

# The Importance of Educating Young Girls about Menstruation

Garige Jyothsna\*

Department of Women Education, Osmania University, Hyderabad, India

Menstruation is a natural bodily function that half of the world's population experiences every month. Despite its prevalence, menstruation is still shrouded in stigma and taboo, particularly in many low and middle-income countries. Lack of education and awareness about menstruation can have serious consequences for the health and wellbeing of young girls, as well as their ability to stay in school and reach their full potential [1].

Educating young girls about menstruation is crucial for several reasons. First and foremost, it helps to break down the stigma and shame that surrounds menstruation. When girls are taught that menstruation is a normal and natural part of life, they are less likely to feel embarrassed or ashamed when they experience it. This can have a significant impact on their self-esteem and overall wellbeing. In addition to breaking down stigma, menstrual education also helps to demystify the menstrual cycle and explain the biological processes that occur in the body. When girls understand what is happening to their bodies during menstruation, they are better equipped to manage their periods and recognize any potential problems or complications. They are also more likely to seek medical care if they experience any issues [2].

Another important aspect of menstrual education is teaching girls about menstrual hygiene. Proper hygiene is essential for preventing infections and other complications, particularly in low-resource settings where access to clean water and sanitary products may be limited. When girls understand the importance of keeping clean and using safe and hygienic menstrual products, they are better able to manage their periods and stay healthy. Education is a key factor in breaking the cycle of poverty and improving the lives of individuals and communities. However, many girls in low and middle-income countries drop out of school once they begin menstruating. This can be due to a number of factors, including lack of access to sanitary products, inadequate toilet facilities, and cultural beliefs and practices that stigmatize menstruation. When girls are educated about menstruation, they are better prepared to manage their periods and stay in school. They are more likely to have access to sanitary products and facilities that meet their needs, and they are less likely to miss school due to menstrual-related issues. This, in turn, can lead to improved educational outcomes, better job prospects, and increased economic stability [3].

Schools and communities have an important role to play in providing menstrual education and support to young girls. Schools can provide education about menstruation as part of the curriculum, as well as ensure that girls have access to clean and private toilet facilities, sanitary products, and healthcare services. Communities can also support menstrual education by breaking down taboos and promoting open and honest discussions about menstruation. It is also important to involve boys and men in menstrual education efforts. When boys are educated about menstruation, they are better able to understand and support the girls and women in their lives. They are also less likely to perpetuate harmful myths and beliefs about menstruation [4].

There are several ways in which menstrual education can be incorporated into schools and communities. One approach is to provide comprehensive sexual education that includes information about menstruation, reproductive health, and hygiene. This can be done through classroom lessons, workshops, and other educational activities. In addition to classroom education, schools can also provide practical support to girls by ensuring that they have access to affordable and safe menstrual products, as well as clean and private toilet facilities. Schools can also provide access to healthcare services, including menstrual health consultations, and referrals to specialists if needed [5].

Communities can also play a critical role in promoting menstrual education and supporting girls and women. This can involve breaking down taboos and promoting open and honest discussions about menstruation, as well as advocating for policies and programs that support menstrual health. In some communities, there may be traditional beliefs and practices that stigmatize menstruation. Educating community leaders and influencers can be an effective way to challenge these beliefs and promote positive attitudes towards menstruation. For example, in some cultures, menstruating women are not allowed to participate in certain activities or enter certain spaces. By educating community leaders and influencers, these harmful practices can be challenged and changed.

In conclusion, educating young girls about menstruation is essential for promoting reproductive and sexual health, breaking down stigma and taboos, and ensuring that girls and women have the knowledge and resources they need to manage their periods safely

\*Correspondence to: Garige Jyothsna, Department of Women Education, Osmania University, Hyderabad, India, E-mail: jyotgar890@gmail.com

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and confidently. This education must be comprehensive, covering not only the biological aspects of menstruation but also the social and cultural factors that can impact menstrual health. Schools and communities have a critical role to play in providing menstrual education and support to girls and women. By promoting open and honest discussions about menstruation, providing access to menstrual products and healthcare services, and challenging harmful beliefs and practices, we can help to empower girls and women, improve their health and wellbeing, and create a more just and equitable world for all.

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