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Report on Survey Conducted among Adolescent Girls Regarding Menstrual Hygiene

Yasmeen Fatima[1], Ruqsar Fatima[2], Syeda Mehraj Nousheen[3], Mahevish Tabassum[4], Sana Fatima[5]
[1, 2, 3, 4,5] *Student Department of Nutrition & Dietetics, Anwarul Uloom College, Hyderabad – India*

Abstract: ***In India, when it comes to menstruation of women or adolescent girls there are lot of factors like physiological, social and economical that influences the behavior and thought process to how most Indians react to menstrual cycle and its hygiene. Given these circumstances many women and adolescent girls are not aware how to manage menstruation like using a clean menstrual management material to absorb or collect menstrual blood, understand the importance of keeping the body clean and the disposal of used menstrual material. The aim of the study was to assess understanding of menstrual hygiene amongst adolescent girls of the urban regions that are in the age group of 18 – 22 years in light of the physiological changes that occur during menstrual cycles and how they manage the menstrual cycle and its related hygiene given the social aspects in a typical Indian context. A survey was conducted amongst adolescent girls of Anwarul Uloom College, Hyderabad from the total sample group of 150 adolescent girls to gather information regarding awareness of menstrual hygiene using a questionnaire and interaction/discussion with the targeted group using illustrative brochures. Thus, it was concluded from our study that urban adolescent girls were seemingly well aware about menstruation and derived this awareness from their mothers prior to attainment of menarche, there is good usage of hygienic sanitary pads amongst the targeted group and most of the girls believed menstrual hygiene like keeping oneself clean, changing cloths, or taking bath and the menstrual waste management is very important factors.***

I. INTRODUCTION

Reproductive Tract Infections (RTI) which has become a silent epidemic that affects a women's life which is closely interrelated with poor menstrual hygiene therefore proper menstrual hygiene, correct perception and belief can protect the womenfolk from this suffering. Before bringing any change in menstrual practices the girls should be educated about the facts of menstruation, physiological implications and above all about proper hygiene practices with selection of disposable sanitary absorbent and the disposal of used menstrual material. This study reveals that menstrual hygiene is good amongst large population of urban adolescent girls while some are still ignorant and have a false perceptions that prompts them to follow unsafe practices during their menstruation; it was also observed that the adolescent girls get their education regarding the menstruation cycles and its related hygiene from their mothers. Thus the above findings reinforce the need to encourage safe and hygienic practices amongst the adolescent girls to bring them out of traditional beliefs, misconceptions and restrictions; moreover it is important to discuss menstruations more openly in the society so that the ill practices revolving around menstruations in the Indian society is positively addressed. The survey was conducted amongst adolescent girls in light of the item like [1] Awareness about menstruation, [2] Physiological changes and remedies adopted to manage this change, [3] Aspects of menstrual hygiene like using of sanitary pads and disposal of used menstrual material. This was done (a) to collect data regarding awareness of menstrual hygiene amongst the adolescent girls, (b) to elicit the beliefs, conception and source of information regarding menstruation amongst student population (c) to find out the status of menstrual hygiene amongst adolescent girls, (d) to evaluate various myths and taboos still prevalent amongst young girls, and (e) to educate the adolescent girls about various health hazards and diseases related to unhygienic menstrual practices

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Conducted survey amongst sample group of 150 adolescent girls of Anwarul Uloom College after taking permission from college authorities, verbal consent was taken from the sample group and the rapport was built with the girls, data was gathered through questionnaire method and interactive sessions using illustrative brochure. A descriptive cross sectional study was conducted using a pre-designed questionnaire. That data was analyzed statistically by simple proportions.

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III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Figure 1. Shows that 100% of the adolescent girls use Sanitary Pad and were well aware about the process of menstruation prior to the attainment of menarche which is a positive thing indicating that the society thought process is undergoing a change and availability and access of sanitary pad is good. But finding that mothers were the first informant regarding menstruation cycles and its hygiene indicates that that the Indian society still considered menstruation as unclean and dirty.

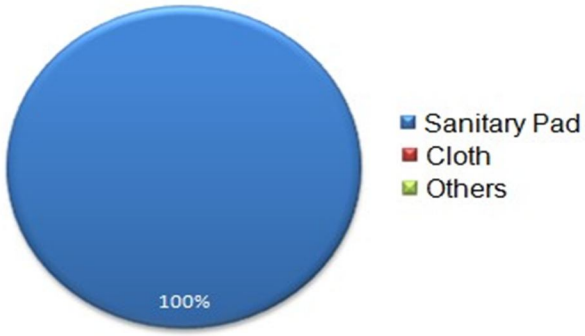

Figure 1 - Type of Absorbent Used

Figure 2. Shows that over 53% adolescent girls experience mood swings, carving for certain food items, back pain, abdominal cramps and body pains due to hormonal imbalance during their menstrual cycles that interferes in their day-to-day affairs. It is important to do mild exercise, take nutritious/rich diet and have enough rest during the menstrual cycle.

