

**Intervention Program to Cope with
Psychological Problems Associated
with Menstruation among Female
Adolescents**

Thesis

**Submitted for Partial Fulfillment of the requirement
of Doctorate Degree in Nursing Sciences
(Psychiatric/Mental Health Nursing)**

By

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2013**

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

قَالُوا سُبْحَانَكَ لَا عِلْمَ لَنَا إِلَّا مَا
عَلَّمْتَنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَلِيمُ الْحَكِيمُ

صدق الله العظيم

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Dedication

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List of Abbreviations

FSH	:	Follicle stimulating hormone
LH	:	Luteinizing hormone
MDQ	:	Menstrual Distress Questionnaire
PMS	:	Premenstrual Symptoms
SPSS	:	Statistical Package for Social Sciences

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Abstract

Adolescence is a period of personal development "transition from childhood to adulthood" during which young female must establish a personal sense of individual identity and feelings of self-worth which include an alteration of her body image, coping with stress, mature intellectual abilities, adjustments to society`s demand for behavioral maturity, and preparing for adult roles. So, such group of female adolescents will need to cope with these psychological problems. The present study aimed to investigate the effect of an intervention program for female adolescent to cope with psychological problems associated with menstruation. The study subjects consisted of (150) female adolescents aged 13-15 years. The study was carried at the three governmental preparatory schools "Om El-moomenin, El-Sanya, and Hoda Sharawy", in El-Sayeda Zeinab, District, Cairo Governorate. Three tools were used for data collection: 1- Student's concept and knowledge assess scale about menstruation, 2- Menstrual Distress Questionnaire (MDQ), and 3- Premenstrual coping scale. The results revealed that, the main source of female knowledge about the menstrual cycle and the closest person to female at the time of tension and anxiety was the mother. Majority of females preferred to drink warm fluids, applying hot water bottle on the lower abdomen also knew the food items needed during menstruation. The majority of girls knew the importance of regular practice of sports, as it helps in alleviating pain. The most common psychological symptoms were related to low ability to perform activity, the inability to leave bed, a feeling of isolation and error in judgment. Results revealed improvement in coping with psychological problems associated with menstruation among female adolescents. The study concluded that as a result of intervention program, the majority of females identify their psychological problems and acquired the methods of coping with the psychological problems associated with menstruation. The study recommended providing female adolescents with the proper knowledge related to the physical and psychological aspects of menstruation before menarche age. They should be taught in nursing curriculum. At the community level, designing programs for mothers of young females and school teachers to teach them about the coping strategies for menstruation and empowering them with the necessary skills to communicate with and transfer the obtained information to their female adolescents.

Key words: Female adolescent, menstruation, psychological problems, coping strategies.

Operational Definitions

Female adolescent:

Is the time period between 11 and 18 years of life (WHO definition), characterized by critical physical and psychological changes leading to adulthood.

Menstruation:

Menstruation or period is a major stage of puberty in girls; it's one of the many physical and psychological signs that a female is turning into a woman.

Coping:

Coping has been defined in psychological terms as "constantly changing cognitive and behavioral efforts to manage specific external and/or internal demands". & Coping is thus expending conscious effort to solve personal and interpersonal problems, and seeking to master, minimize or tolerate stress or conflict.

Introduction

Adolescence is a period of personal development "transition from childhood to adulthood" during which young female must establish a personal sense of individual identity and feelings of self-worth, which include an alteration of her body image, coping with stress, mature intellectual abilities, adjustments to society`s demand for behavioral maturity, and preparing for adult roles (*Knopak, 2012*).

In Egypt, it has been found that the onset of menstruation usually appears between eleven to fourteen years depending on the constitution of the female (*Population Council, 2010*). The information about physical maturation (including menarche) is often not discussed with the family. On the assumption that silence and secrecy of menstruation didn't allow an open discussion on this subject, very few mothers until recent time, talk to their daughters openly about the process of menstruation because of myths, taboos and misconception and cultural practice associated with it as indicated by *The National Survey of Egyptian Adolescents, (NSEA), (2011)*.

According to *Maawad (2008)*, puberty is the period in the growth and development of the child and progress of sexual, physical and psychological maturation. Menarche is a

time of stress in female's life and she needs emotional support and assistance that menstruation is normal and healthy; mothers are critically important in their regard but are often unable to meet their daughter's needs.

The onset of menstruation in a female who is uninformed, arouses emotions of fear and shame, and can give her a psychological shock from which she never fully recovers (*Gupta, 2011*). In addition, *Pillitteri (2012)* mentioned that menstruation plays an important role in the health of a female; it is crucial that a female obtains accurate knowledge about menstruation and learns to accept menstruation as a positive, natural part of her life.

Moreover, *Singh et al., (2013)* reported that female adolescents suffer from negative feelings such as guilt, shame and inferiority as a result of lack of awareness regarding their growth processes. They stress on the need to orient parents and the community on a large scale through specially designed courses so as to have a positive impact on their attitudes and practices and help female to cope with psychological problems associated with menstruation.

Intervention program will improve understanding and attitudes toward menstruation among female adolescents, if females are prepared even before menarche they will develop

positive awareness and attitude to cope with physical and psychological changes. Further, this will enable them to develop a healthy attitude toward menstruation and help females to cope with myths and beliefs surrounding menstruation (*George, 2013*).

The psychiatric nurse has an important role in education of female adolescent to improve her knowledge, attitude, discomfort and unpleasant symptoms to promote physical and emotional comfort, and help balancing mood swings and sleeplessness by increasing healthy activities to cope with psychological problems associated with menstruation among female adolescents (*Cohen et al., 2013*).