

# Nature and the Pattern of Menstrual Problems among Adolescent Girls



R. Shakeela, S.N. Sugumar

**Abstract:** *Human health is a prime factor of a Country's Economic development. Women play a vital role in preserving the Human health and wellbeing of the society. Healthy Women means Healthy World which represents the fact that women are the caretakers of family's health. Healthy families lead to healthy society. Health of future generation depends on healthy mothers. Menstrual problems are the major issue among women, which has to be handled with utmost priority. Most of the women are suffering from menstrual problems. Every woman in her life time, from menarche to menopause faces at least one or more of menstrual problems. It disturbs day to day life of women. Life style and behavior will be changed as soon as a girl attained puberty. After puberty the girl will experience Physical, Psychological and Emotional challenges in her life. Age at puberty is a turning point in her life and it makes her to have change in her interpersonal relations especially with her friends and counterpart.*

**Keywords –** Health, Health economics, Women's health, Menstrual cycle, Menstrual symptoms, Premenstrual syndrome (PMS).

## I. INTRODUCTION

Health is a prime factor of a Country's development. The Country's Economic status is mainly depending on Health status of the Country. Wealthier Countries have Healthier population. Healthier population can be produced by healthier Women. Women play a vital role in preserving the health and wellbeing of their societies. Healthy Women represents the fact that women are the caretakers of family health. Healthy families lead to healthy society. According to Geetha S. Iyengar – a Yoga specialist stated that wealth of nation and health of the future generation depends upon the physical and mental well-being of women<sup>1</sup>.

Menstrual problems are the main health issue in women's life. Girls face various physiological and psychological problems when menstruation is initiated, especially during the transformation stage from childhood to womanhood. In fact, 75 percentage of adolescent girls are experiencing some problems with menstruation<sup>2</sup>. Adolescence is a stage where a

girl should have adequate knowledge to cope up with the problems of menstruation to maintain sound health. At this juncture, it is to state that the knowledge about the menstrual problems, focused attitude and proper treatment facilities for this issue will develop the self-image of women and this is the need of the hour.

## II. RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

Objective of the study is to examine the nature and the pattern of the menstrual problems among adolescent girls.

## III. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

To have clarity and clear understanding on the subject, the researcher made an attempt to review a few literatures related to menstrual problems.

Shabnam Omidvaret.al. (2018) emphasized the importance of the educational program on menstrual problems to the school girls for them to handle the situation during periods<sup>3</sup>. A.E.Arafa et.al. (2018) suggested to conduct programs on health awareness to improve girls' knowledge regarding menstrual problems<sup>4</sup>. Rumana Akbari M et.al (2017) concluded that PMS symptoms are more for the students' those attained puberty at young age, girls residing in hostels, vegetarian girls and final year girls. Author has also suggested that girls can avoid menstrual complications and can get treatment at right time, if they have proper awareness about menstrual symptoms<sup>5</sup>. Ranjana Mandal et.al (2015), suggested to have proper medical care to avoid the bad effects of PMS. In this study it is said that depression, anger, irritability, anxiety, confusion is more among students before menstruation<sup>6</sup>. Asha Mahesh et.al (2011) concluded that students with PMS problems get affected mentally and physically which results in poor academic achievements<sup>7</sup>.

## IV. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

There are three important stages in woman's life beginning with youth, passing through middle age, and ending with old age. A woman after getting menstruation will become womanhood. Age of menarche is not only a turning point in her life but also an indication of motherhood. Generally, women come across three different stages viz., Menstruation, Pregnancy & delivery and Menopause. In fact, in all the three stages, women face a lot of problems and they are the matter of survival for them. Among females, the menstrual cycle occurs repeatedly between the ages of menarche and menopause.

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## Nature and the Pattern of Menstrual Problems among Adolescent Girls

As the menstrual cycle starts, changes occur in the female reproductive system as well as in the physical appearance. A woman's first menstruation is termed menarche, and it occurs typically around the age 12 to 16. The end of a woman's reproductive phase of life is called the menopause and this commonly occurs somewhere between the ages of 45 and 55. Menstrual cycle and its problems

The menstrual cycle is natural change that occurs in the uterus and ovaries as an essential part of aking reproduction possible. The menstrual cycle is essential for the production of eggs and for the preparation of the uterus for pregnancy. The average menstrual cycle takes about 28 days. It occurs in three phases: 1) Follicular phase (development of the egg), 2) Ovulatory phase (Release of the egg) and 3) Luteal phase (Implantation of fertilized egg).

If the egg is not fertilized, levels of hormones get decreased and the lining of uterus prepared for the pregnancy breaks down and sheds. Shedding of endometrium, the uterine lining is called menstruation or period. Women may experience lots of complaints during this period. Three out of four experience enstrual discomforts <sup>8</sup>

Menstrual cramps are caused by contractions in the uterus, which is a muscle. The uterus contracts throughout a woman's menstrual cycle. If the uterus contracts too strongly, it can press against nearby blood vessels, cutting off the supply of oxygen to the muscle tissue of the uterus. Pain results when part of a muscle briefly loses its supply of xygen.