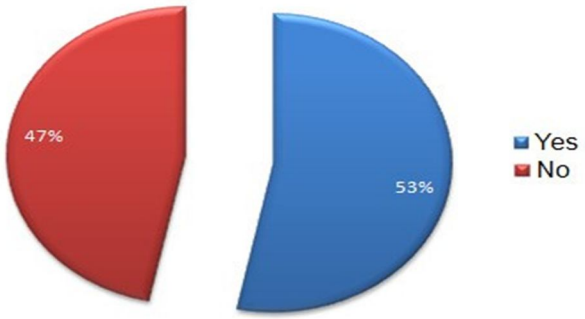

Figure 2 - Mood Swing during Menstrual Cycles & PMS

Figure 3. Shows that 84% adolescent girls have suffered UTI (Urinary Tract Infection) during their menstrual cycles and attributed the same to poor menstrual hygiene which indicates that it is very important to maintain hygiene by changing their sanitary pads regularly and taking regular baths using mild soap to avoid UTI and other infections

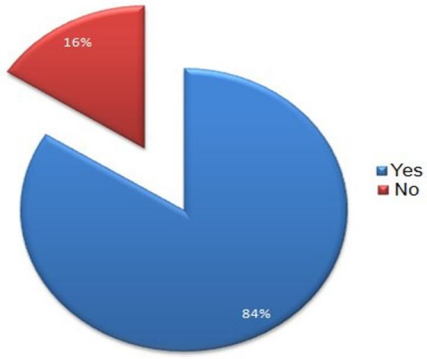

Figure 3 - UTI is Common during Menstrual Cycles Due to Poor Hygiene

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Figure 4. Shows that 100% adolescent girls change their sanitary pads every 4-8 hours which indicates that the adolescent girls are well aware of the importance of maintaining hygiene during their menstrual cycle to avoid infections and they are also ensuring proper disposal of used menstrual material

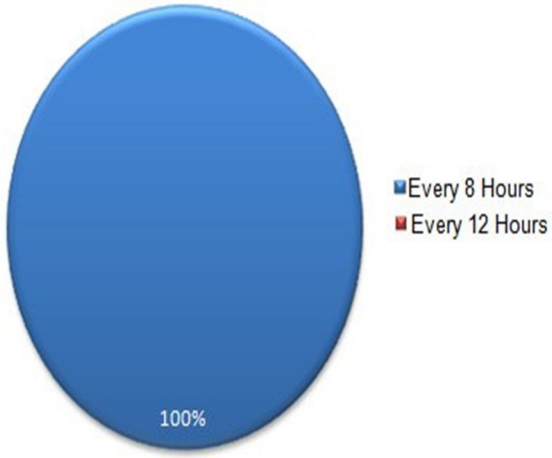

Figure 4 - Duration of Changing Sanitary Pad during Menstrual Cycles

Figure 5. Shows that 71% adolescent girls feel it is important to bath regularly with mild soap and water to avoid UTI (Urinary Tract Infection) and other infections during their menstrual cycles which is good and defies the traditional thought that a girl/women should not take bath during their menstrual cycle which indicate a positive change.

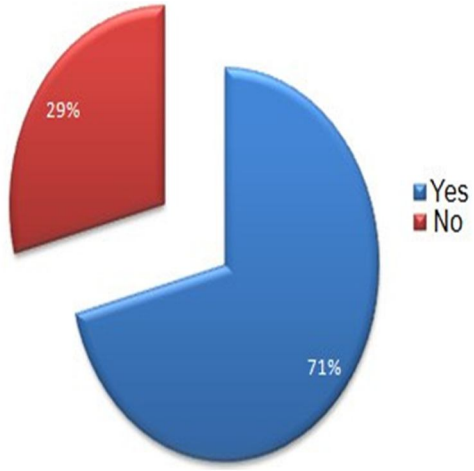

Figure 5 - Bathing during Menstrual Cycles

IV. CONCLUSION

[1] Menstrual hygienic, a very important risk factor for reproductive tract infections is a vital aspect of health education for adolescent girls, [2] Educational television programs, and to educate/encourage teachers to discuss menstruation at schools and colleges will help in eradicating the negativity surrounding menstruations in the society [3] Parents play a very important role in transmitting the vital message of correct menstrual hygiene to the adolescent girls, they can still be provided with proper knowledge to ensure that freely discuss regarding menstruation with their girl child [4] Providing suitable disposal faculty like closed dustbins or containers for disposing used sanitary absorbent at women toilets in schools, colleges and public places, and [5] It is required to providing easy access to sanitary absorbents in the schools, colleges and public places as it will help in the time of urgency.

V. ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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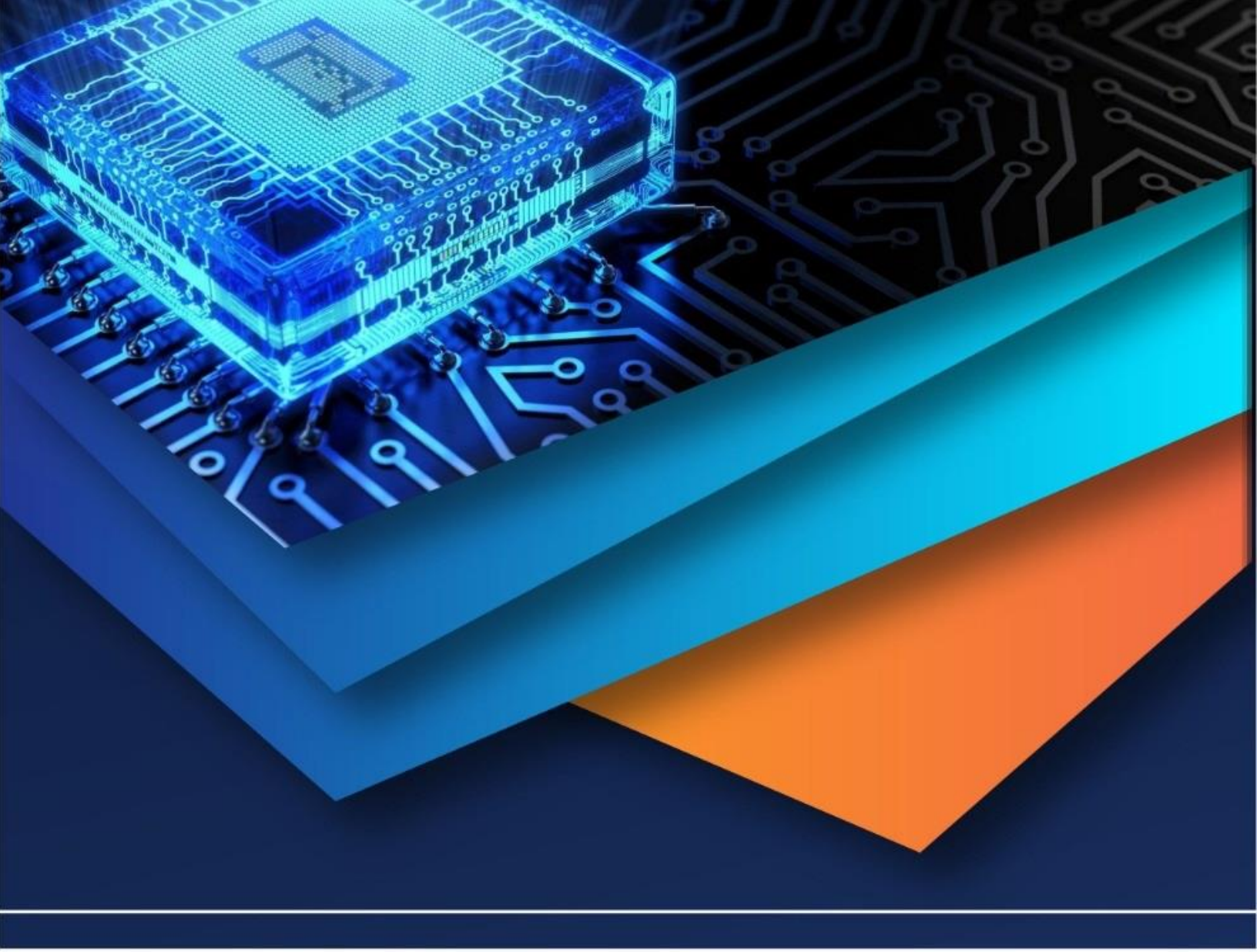

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