

# A Study on Menstrual Problems among High School Girls Studying in Rural Field Practice Area of a Tertiary Care Hospital

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## ABSTRACT

Menstruation is an important event in life of adolescent girls and is often associated with menstrual problems such as irregular menstruation, excessive bleeding, dysmenorrhea, and many more. Present study was conducted to find menstrual problems among high school girls. The objectives were to enumerate menstrual problems among high school girls and to assess the awareness and practices on menstruation hygiene in them.

**Materials and methods:** The study was conducted in the rural field practice area of RajaRajeswari Medical College and Hospital, Bengaluru, after taking institutional ethical clearance. That area has two high schools which had 120 girls in total. Permission was taken from the school authority to conduct the study and the complete enumeration of the schools was done. Menstrual problems, awareness, and practices on menstrual hygiene were assessed by semistructured questionnaire. Health education regarding menstrual health was given to them after data collection. The data collected were compiled and entered into a Microsoft Excel worksheet. Descriptive statistics and suitable tests of significance were used as required. The data were then analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software v.21.0.

**Results:** Nearly 112 high school girls participated in the study. Most of them mentioned that dysmenorrhea was the major menstrual problem (48%). The practices of menstrual hygiene among high school girls were found to be satisfactory (99%).

**Conclusion:** In conclusion, dysmenorrhea was the most common menstrual problem among high school girls. Majority of them lack awareness that sanitary pads are to be disposed in dustbins.

**Keywords:** Dysmenorrhea, High school girls, Menstrual hygiene, Menstrual problems.

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## INTRODUCTION

Menstruation is an important part of female reproductive cycle, but menstrual dysfunction in adolescent girls may affect normal life of adolescents. Menstrual problems are generally perceived as the only minor health concern and thus irrelevant to the public health agenda particularly for women in developing countries who may face life-threatening conditions.<sup>1</sup> Dysmenorrhea, for example, is a common problem, yet it remains poorly understood and is not taken into consideration when assessing adolescent health problems. About 50–75% of young girls complain of this. This is one of the leading causes of loss of school days.<sup>2</sup>

The menstrual phenomenon is associated with a lot of false myths, beliefs, and sociocultural restrictions, often leading to the neglect of the menstruation-related problems, especially in a developing country as India. Lack of awareness and the associated problems are responsible for the hesitation, shyness, fear in sharing problems, and health-seeking behavior, which are commonly faced by young girls.

Therefore, this study was taken up to assess the menstrual problems among the high school girls.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

Descriptive study was carried out among high school girls studying in the high schools of rural field practice area of RajaRajeswari Medical College and Hospital from August 2018 to September 2018. Pretested and semi-structured questionnaire was used to interview the study subjects applying score for the

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**Conflict of interest:** None

responses. The study was conducted after taking institutional ethical clearance. That area has two high schools, which had 120 girls in total, of which 112 high school girls participated in the study. Permission was taken from the school authority to conduct the study. Menstrual problems, awareness, and practices on menstrual hygiene were assessed by semistructured questionnaire. Health education regarding menstrual health was given to them after data collection.

## STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

All the data collected were compiled and entered into a Microsoft Excel worksheet. Descriptive statistics was used to present the data. Qualitative variables presented as frequencies and percentages. Data were analyzed using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) software v.21.0.

