

# A Study on Menstrual Health Practices among Adolescent Girls in Prakasam District of Andhra Pradesh

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## ABSTRACT

Adolescence is a significant period in the life of a woman. Adolescent girls often lack knowledge regarding reproductive health including menstruation which can be due to socio-cultural barriers in which they grow up. These differences create various problems for the adolescent girls. The need of the hour for girls is to have the information, education and an enabling environment to cope with menstruation issues.

## 1. Research Methodology

The study was conducted on mensural health hygiene among adolescent girls in Prakasam district of Andhra Pradesh with the following objectives;

1. To study the socio-economic profile of the adolescent girls in rural area of Prakasam district, Andhra Pradesh.
2. To assess the knowledge of adolescent girls among the practices of menstrual hygiene conditions in rural areas.

For the purpose of the study, the researcher has gathered information vis-à-vis the adolescent girls in rural area in Prakasam District. A total of 300 adolescent girls from the rural area as selected by using purposive sampling method for the purpose of study.

## 2. Findings of the study

Table – 1: Age Wise Distribution of Respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage
12 - 13	97	32.3
14 - 15	132	44.0
16 - 18	71	23.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Mean Age ( $\bar{x}$ ) = 14.4367 years

Table 1 shows that the age group composition of adolescent girl's sample respondents. In order to facilitate further analysis, three age categories have been developed. The table shows that in the age group of 12 to 13 years of respondents are 32.3 per cent. About 44.0 per cent in the age group of 14 to 15 years and remaining 23.7 per cent is in the age group of 16 to 18 years. Hence, the majority are 14 to 15 years of the adolescent girls under the study in the rural area. The average mean age of the study group is 14.4367 years.

Table – 2: Education Wise Distribution of Respondents

Education	Frequency	Percentage
Illiterate	24	8.0
6 - 7 Class	36	12.0

8 - 9 Class	144	48.0
10 - > Class	96	32.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Most of the respondents were found poor in terms of education and literacy development. About 69.2 percent respondents were reported to be illiterate. Importantly, educated respondents were reported high in secondary education about 10.8 percent. Remaining 10.0 percent were belonging to primary education and 10.0 percent are studied SSC and above. Thus, majority respondents are not given importance to education.

Table –3: Caste Wise Distribution of Respondents

Caste	Frequency	Percentage
OC	50	16.7
BC	188	62.7
SC	38	12.7
ST	24	8.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Caste-system is a unique characteristic of Indian Hindu society. The caste-system imposes certain restrictions on its members in the matter of occupation as well as social intercourse. After Independence, Government of India has tried to improve the situation of the underprivileged sections, officially termed as Scheduled Castes (SC) and Other Backward Classes (OBC) through several affirmative actions. The caste of the sample respondents describes that 54.1 percent belong to Backward Caste and respondents belonging to Other Caste (OC such as forward caste) and Scheduled Caste groups constitute 35.7 percent and 10.2 percent respectively. It is indicating that the majority people who belongs to Backward Caste, Scheduled Caste are marginalized sections in India and they are more backward with compare to other groups.

Among the respondents, the majority (80.8 percent) are belongs to Hindu religion followed by 5.8 percent are Christian and 6.7 percent are Muslims and remaining 6.7 percent are others such as pasesis, Sikhs etc.

### 3. Knowledge on menarche and menstruation

**Table-4: Attended any educational programme organised for adolescent girls Vs. Education**

Education	Attended any educational programme organised for adolescents		Total
	Yes	No	
Illiterate	0	24	24
	.0%	8.0%	8.0%
6 - 7 Class	12	24	36
	4.0%	8.0%	12.0%
8 - 9 Class	60	84	144
	20.0%	28.0%	48.0%
10 - > Class	60	36	96
	20.0%	12.0%	32.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>300</b>
	<b>44.0%</b>	<b>56.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

$\chi^2=34.172$ , df= 3, P < 0.000, Significant at 0.01 level

The table 4 depicts that attend any educational programme organised for adolescent girls. It can be seen from the table 44.0 percent of the respondents said that they attended for training programme. Whereas 56.0 percent are not attended to any training. The adolescent girls who were attended to training programme for enhancement of their life skills. The government of India initiated the welfare scheme called "Kishore Balika Samvruddi Yojana" under this programme the women and child development department are

being conducting training programmes for adolescent girls for improve their skills in different areas.

The chi-square table revealed the relationship between education and attend any training programme organised for adolescent girls. Education wise there are more adolescent girls are attended to the training. Hence, there are important of education to attend more adolescent girls in training and there is highly significant at 0.01 level.

