



Knowledge and Practices Related to Menstruation Hygiene: A Case Study of Pandua C.D Block, West Bengal

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Introduction:

Menstruation and menstrual activities are still dominated by social, cultural, and religious standards, which is a significant barrier to maintaining proper menstrual hygiene (1). Women around the world have developed coping techniques for menstruation that differ by country and are influenced by factors such as economic status, personal interests, regional customs, cultural values, and level of education. Menstrual management procedures are usually unsanitary and inconvenient, particularly in developing countries. Although menstruation is a natural biological function, it is wrapped in taboos, myths, and prejudices that make it difficult for women to track their monthly periods safely, discreetly, and hygienically (2). Absence from work and home, as well as gender-based violence, are affected by health issues, particularly those connected to reproductive health, respiratory tract infections, stress, and anxiety. WASH United has designated May 28 as "Menstrual Hygiene Day" to promote awareness about menstrual health. However, this is still a societal taboo that is respected in many parts of India (3). Women face a variety of obstacles and issues at home, at school, and work. The situation was compounded when the availability of menstrual products made it impossible for women from diverse socioeconomic strata, as well as those living in distant areas, to get sanitary items (4).

Key Words: Menstruation; Hygiene; WASH; Female

Objectives of the study:

Knowing the facts about menstrual product access can assist in showing the reasons for the problems and difficult circumstances that women may face while selecting and utilizing menstrual products at the grassroots level.

Significance of the study:

Instead of pushing for a single choice for women to manage their menstruation responsibly, UNICEF wants to ensure that they have access to a range of fair and acceptable solutions. Girls and women in the majority of countries lack access to high-quality, sanitary absorbent materials for menstruation management. There is no menstruation product or chemical that is appropriate for every girl or woman in every situation. Because girls and women have distinct needs and interests, they require options in both public and private settings. Menstrual cultural and religious rituals are typically based on patriarchal, discriminatory conceptions about a girl's role and place in society. As a result, women are routinely instructed to refrain from completing ordinary duties like cooking or bathing, and they may even be asked to leave the house when on their period (5). Girls' self-esteem suffers as a result of these restrictions and bad views towards menstruation. Society must advance its efforts to promote menstrual hygiene and the proper disposal of menstrual waste by raising awareness.

Discussion:

Menstrual hygiene is a taboo topic that many women avoid discussing. Adolescent girls hold a variety of cultural and religious views. According to various studies, education, family environment, culture, and belief are all factors that influence menstrual behavior. Religion has been found to have a substantial influence on menstruation behaviors. The current study observed similar outcomes regarding a variety of menstrual limitations, which is consistent with previous research. The sample participants' personal cleaning standards are poor.



P.C – Lopamudra Ganguly

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Conclusion:

Menstruation is an important sign of the commencement of female reproductive life. Many communities mark the beginning of menstruation (menarche). However, this study emphasizes that data on menstrual hygiene habits among Indian tribal females is limited, and even the available data suggests that harmful practices are widespread in many areas. To develop future tribal health programs, community data on menstrual beliefs from indigenous females must be acquired proactively. Local awareness programs should emphasise disposal and genital cleaning practices. Furthermore, to debunk conventional habits, wrong notions, and myths, a distinct socio-cultural strategy is necessary.

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