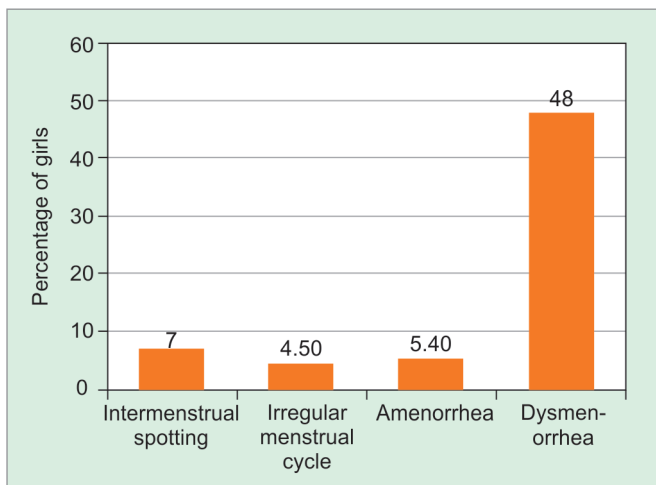


Fig. 1: Bar graph depicting menstrual problem among high school girls

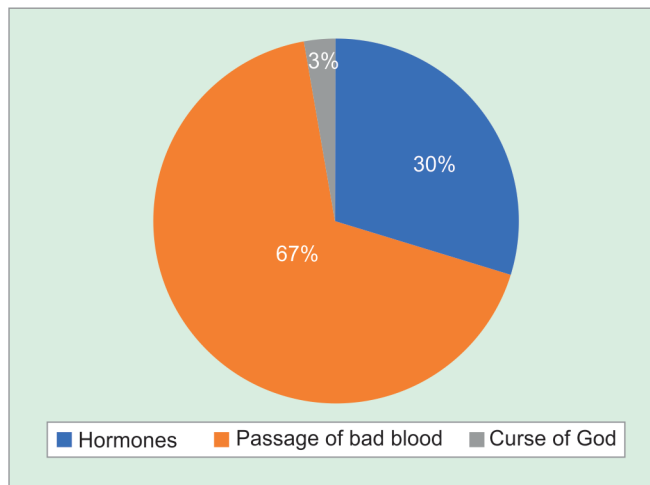


Fig. 2: Pie chart depicting awareness about reason of menstruation among high school girls

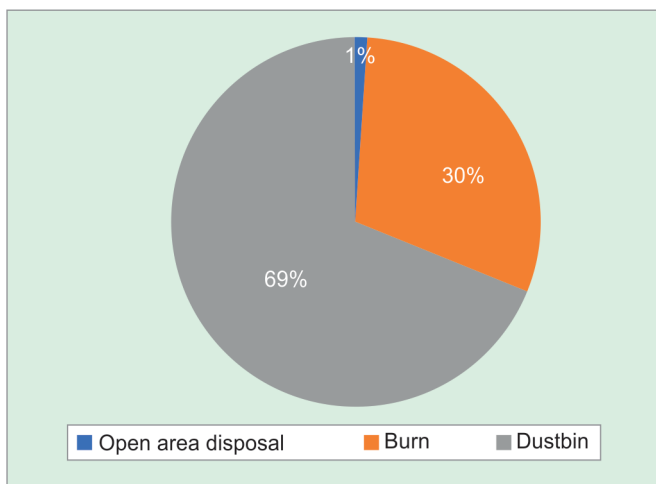


Fig. 3: Pie chart depicting practices on disposal of sanitary pads among high school girls

## RESULTS

The most common menstrual problem was found to be dysmenorrhoea (48%) (Fig. 1). High school girls in this study lack awareness about the reason of menstruation, i.e. only 30% of them answered correctly (Fig. 2). Most of them (99%) were following good hygiene practices (Fig. 3).

## ASSESSMENT OF PRACTICES ON MENSTRUAL HYGIENE

- Score of practices on menstrual hygiene among high school girls was calculated based on the practice-specific questions. Each correct response earned one point, whereas any wrong response attracted no mark.<sup>3,4</sup>
- The sum score of practice was calculated (5 points), where the score of practice of menstrual hygiene 3 and above was considered as a good practice and of less than 3 was considered as poor practice.
- Here in this study, 111 students scored 3 and above points and only one scored less than 3. Hence, practices on menstrual hygiene were satisfactory.<sup>5-7</sup>

## DISCUSSION

This study was conducted with an objective of describing menstrual problem, awareness, and practices on menstrual hygiene among high school girls.

This study results showed dysmenorrhoea as the most common menstrual problem (48%) which was similar to the study conducted in rural Tamil Nadu by Ravi et al.<sup>4</sup> The overall menstrual hygiene practices among high school girls in this study were found to be satisfactory (99%) in contrast to the study by Mohite et al.<sup>8</sup> which showed poor hygiene practices. Only 38.4% of the girls were aware of menstruation before menarche, which is similar to the study conducted by Thakre et al.<sup>9</sup>

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, dysmenorrhoea was the most common menstrual problem. Majority of them lack the awareness that sanitary pads have to be disposed in dustbins.<sup>10</sup> It was observed that the high school girls were unaware of the reason of menstruation. Hygiene practices on menstruation were found to be satisfactory.

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