

“A Qualitative Study On Stress Management During Menstrual Days In Pg (Post-Graduate) College Girls In Chennai”

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ABSTRACT: *Menstruation is a process where a female's body prepares themselves for potential pregnancy. The term period is the process begins between 10 to 15 years of age where the woman discharges blood once a month interval of average 21 to 35 days from puberty till menopause (ceasing of regular menstrual cycles in their 40s or 50s) except during pregnancy. During menstrual days besides bleeding women undergo other signs and symptoms of PMS (Premenstrual Syndrome) and Dysmenorrhoea. Due to certain changes occurring in their body during menstrual days can cause stress in one's life. In this study the researcher collected the data through Telephonic interview with PG studying girls from various colleges in Chennai to know the awareness regarding their menstrual pattern, issues and differences they had/have in their flow and interval of menstruation, the signs and symptoms they face, its effects in their routine activities and their overall management of those stressors during their menstrual days. The major findings of this study reveal their physical, emotional and behavioral aspects they undergo during menstrual days. The stress management during menstrual days here involves life style changes, changing the situation or avoiding the situation.*

Keywords: *menstrual days, stress management, Premenstrual syndrome and Dysmenorrhoea – signs and symptoms*

1. INTRODUCTION

Menstruation is a normal process that females go through as their bodies prepare themselves for potential pregnancy. The term period or bleeding is the process in a woman of discharging blood once a month interval from puberty until menopause (ceasing of regular menstrual cycles) except during pregnancy. During menstruation besides bleeding there are other signs and symptoms that take place, it can be said as PMS and Dysmenorrhoea. Premenstrual syndrome (PMS) is a condition that affects a woman's emotions, physical health and behaviour during certain menstrual days, generally just before menses. Dysmenorrhoea is one of the most prevalent menstrual problems during this period and can drastically affect women's daily activities. The symptoms during PMS and Dysmenorrhoea include :

abdominal bloating and pain, sore breasts, acne, food cravings, constipation, diarrhoea, headaches, sensitivity to light or sound, fatigue, irritability, changes in sleep patterns, anxiety, depression, sadness and emotional outbursts. Stress can be defined as any type of change that causes physical, emotional or psychological strain. Stress management defines stress precisely as a person's physiological response to an external stimulus that triggers the "fight-or-flight" reaction. The response to stress however makes a big difference to our overall well-being. Sometimes the best way to manage stress involves changing the situation.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

(Rafique& Al-Sheikh, 2018) says in their study on 'Prevalence of menstrual problems and their association with psychological stress in young female students studying health sciences'. The most prevalent menstrual problems (dysmenorrhoea and premenstrual symptoms) in the target population were strongly associated with stress. Therefore, it is recommended that health science students should be provided with early psychological and gynecological counseling to prevent future complications.

(Ibrahim et al., 2015) says in their study on 'Dysmenorrhoea among female medical students in King Abdulaziz University': Prevalence, Predictors and outcome. A high prevalence of dysmenorrhoea was prevalent among medical students in King Abdulaziz University (KAU), Health promotion, screening programs, and stress management courses are recommended.

(Kural et al., 2015) says in their study on 'Menstrual characteristics and prevalence of dysmenorrhoea in college going girls'. Dysmenorrhoeais found to be highly prevalent among college going girls. Family history, bleeding duration and presence of clots were significant risk factors for dysmenorrhoea.

(Begum et al., 2009) says in their study on 'Menstrual Pattern and Common Menstrual Disorders among Students in Dinajpur Medical College'. The prevalence of dysmenorrhoea and menstrual irregularity was high, and most adolescents have inappropriate and insufficient information about menstrual problems. Hence, an education program is needed at the end of primary school about menarche and menstrual problems.

AIM OF THE STUDY

To make a qualitative study about awareness on menstrual patterns and coping factors for stress during menstrual days among Post Graduate College students.

OBJECTIVES

- To assess the knowledge on menstrual patterns among the Post Graduate College girls.
- To assess the effects of stress on their day-to-day life activities during menstrual days.
- To study the impact of menstrual problems on their health.
- To examine the menstrual pattern on their menstrual cycle.
- To determine the abnormalities during their menstrual days.
- To know the managing strategies due to stress during menstrual days.
- To provide suitable suggestions.

