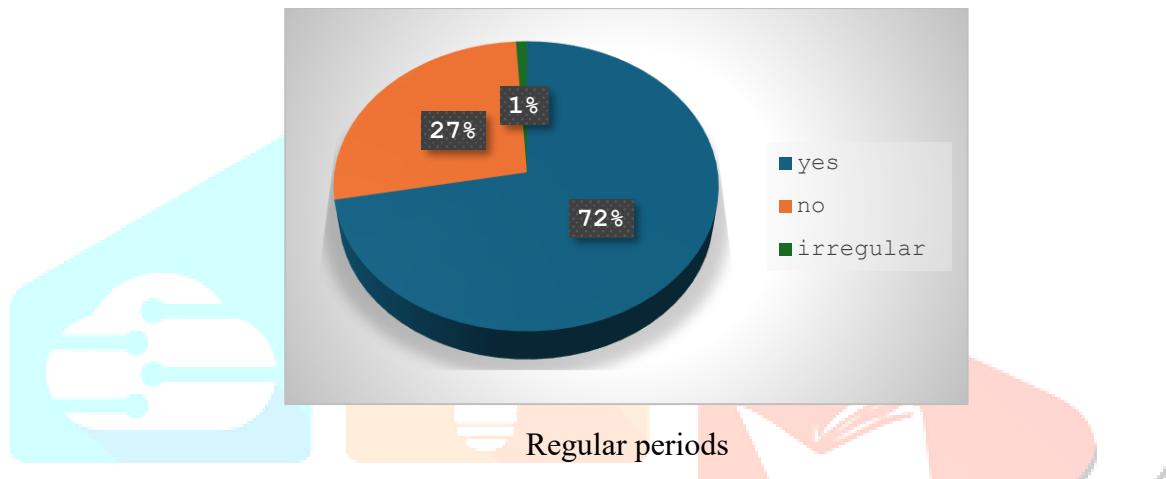
Diagram no:1 Age of the Respondents

The diagram highlights the age of the respondents who were involved in the study 45 percent of them belong to 14 years, 42 percent of them belong to 13 years, 10 percent belong to 15 years and 3 percent of them belong to 16 years.

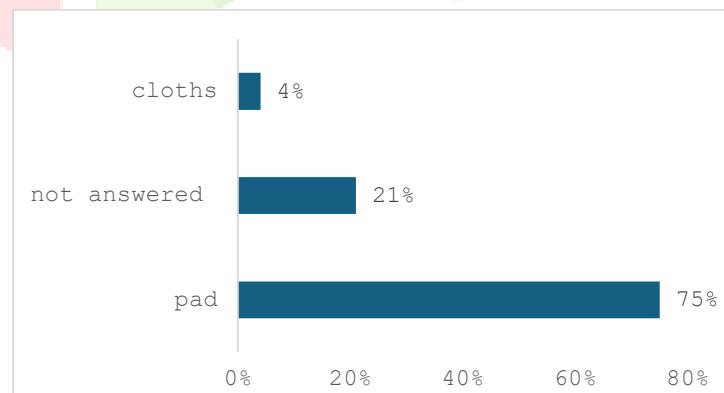


Respondents belong to Higher Primary

The diagram shows to which class the respondents belong the sample chosen for the study belong to higher primary.

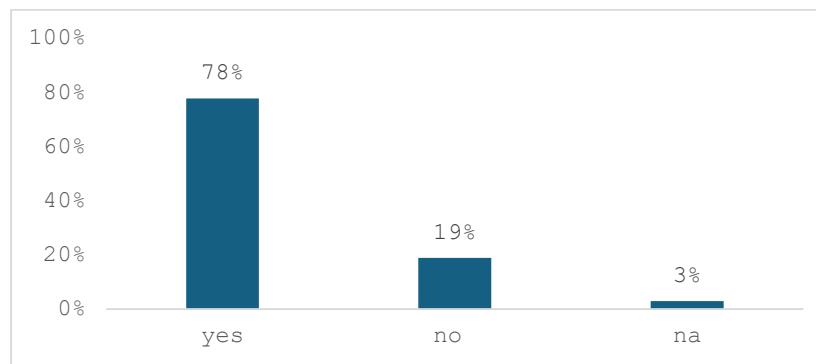


The diagram shows the periods pattern of respondents, 72 percent of them have regular periods and 27 percent have irregular periods. Results suggest that most of the preadolescents have normal reproductive health and hormone balance. Regular cycles indicate proper ovulation and menstrual functions, reducing the likelihood of underlying conditions like PCOS.



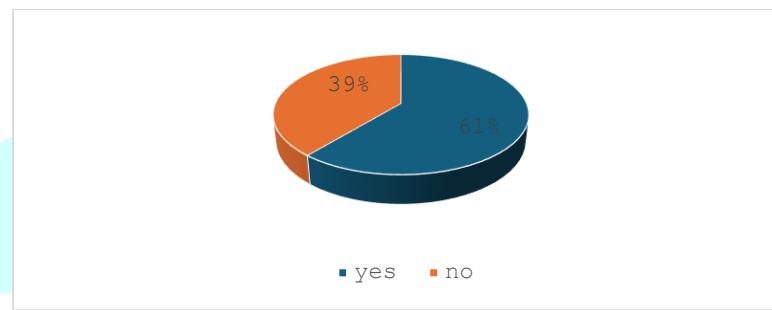
Products used during Periods

The diagram shows the products used by respondents during periods, 75 percent of the respondents use sanitary pads during periods, 21 percent of the respondents have not answered this shows they are not comfortable to share, 4 percent of them use cloths during periods. This is because sanitary pads are easy to use and widely available and provide comfort helping to manage menstruation hygienically.



