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### RESEARCH ARTICLE

#### KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEF OF MALE POPULATION TOWARDS MENSTRUATION

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#### Abstract

**Background:** Menstruation is a normal physiological phenomenon that indicates the sign of motherhood and continuation of generation. Knowledge and awareness about menstruation among males is equally important to overcome the negative beliefs and ill menstrual health of females.

**Objective:** To assess the knowledge and beliefs regarding menstruation among males at Chandernagar, Dehradun, Uttarakhand, India.

**Methodology:** Quantitative research approach with descriptive design was used to assess knowledge and beliefs regarding menstruation among males. A total of 500 men above the age of 18 years were included in the study by using consecutive sampling technique. The study was conducted for a period of two months from 1st January 2022 to 28th February 2022. The data was collected for 6 days in a week. The Self structured questionnaires to assess Knowledge and Belief of men towards menstruation were used for data collection.

**Results:** The mean age of study participants was  $40.63 \pm 11.58$ . The result of present study reveals that most of the subjects (approx. 41%) had poor and intermediate level of knowledge and rest of the subjects (17.6%) had good level of knowledge. Most of the subjects (81.2%) had negative belief and the remaining subjects (18.8%) had positive belief towards menstruation. A strong positive correlation ( $r=0.04$ ) was found between knowledge and belief towards menstruation among males at  $p$  value = 0.01.

**Conclusion:** These findings highlight the need to improve knowledge and to erase negative mentalities regarding menstruation among males to improve health of the women and girls over the globe.

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#### Introduction:-

Life is a precious treasure that is granted to all human beings through a woman. People think that women are delicate 'Queens' who were not made to do hard labour that men were created for, but what could be the biggest strength than giving birth to baby.

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Menstruation - aka 'period' is the free discharge of blood and mucous out of a female's vagina. It is generally the shedding of endometrial lining inside a woman's uterus or womb that is prepared every month to receive a fertilized egg. It is a biological process that every woman has to go through in her lifetime.<sup>i</sup>

According to United States (2015) population of females in the world is estimated at 3.905 billion, approximately 49.58 % of the world population and in India it is estimated to be 60.47 crore. Globally women make up half of the total population despite of being a vast population millions of women are still facing some sort of barriers to comfortable and safe experience of menstrual health according to United Nations (2013)<sup>ii</sup>

When a woman starts menstruating, she goes on through a lot of physical pain due to the biological factors associated with it but on the same note she suffers through a lot of psychological and mental distress that is poured on her by the society.

Education regarding menstruation is important for everyone regardless of gender to spread biological and scientific knowledge on how organs work. Teaching men and women both about menstruation will help them better understand the practicalities and importance of safe sex and contraception which can help them prevent unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases. This will also clear the misconceptions and their common myths.<sup>iii</sup>

## **Material and Methods:-**

### **Study design**

The study was conducted at Chandernagar, Dehradun, Uttarakhand, from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2022 to 28<sup>th</sup> February 2022. Descriptive research design was used. Consecutive sampling technique was used for collecting the sample which comprised of 500 men above the age of 18 years.

### **Inclusion criteria**

1. All men above the age of 18 years.
2. All men who can read, write, understand and speak Hindi.
3. All men who were willing to participate in the study.

### **Exclusion criteria**

All men who were not interested to talk about menstruation.

### **Instrument/ Tool**

It includes Self structured questionnaire to evaluate the knowledge and Self structured questionnaire to evaluate men's belief toward menstruation.

### **Tool 1: Personal and socio demographic details**

It include age in years, education, marital status, number of children (if married), occupation, income(per month), type of family, number of females in the family, religion, locality, previous knowledge regarding menstruation.

### **Tool 2: Self structured knowledge questionnaire**

Knowledge was assessed regarding reproductive organ, menstruation, menarche, menopause and menstrual hygiene.

### **Scoring of tool**

Each parameter was awarded 1 mark for the correct answer and 0 mark if the answer is wrong. Thus the total marks for the questions related to knowledge were 15. Those who scored between 0 – 7 were considered having poor level of knowledge between 8- 11 were considered having intermediate level of knowledge and those who scored between 12 -15 were considered having high level of knowledge.

### **Tool 3: Self structured tool to measure men's belief towards menstruation.**

The tool was developed by investigator to collect information regarding men belief towards menstruation.

### **Scoring of Tool**

Each parameter was awarded 1 mark for correct answer and 0 mark if the answer is wrong. Thus total marks for questions related to belief were 12. Those who scored between 0-6 were considered having negative belief those scored between 7-12 were considered having positive belief.

### Statistical analysis

The analysis of data was planned on the basis of objectives and hypothesis using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Personal and Socio demographic variables, knowledge and belief scores were analyzed by using frequency and percentage distribution. Chi-square test was used to find out the association of knowledge and belief with Socio demographic variables. To find out relationship and strength Karl Pearson coefficient correlation was used.

### Results:-

In this study the mean age of study participants was  $40.63 \pm 11.58$ . The majority of subjects, 144 (28.8%) were in the age group of 38-47 years. The study showed that in terms of education most of the subjects 114 (22.8%) were among junior high school. In terms of marital status 423 (84.6%) subjects were married and 77 (15.4%) were unmarried. In terms of number of children the majority of subjects 332 (78.3%) were having 1-3 children. In terms of occupation majority of 250 (51.2%) subject were businessmen. Majority of subjects 328 (65.6%) had nuclear family and 172 (34.4%) had joint family. Most of the subjects 441 (88.2%) had one to three females in their family. In terms of previous knowledge, majority of subjects 491 (98.2%) had previous knowledge about menstruation and 9 (1.8%) subjects did not have previous knowledge.