### Premenstrual syndrome (PMS)

Premenstrual syndrome occurs in luteal phase with lot of symptoms, which affects the normal life of women. Before a week or two of Women's menstrual periods, Physical and emotional symptoms occur. The categories of the symptoms are of four types – Physical, Psychological, Emotional and Behavioral. Those symptoms may vary person to person.

Nearly 150 symptoms are associated with PMS. But nine are the most common symptoms that are considered for diagnosis. Persons having five and above of PMS symptoms out of nine to be treated as per DSM-5 of APA (American sychiatric Association) <sup>9</sup>. They are:

1. Body pains - Headache, Abdominal pain, Backache, General pains, Cramps, Muscle stiffness, 2. Edematous - Bloating, Swelling of hands / feet, 3. Breast tenderness, 4. Lethargy & Fatigue, 5. Mood swings, 6. Irritability, 7. Anger outburst, 8. Depression and 9. Anxiety.

According to the research on PMS, the cause is said to be the rise and fall of hormones, specifically because of the levels of estrogen, Progesterone and serotonin hormones throughout the menstrual cycle.

## V. METHODOLOGY

The research scholar has selected the subjects from Christ King girls' higher secondary school, Selaiyur, Tambaram, Chennai, Tamilnadu. As per the field investigations, 600 students fall in the age group between 16 and 18. Out of this, 460 students are suffering from menstrual problems. Out of these 460, only 210 students have accepted to co-operate for the study to examine the nature and pattern of physical problems of menstruation.

## VI. DATA ANALYSIS

The Physical problems (25 Symptoms) that the subjects (210 students) witnessed during the periods are classified as follows:

**Table 1: PAIN RELATED ISSUES**

S.No	Name of Symptoms (Pain related issues)	No. of respondents	Percenta ge
1.	Headache	43	20.5%
2.	Abdominal pain	165	78.5%
3.	Backache	143	68%
4.	General aches and Pain	63	30%
5.	Cramps	62	29.5%
6.	Muscle stiffness	14	6.6%
7.	Breast tenderness	18	8.5%

Source: Primary data

**Table 2: Body Temperature Related Issues**

S.No	Name of Symptoms (Body temperature related issues)	No. of respondents	Percent age
1.	Cold sweats	18	8.5%
2.	Hot flashes	44	21%

Source: Primary data

**Table 3: External Physical Problems**

S.No	Name of Symptoms (External Physical problems)	No. of respondents	Percent age
1.	Swelling of hands / feet	16	7.6%
2.	Bloating	14	6.6%
3.	Weight gain	15	7.1%
4.	Skin problems	12	5.7%
5.	Allergic reactions	8	3.8%
6.	Nausea	28	13.3%
7.	Vomiting	18	8.5%

Source: Primary data

**Table 4: Bowl Movement Disorders**

S.No	Name of Symptoms (Bowl movement disorders)	No. of respondents	Percent age
1.	Constipation	11	5.2%
2.	Diarrhea	12	5.7%
3.	Gastrointestinal symptoms	1	0.5%

Source: Primary data

**Table 5: Mood Related Issues**

S.No	Name of Symptoms (Mood related issues)	No. of respondents	Percenta ge
1.	Fatigue	152	72.4%
2.	Dizziness	38	18%
3.	Palpitations	38	18%
4.	Food cravings	26	12.3%
5.	Thirst & Appetite changes	38	18%
6.	Poor sleep or sleep disturbances	70	33.3%

Source: Primary data

**Table 6: Prevalence of Pms’s Physical Symptoms Among Study Subjects**

S.No	No. of Symptoms	No. of respondents	Percentage
1	0 to 5	135	64.3%
2	6 to 10	64	30.5%
3	11 to 15	11	5.2%
4	16 to 20	0	-
5	21 to 25	0	-
Total	25 Symptoms	210	100%

Source: Primary data

**VII. FINDINGS**

Table-1 reveals that out of 210, 165 girls are suffering from abdominal pain and 143 girls are having backache. In Table-2, 44 percent is suffering from hot flashes. Table-3 shows that 13.3 percent suffers from Nausea and 72 percent girls are suffering from Fatigue according to Table-5 Table-6 explains symptomswise classification of the study subjects. Out of 210, 135 girls are suffering from five different physical problems. 64 girls are suffering from six to ten problems and 11 subjects are suffering from 11 to 15 problems. The study conveys that all the girls are suffering from multiple problems during their periods.

**VIII. CONCLUSION**

As per the survey report, 76 percent of the girls are suffering from Premenstrual Syndrome. Among them, 64 percent of them are suffering from five different physical problems and 36 percent of them are suffering from 6 to 15 physical problems. The study reveals that most of them are suffering from multiple symptoms of PMS.

**IX. DISCUSSION**

It is pertinent to say that most of the adolescent girls are suffering from PMS. Therefore, it is a major issue of Women and proper awareness, education and treatment are need of the hour to create healthy women.

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