



SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY ON SANITARY NAPKINS DURING MENSTRUATION PERIOD

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ABSTRACT:

Menstruation is a natural reproductive process. In our society, menstruation is considered as something that is unclean, shameful, and impure. The conversation regarding menstruation among women and adolescent girls from an initial age is observed as prohibited. If menstruating women and adolescent girls cannot access safe and private places for managing menstrual hygiene, it is against their dignity. There is a need for a holistic approach that addresses menstrual health and hygiene issues within the context of human rights. When women and girls cannot manage their bleeding cycle hygienically, it can negatively impact their rights. With this background, the main objective of this paper is to examine basic rights in the context of menstrual health and hygiene. This study is significant because it helps to understand the existing human rights, use of sanitary pads and adequate washing of genital area are essential during menstruation.

KEYWORDS:

WOMEN, ADOLESCENT GIRLS, HUMAN RIGHTS, MENSTRUAL HEALTH AND HYGIENE, MENSTRUATION, SANITARY PADS, GENITAL AREA.

INTRODUCTION

Menstruation is a natural process that is associated with a woman's ability to procreate. The onset of menstruation is called Menarche, one of the milestones in an adolescent girl's life. Menstruation is periodic vaginal bleeding that occurs with the shedding of the uterine mucosa, one of the symbols of Puberty. There are more than 300 million women worldwide are menstruating. In total, an estimated 500 million lack access to menstrual products and adequate facilities for menstrual hygiene management. Especially in Indian scenario where joint families are common in the society, the issues of menstrual hygiene practices are needed to be tackled at early age, as adolescence. The knowledge, attitudes and practices regarding menstrual hygiene, which establish at this age, are usually followed by them throughout life and also passed on to the next generation. Therefore, faulty practices pertaining to menstruation will affect health of large number of women in reproductive age group. Usually, adolescents are guided by their mother or other female family members regarding menstrual hygiene practices. It is necessary to assess the practices of mother as well as other female family members regarding the menstrual hygiene. Menstrual hygiene practices also vary in rural and urban areas. In Indian culture, talking about reproductive function of body is considered taboo. Young females have poor knowledge and lack of awareness about physical and physiological changes associated with adolescence. They hardly get any chance to learn about menstruation. Various myths and social beliefs are also prevailing related to menstruation. Most girls are unaware about proper menstrual practices at the age of menarche. Use of unhygienic cloths and other traditional methods

may lead to development of infection of reproductive tract which may seriously hamper the reproductive capacity or even life of female.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

To assess the status of Knowledge, Affordability, Availability & Accessibility of Sanitary Napkins; in knowledge, attitude and the practice of menstrual hygiene; among adolescent girls and women aging between 11- 45.

METHODOLOGY & PROCESS

For research work I have identified 15 villages from Khurai block of Sagar District from Madhya Pradesh, India. The sampling was done using multi stage sampling technique.

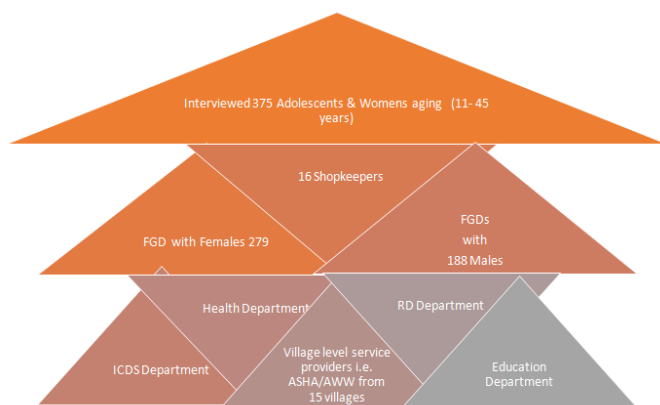
- **FIRST STAGE:** Finalization of Tool with suggestions from guide and get it approved from Dr. Santosh Salve Mentor and Guide.
- **SECOND STAGE:** Random selection of 15 villages from Khurai block of Sagar District (BerkhediPithariya, Tewra, Nagda, Tewri, Karampur, Muhasa, Kaurasa, Majhera, BarodiyaNonagarh, Toda Kachhi, Guwari, SemraGanpat, Bardha, Talapar, Jangrai Kala)
- **THIRD STAGE:** Random selection of 375 Adolescent girls and women's aging 11-45 years of age. In each of the village 25 beneficiaries were identified and interviewed from the community of sampled village.

$$\text{Selection of beneficiary} = \frac{\text{Number of HH}}{25 \text{ participants from the village}}$$

Hence every 8th HH was our target for Individual interview.