**Table No. 1:-** Frequency and Percentage distribution of socio demographic variable of subjects N= 500.

S.No.	Demographic Variables	Frequency	Percentage
1	<b>Age</b>		
	18-27	65	13.0
	28-37	140	28.0
	38-47	144	28.8
	48-57	111	22.2
	58-67	30	06.0
	68-77	10	02.0
2	<b>Education</b>		
	No Formal Education	15	03.0
	Primary Education	90	18.0
	Junior High School	114	22.8
	High School	84	16.8
	Senior Secondary	110	22.0
	Graduates And Post Graduates	87	17.4
3	<b>Marital Status</b>		
	Married	423	84.6
	Unmarried	77	15.4
4	<b>No. of Children</b>		
	No Children	17	04.0
	1-3	332	78.3
	4-6	75	17.7
5	<b>Occupation</b>		
	Business	250	51.2
	Government job	08	01.6
	Private job	198	40.6
	Retired	05	00.2
	Labour	27	05.5
6	<b>Type of Family</b>		
	Joint Family	172	34.4
	Nuclear Family	328	65.6
7	<b>No. of Females in family</b>		
	1-3	441	88.2
	4-6	59	11.9
8	<b>Previous Knowledge regarding menstruation</b>		
	Yes	491	98.2

No	09	01.8
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The mean age of study participants was  $40.63 \pm 11.58$

**Table No. 2:-** Frequency and Percentage distribution of men Knowledge regarding menstruation N= 500.

S No.	Variable	Frequency	Percentage	Mean± SD
1	<b>Knowledge</b>			
	• Poor knowledge (0-7)	207	41.4	$7.72 \pm 14.48$
	• Intermediate knowledge (8-11)	205	41.0	
	• Good knowledge (12-15)	88	17.6	

**Table No. 3:-** Frequency and Percentage distribution of men Belief regarding menstruation N=500.

S.No.	Variable	Frequency	Percentage	Mean ± SD
1	<b>Belief</b>			
	• Negative belief (0-6)	406	81.2	$4.03 \pm 89.9$
	• Positive belief (7-12)	94	18.8	

**Table No. 4:-** Coorelation between men Knowledge and Belief regarding menstruation N = 500.

Belief	Knowledge	
	r	p value
	0.04	0.01

In terms of knowledge 207(41.4%) subjects had poor knowledge, 205(41%) had intermediate knowledge and only 88(17.6%) had good knowledge regarding menstruation. The mean knowledge was found  $7.72 \pm 14.48$ .

In terms of belief most of the subjects 406(81.2%) had negative belief and only 94(18.8%) subjects had positive belief towards menstruation. The mean calculated for men belief regarding menstruation was  $4.03 \pm 89.9$ .

A strong positive correlation ( $r=0.04$ ) was found between knowledge and belief towards menstruation among males at  $p=0.01$ .

### Discussion:-

The purpose of this study was to assess the knowledge and beliefs regarding menstruation among males. In the present study, it was observed that maximum number of males 207(41.4%) had scored poor level of knowledge regarding menstruation, 205(41%) had scored intermediate level of knowledge regarding menstruation and only 88(17.6%) had scored good level of knowledge regarding menstruation.

A cross-sectional study was done by Dubey A. on both male and female to assess the knowledge and socio-cultural practices regarding menstruation. The findings of this study shows that the knowledge score calculated on the knowledge-based questions was ( $6.49 \pm 0.81$ ) for females and for males ( $4.36 \pm 2.07$ ) which was significantly lower than that of females and knowledge about menstruation is lacking in males.<sup>iv</sup>

A cross-sectional study was conducted by Srinivasan D. to assess the awareness, perceptions and practices regarding menstruation and menstrual hygiene on both male and female students studying in a degree college, Bangalore. The result revealed that awareness level was significantly better among females (72.3%) than males (29.6%). The study concluded that there are misconceptions which were widely prevalent among both genders indicating the need for health education among college going child.<sup>v</sup>

In the present study, it was observed that maximum number of males 406(81.2%) had negative beliefs about menstruation and 94(18.8%) had positive beliefs about menstruation. A similar qualitative study was done by Maria Lusía Marwan on beliefs about and attitude towards menstruation among young and middle-aged Mexicans. The sample consisted of 121 Mexican college students and 100 middle aged Mexicans. The result showed that younger participants showed more negative attitude when compare to those in middle-aged.<sup>vi</sup>

A cross-sectional study was done by Wing chi Wong on beliefs and attitudes towards menstruation of Chinese undergraduate males and females in Hong Kong. The findings of this study shows that after comparing the beliefs and attitudes towards menstruation of Chinese male undergraduate with those of female, females tended to disagree that menstruation should be maintained secret but tended to agree that it was annoying.<sup>vii</sup>

### Conclusion:-

Based on the findings of the study it can be concluded that majority of men had poor knowledge and negative beliefs. Therefore there is a need to raise the topic of menstruation among males of all the age group. Due to lack of correct knowledge and false beliefs they are possibly and directly responsible for the ill menstrual health of females of our country. Providing education on menstruation to both males and females is important in order to make a positive change in the family, society as well as the country. Woman is the key to a healthy life and so is her own.

### Source of Support:

Nil.

### Conflict of interest:

None.

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