2. METHODS

FACTOR	Telephonic Interview
FORMAT	Post Graduate college Girls
AGE	Above 20 years
SIZE	10 Students
DATE	22 March 2021 – 28 March 2021
LENGTH OF SESSION	30 to 45 minutes
FORM OF DATA	Voice conversation
DOCUMENTATION PATTERN	(Mobile) Audio Recording
INTERVIEWER	PavithraBharathi. k

3. FINDINGS

From the telephonic interview method the researcher gathered information and the findings are given related to the following aspects such as,

- ✓ Knowledge on menstrual cycle
- ✓ Effects during menstrual days
- ✓ Impact of menstruation on health
- ✓ Abnormalities in menstrual days
- ✓ Managing strategies due to stressors
- Most of the respondents didn't have awareness on menstruation at the age of their first menstrual cycle. As years passed the respondents got information through their family and school education. So, the respondents are able to guess the average days of interval between one to another menstrual cycle.
- Most of the respondents felt effects of menstruation in their interpersonal relationships, academic aspects like not able to concentrate, not able to attend classes, not able to prepare for exams where their results get affected. Some of the respondents try to reduce their routine activities and normally not prefer to travel outdoors during their menstrual days. In one of the respondent's communities, the respondent should be separated from the family for 3 to 4 days, not to touch anybody inside the house, wash all the things she uses, should not attend any functions or allowed outside during her menstrual days. Only their family permits her to go school or college during menstrual days.
- In this study all the respondents have impact on their health due to menstruation like abdominal bloating, back pain, leg pain, sore breasts, acne, pimple, food craving, constipation, diarrhea, head ache, sensitivity to sound, fatigue, irritability, irregular sleep pattern, anxiety, depression, and emotional outbursts which are all the signs & symptoms of Premenstrual Syndrome and Dysmenorrhoea.

- Most of the respondents have regular intervals, average days and blood flow during their menstrual cycle.
- Some of the respondents had 2 months to 2 years of irregularity to get their second menstrual cycle, among them one of the respondents has irregularity of 2 to 6 months to get her regular monthly cycle and also one of the respondents has issues in her blood flow during menstrual days due to iron and vitamin deficiency. So, most of the respondents include extra food items like fenugreek seeds, liquids items like coconut water, juices, sweets & chocolates, traditional items such as sesame seed laddu, ragi, porridge by avoiding hot items such as spicy and non vegetables during their menstrual days.
- Most the respondents had their own management of stressors during their menstrual days are on the following, 'She will try to deviate her thoughts, try to motivate and built hope within them', 'She just takes rest, put wet cloth on her stomach to get relief', 'Food, exercise and yoga helps a lot to manage which she follows regularly', 'She will be silent and carry out her activities', 'Just eat whatever is necessary avoid other foods items', 'She started to accept the culture of her family and manage things by her own', 'She will do exercise and distract her pain by listening music', 'She started using cotton cloth pads, mostly eats cool items', 'She has mindset that to be active during periods like do lot of physical activities', 'Manage to control her emotions, be alone in comfortable place'. Only one respondent states 'She has not tried to manage anything till now'.

4. SUGGESTIONS

From the above study, the awareness regarding menstruation should be provided for every girl child at the age between 8 to 10 years. The education regarding menstruation should be provided through the family members, educators, practitioners, counselors, social workers etc. Nowadays, most of the girls experience irregularities and issues regarding menstruation are due to their lifestyle changes. So every girl child should try to have a healthy food plan including traditional food items such as ragi, sesame seed balls, porridge etc., and do physical activities like exercise, yoga, meditation etc. to regularize the menstrual cycle and to reduce issues related to menstruation. In some communities, there are certain restrictions which have been focused on a girl child during menstrual days. Every individual in this society should understand that menstruation is a normal process that takes place in women so it's better to be aware, rid of myths and avoid following restrictions related to menstruation.

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