- **FOURTH STAGE:** Focus Group discussion with the secondary and primary stake holders for K&A3 i.e., Adolescent Girls & Women's aging between 11-45 year; and also, the male participants of the community either they are Father, Husband or family members of female.
- **FIFTH STAGE:** Collection of secondary data and information from service provision side of the study i.e., Service providers at the village (ASHA, AWW, ANM); Provision Departments for availability of Sanitary Napkins (Health, ICDS, RD & Education departments); Open market supplier (Medical, Provision and other mini stores)
- **SIXTH STAGE:** Computerization and data entry of the data collected from the different segments of the community; wherein primary and secondary stake holders were interrogated.
- **FINALIZATION STAGE:** Data and information interpretation and preparation of research study report; sharing and submission.

STAKEHOLDERS MATRIX



As schedule and approved the research study has further covers the following segment of the society and community;

- Primary Stakeholders i.e.
 - Adolescent Girls
 - Women from RH group
- Secondary Stakeholders i.e.
 - Male members of the community
 - Service Providers at community level i.e., ASHA/AWW
 - Provisioning Departments for Sanitary Napkin provision i.e., Health, ICDS, Education and RD

Retailers and mini provision store available at nearby as alternate.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In correlation and in relation of above said research study;

following points has been recommended and suggested for improvise Sanitary Napkin usage among women and adolescents aging between 11-49 years of the age;

- Information and transformative knowledge sharing among last beneficiary.
- Breaking the taboo's related to Menstruation has to be breakdown.
- Ensure to create demand and supply chain mechanism at place.
- Ensure availability and accessibility of Sanitary Pads at village level with peer or feminine group representatives.
- If possible low-cost Sanitary Napkins are made available at nearest place to buy.
- Development of Female centric proprietorship to enhance the ownership of females in Sanitary Pads business.
- Involvement and initiatives from male segment of the community is highly appreciable.
- Sustainable and regular programme support on the issue from Government with any hatchback.

SOME FACTS AND DETAILS OF SECONDARY INFORMATION AVAILABLE ON SANITARY PADS

- The latest National Family and Health Survey 4 found that 58 per cent of young Indian women (15-24 years) use a hygienic method of protection (mostly sanitary pads), a significant increase from the 12 per cent using pads in 2010 (as reported by the Plan and AC Nielsen study).
- As much as 82 of percent women in India still do not know what a sanitary napkin is or what it is used for - an alarming statistic but an even tougher number to counter.
- Data states that a single woman can generate up to 125 kilograms of non-biodegradable waste during her menstrual years.
- Studies suggest that one sanitary napkin can take at least 500 to 800 years to decompose due to the plastic content in it.
- "Only 18% women in India have access to sanitary hygiene in India"
- A 2014 report by the NGO Dasra titled *Spot On!* Found that nearly 23 million girls drop out of school annually due to lack of proper menstrual hygiene management facilities, which include availability of sanitary napkins and logical awareness of menstruation.
- 71% adolescent girls in India remain unaware of menstruation till menarche
- Indian Council for Medical Research's 2011-12 report stated that only 38 per cent menstruating girls in India spoke to their mothers about

menstruation.

- A 2015 survey by the Ministry of Education found that in 63% schools in villages, teachers never discussed menstruation and how to deal with it in a hygienic manner.

CONCLUSION

This study draw a conclusion that the discipline of sociology itself Studies social problems. It suggests that including Social institutions like kinship, economic, political, education, and religious institutions the life of adolescent girls should be treated as a big issue of sociology. The data suggests that the menarche's condition does not tend to appear very good, even at some places, it is the same as it was earlier in life. The sanitary, nutritional, and economic conditions of our society should be improved. And we should include the adolescence ceremony of the girls under the institutions which are like pillars that hold up society because they are the constituent parts of the social system (society).

We should make the ladies aware for better health management during menstruation. The historical association of menstruation with evil spirits should stop the practices influenced by the old concepts (in which women used to bury the cloths they use to absorb period blood) should be restricted. Menstruation shuld be accepted scientifically. The girls should know that the actual cause of menstruation is ovulation followed by missed chances of pregnancy that results in bleeding from the endometrial vessels and is followed by preparation of the next cycle.

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