

Interventional study to assess knowledge and practice among rural adolescent girls regarding menstruation and their perception of taboos

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■ **ABSTRACT** : Adolescence in girls is a turbulent period, which includes stressful events like menarche, considered as a landmark of female puberty. Menstruation is generally considered as unclean in the Indian society particularly in rural areas. Menstrual practices are still shrouded by taboos and socio-cultural restrictions. Isolation of the menstruating girls and restrictions being imposed on them in the family, have reinforced a negative attitude towards this phenomenon. Adolescent girls remain ignorant of the scientific facts and hygiene practices which sometimes result into adverse health consequences. There is a substantial lacuna in the knowledge towards menstruation among adolescent girls. Thus the present study was undertaken to assess the awareness of rural adolescent girls regarding menstruation and reproductive health aspects through an intervention study. A total of 200 adolescent girls in the age group of 12 to 16 years were selected randomly from four government schools from Badgaon village of Rajasthan. The study adopted a pretest – post test design with an intervention for a period of five days. Post testing was done after the intervention and data was analyzed using SPSS version 11.0 windows. Results revealed that the knowledge of girls regarding menstruation and reproductive health aspects improved significantly after intervention. Thus the study clearly showed that educational intervention programme can bring about a desirable change in the knowledge among adolescent girls regarding reproductive health.

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■ **KEY WORDS**: Adolescents, Attitude, Intervention, Knowledge, Rural area, Taboos

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