**Table-5: Source of information for health and hygiene Vs Education**

Education	Source of information for health and hygiene				Total
	Books	TV	Health worker	Any other	
Illiterate	12	12	0	0	24
	4.0%	4.0%	.0%	.0%	8.0%
6 - 7 Class	12	0	12	12	36
	4.0%	.0%	4.0%	4.0%	12.0%
8 - 9 Class	72	72	0	0	144
	24.0%	24.0%	.0%	.0%	48.0%
10 - > Class	24	0	48	24	96
	8.0%	.0%	16.0%	8.0%	32.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>300</b>
	<b>40.0%</b>	<b>28.0%</b>	<b>20.0%</b>	<b>12.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

$\chi^2=2.033E2$ , df=93, P < 0.000, Significant at 0.01 level

Analysis of the source of the adolescent girls regarding health and hygiene revealed that books were the major source of information for about 40.0 percent of them, whereas 28.0 percent reported that they get information from Television. When 20.0 percent of them reported health professional as major source of health information. Only 12.0 percent reported that any other such as newspapers, magazines etc.,

It is evident that a variety of sources convey information regarding health and hygiene to the adolescent girls. From

among the health professionals who conveyed information the persons were doctors, ANMs, health workers.

The chi square table shows that half of the respondents in the group of 8 – 9<sup>th</sup> class are getting information from books, TV and health professionals. These are playing important role in the source of information and statically significant association in between education and source of information for health and hygiene at 0.01 level.

**Table-6: Attain menarche by their education**

Education	At what age did you attain menarche				Total
	11	12	13	14	
Illiterate	24	0	0	0	24
	8.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	8.0%
6 - 7 Class	24	12	0	0	36
	8.0%	4.0%	.0%	.0%	12.0%
8 - 9 Class	24	60	48	12	144
	8.0%	20.0%	16.0%	4.0%	48.0%
10 - > Class	12	24	37	23	96
	4.0%	8.0%	12.3%	7.7%	32.0%
Total	84	96	85	35	300
	28.0%	32.0%	28.3%	11.7%	100.0%

$\chi^2=1.345E2$ , df=9, P < 0.000, Significant at 0.01 level

Menarche, the first menstruation is of course a new experience for the girls. As reported by the adolescent girls and more than 32.0 percent of them attained menarche at the age of 12 years and 28.0 percent at the age of 11 years. Whereas,

28.3 percent attained menarche at the age of 13 years and 11.7 percent attained menarche after 13 years. None of them have attained menarche before the age of 11 years. The average mean age of attained menarche is 12.2367 years.

**Table-7: Inform your first period Vs. Education**

Education	Whom did you inform your first period				Total
	Mother	Sister	Teacher	Friend	
Illiterate	20	2	2	0	24
	6.7%	.7%	.7%	.0%	8.0%
6 - 7 Class	32	3	1	0	36
	10.7%	1.0%	.3%	.0%	12.0%
8 - 9 Class	123	5	16	0	144
	41.0%	1.7%	5.3%	.0%	48.0%
10 - > Class	71	13	1	11	96
	23.7%	4.3%	.3%	3.7%	32.0%
Total	246	23	20	11	300
	82.0%	7.7%	6.7%	3.7%	100.0%

$\chi^2=41.951$ , df=9, P < 0.000, Significant at 0.01 level

In the case of data related to the person to whom the adolescent girls reported the event of menarche, it was evident from table 7 that 82.0 percent of them reported to it to their mother. It was also noted that 7.7 percent of the girls reported to their sister and 6.7 percent reported menarche to teacher and remaining 3.7 percent reported to friends.

Mothers maintain a close relation with daughters and hence, girls trust and believe their mothers and discuss with them about important issues including menses.

From the data, it is revealed that mothers are the important sources of information about menstruation than other sources.

Therefore, the chi-square test reveals that there is a relationship between educated categories and whom did you inform your first period. Hence, there is statically significant different in information giving at first menarche about education categories at 0.01 level.

**Table-8: Were you aware about menstruation before its occurrence vs. Education**

Education	Were you aware about menstruation before its occurrence		Total
	Yes	No	
Illiterate	12	12	24
	4.0%	4.0%	8.0%
6 - 7 Class	24	12	36
	8.0%	4.0%	12.0%
8 - 9 Class	60	84	144

	20.0%	28.0%	48.0%
10 - > Class	36	60	96
	12.0%	20.0%	32.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>300</b>
	<b>44.0%</b>	<b>56.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

$\chi^2=9.821$ , df= 3, P < 0.020, Significant at 0.05 level

The data about adolescent girls awareness regarding mensuration prior to its occurrence reveals that more than 44.0

percent were aware of it and 56.0 percent reported they were not aware of menarche prior to its occurrence.

