

Managing Menstruation with Dignity: Insights into Hygiene, Taboos, and Access Among Rural Indian Women

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Abstract: *In the rural regions of India, menstruation is frequently associated with stigma and concealment. Many girls and women are raised with a profound lack of understanding regarding menstrual hygiene, which can be attributed to entrenched cultural taboos and traditional ideologies. Consequently, they are necessitated to navigate their menstrual cycles utilizing hazardous and unsanitary materials such as repurposed fabric, ash, or sand behaviors that may result in infections and enduring reproductive health complications. In addition to health issues, menstruation significantly influences the educational pursuits, dignity, and self-esteem of girls. A considerable number discontinue their education or are absent from school during their menstrual periods owing to trepidation, shame, or insufficient facilities. In a community where menstruation is a natural physiological occurrence, such reticence proves detrimental. This study endeavors to investigate the practical difficulties associated with menstrual hygiene management within rural and urban impoverished communities in India. It examines levels of awareness, common practices, the influence of cultural taboos, and the accessibility of sanitary products. The research aims to highlight the imperative necessity for education, eliminate harmful misconceptions, and advocate for practical, inclusive approaches to improve menstrual health and preserve dignity for all individuals.*

Keywords: Menstruation Awareness, Rural India, Sanitary Products Accessibility, Menstrual Health Management, Adolescent Girls