Eating Junk Food

The diagram shows junk food eaters during periods, 78 percent of them eat junk food during periods, 19 percent of them don't eat junk food during the time of periods. Participants consuming junk food during periods indicates a lack of awareness about its impact on menstrual health. This emphasizes the need for better nutrition education during menstruation.



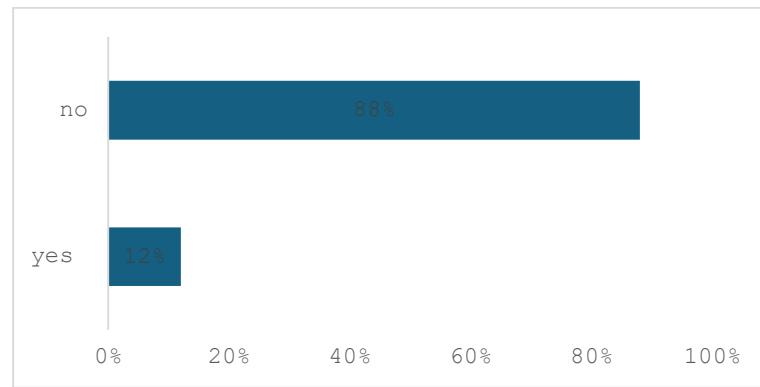
Cramps during periods

The diagram shows respondent getting cramps during periods, 61 percent of the respondents get cramps during periods, 39 percent of them do not get cramps during periods. Many preadolescent females do experience menstrual cramps which is a common symptom due to hormonal changes. This highlights the importance of education on managing pain and providing support for menstrual health at an early age.



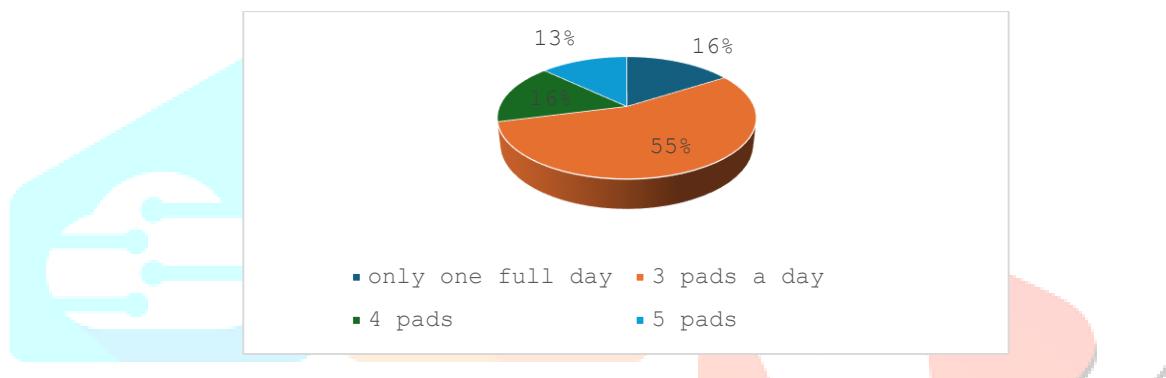
Leave during periods

A relative majority 69 percent of the adolescents do not take leave to school during periods but 31 percent of the respondents do take leave during periods and 1 day leave will be taken by 8 respondents, 3 days leave will be taken by 2 respondents, 2 days leave will be taken by 2 respondents. The results reflects that most of the preadolescents are able to attend classes during their menstrual cycle, some students may experience menstrual discomfort or severe pain which affects their school attendance. It highlights the need for better understanding and support for menstrual health in school



consuming pain killers during periods

Respondents consuming pain killers during the time of periods, a vast majority 88 percent of the respondents do not have the habit of consuming pain killers during their periods, 12 percent of them do consume pain killers to manage the pain during periods. The high percentage of participants not using painkillers reflect that they are managing menstrual discomforts through non-medical methods such as rest and natural remedies.



frequency of changing pads

Half of the respondent's 55 percent of them change 3 pads in a day, 17 percent of them change 16 percent use single pad for one full day, 16 percent of them change 4 pads a day and 13 percent of them change 5 pads in a day. The results highlights that most of the preadolescent females are practicing basic hygiene by changing pads multiple times a day. However, it also suggests that the need for guidance on appropriate usage and managing menstrual days.



opinion about periods

A relative majority 61 percent of them shared their opinion as periods are bad and 39 percent of them shared their opinion as good. The analysis suggests that societal stigma and lack of proper education may contribute to negative perception of menstruation. A majority viewing periods as "bad" reflects misconceptions and a need for better awareness and support.

Conclusions

Imparting knowledge on menstruation and menstrual hygiene is crucial during this stage of life as it has direct impact on the reproductive health of an adolescent. This study highlights the critical need for early education on menstrual health among preadolescent females. The findings suggest that many girls lack knowledge on hygiene and healthy practices there is significant gap in understanding more comprehensive aspects of menstrual health. Effective and age-appropriate health education programs are essential to bridge the gaps. Promoting open discussion and providing adequate resources can empower preadolescent girls to adopt healthy practices and overall wellbeing during this most crucial stage of development.

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