**Table-9: Type of perineal pad using during first period Vs. Education**

Education	What type of perineal pad did you use during your first period		Total
	Sanitary pad	Cloth pad	
Illiterate	24	0	24
	8.0%	.0%	8.0%
6 - 7 Class	36	0	36
	12.0%	.0%	12.0%
8 - 9 Class	72	72	144
	24.0%	24.0%	48.0%
10 - > Class	60	36	96
	20.0%	12.0%	32.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>300</b>
	<b>64.0%</b>	<b>36.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

$\chi^2=46.094$ , df= 3, P < 0.000, Significant at 0.01 level

The table shows highlights that 64.0 percent of the respondents reported they have used sanitary pad during menarche and the rest of them 36.0 percent used cloth pad.

pads; 18.2 percent of the girls were using new cloth pieces and only 5 percent of the girls reused the cloth pieces. The above findings reveal that though many of the respondents (76.8 percent) preferred to use readymade sanitary pads, a good number of girls used traditional type of materials such as new and old cloth pieces.

The above table 9 shows that 76.8 percent of the respondents were using the readymade disposable sanitary

**Table-10: How often take bath during menstruation Vs. Education**

Education	How often take bath during menstruation				Total
	Once a day	Twice a day	Only on the third day of menstruation	Only on the fifth day of menstruation	
Illiterate	0	0	0	24	24
	.0%	.0%	.0%	8.0%	8.0%
6 - 7 Class	0	12	12	12	36
	.0%	4.0%	4.0%	4.0%	12.0%
8 - 9 Class	0	24	48	72	144
	.0%	8.0%	16.0%	24.0%	48.0%
10 - > Class	12	0	24	60	96
	4.0%	.0%	8.0%	20.0%	32.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>300</b>
	<b>4.0%</b>	<b>12.0%</b>	<b>28.0%</b>	<b>56.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

$\chi^2=78.274$ , df= 9, P < 0.000, Significant at 0.01 level

It can be seen from the table 10 that how often take bath during the menstruation. The majority (56.0 percent) of the respondents reported that they take bath only on the fifth day of the mensuration followed by 28.0 percent of the respondents

take bath only on third day of the mensuration. About 12.0 percent of them take bath once in a two days and 4.0 percent of the adolescent girls take bath on every day.

**Table-11: How often wash the perineal area during menstruation Vs. Education**

Education	How often wash the perineal area during menstruation			Total
	Each time when changing the pad	After every urination & defecation	Only when taking bath	
Illiterate	0	24	0	24
	.0%	8.0%	.0%	8.0%
6 - 7 Class	0	24	12	36
	.0%	8.0%	4.0%	12.0%
8 - 9 Class	12	132	0	144
	4.0%	44.0%	.0%	48.0%
10 - > Class	24	72	0	96
	8.0%	24.0%	.0%	32.0%
Total	36	252	12	300
	12.0%	84.0%	4.0%	100.0%

$\chi^2=1.143E2$ , df= 6, P < 0.000, Significant at 0.01 level

The table 11 shows that how often wash the perineal area during mensuration. The researcher also covered some sensitive area to know more about their cleanliness of genitalia. More than three fourth 84.0 percent of the adolescent girls

reported that after every urination and defecation clean the perineal area. About12.0 percent of them clean after each time when changing the pad. Only 4.0 percent revealed that they clean only when taking bath.

**Table-12: Change of perineal pads during the menstruation Vs. Education**

Education	How often change the perineal pads during the menstruation				Total
	Every 6 hours	Every 12 hours	Once a day	Only when the pad get soaked with blood	
Illiterate	12	0	12	0	24
	4.0%	.0%	4.0%	.0%	8.0%
6 - 7 Class	0	0	24	12	36
	.0%	.0%	8.0%	4.0%	12.0%
8 - 9 Class	12	36	72	24	144
	4.0%	12.0%	24.0%	8.0%	48.0%
10 - > Class	0	36	48	12	96
	.0%	12.0%	16.0%	4.0%	32.0%
Total	24	72	156	48	300
	8.0%	24.0%	52.0%	16.0%	100.0%

$\chi^2=98.317$ , df= 9, P < 0.000, Significant at 0.01 level

The table describes that how often change the perineal pads during the mensuration. About 52.0 percent of the respondents revealed that they change pad every day followed by 24.0 percent of them reported that every 12 hours change the pad. A few respondents about 16.0 percent are said that they change perineal pad only when the pad get soaked with blood.

**4. Conclusion**

The study strategies will be use full to envelope and increase awareness and address some of the issues raised in the study and it helps to empower adolescent girls with the necessary life skills to lead a healthy lifestyle. A community level education for the mothers of adolescent girls should be encouraged to lead a menstrual health hygiene.

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