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Knowledge, attitude and practices regarding menstruation among adolescent girls in Mangaluru

Background: Adolescence is the stage when a girl attains reproductive maturity. One of the important factors influencing the quality of life is menstrual hygiene.

Objectives: The study was designed to assess the knowledge, attitude and practices regarding menstruation and menstrual hygiene.

Methods: A cross sectional study was conducted between 1st to 31st January 2020 involving 230 college going girls belonging to the late adolescent age group (18-19 years of age) from four degree colleges in Mangalore. Quota sampling was used; validated questionnaire was used to collect information regarding knowledge attitude and practices related to menstrual hygiene. Statistical analysis was done using SPSS v25.0.

Results and conclusions: Knowledge regarding the basic physiology of menstruation was known to about 87% of participants, however the source of blood was known to only 65%. The main source of their information was their mothers. Around half of the students were aware about the various premenstrual signs and infections associated with poor menstrual hygiene. Various taboos regarding menstruation are still prevalent, however it was surprising that the taboo was comparatively lesser among the rural people. More than 80% of people thought that men should also be educated regarding menstruation. Sanitary pads were the most used absorbent material due to its ease of use and availability. Disposal was mainly through flushing, especially among rural students. Burning of the absorbent material is also followed, disposal bins were mainly used by urban students. 38% of urban and 36.6% of rural students miss college during their menses, mainly due to pain.