



Royal College of
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The menarche experience among tunisian adolescent girls

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Introduction

The aim of this study was to explore the subjective experience of young adolescents regarding their first menstrual period and to identify and elaborate the role of the midwife in the preparation for puberty.

Methodology and research tools:

This is a prospective tr(ansversal descriptive cross-sectional study .We enrolled 100 high-school teenage girls over a period of four months in three different states. We used an anonymous self-administered questionnaire to collect necessary data.

Results

The average age of the study population at menarche was 12.62 years, with extremes ranging from 10 to 16 years.44% of the participants had already received information about menstruation and 27% received preparation for menarche. The majority of participants (78%) previously informed about the menstrual cycle said that they had received it from their close family (mothers and older sisters).

Results

After menarche, the majority (74%) of the girls had sought explanations about menstruation from their mothers To obtain explanations, the majority of adolescents had recourse to a person of the same sex. In our population, the main source of information about menstruation was the mother. 64% of the population declared that their experiences of the first menstrual period were bad, 18% of which were very bad. Fear, shame, anxiety, frustration and inclusion were strongly experienced during the first menstrual cycle. 34% of the adolescents had experienced problems such as soiling of clothes or shyness about buying sanitary napkins. 32% of the adolescents reported that their parents changed their behavior after the first menstrual period, often in the form of prohibiting them from having friends of the opposite sex and even limiting their relationships with their male cousins.

Discussion

Family educational practices concerning menstruation, the ways in which young girls appropriate this event and the meaning they attribute to it have therefore not been explored in our country. By focusing on these aspects, this study shows that menarche can be considered as a critical moment. Almost all of the girls were not or were not very satisfied with the information they received . Several studies have discussed this topic, such as Mexican study which shows that hirty-eight percent of the participants acknowledged they had felt badly prepared to start menstruating, 43% claimed they had felt regular, and only 19% stated they had felt well prepared. Furthermore, an indian work has reported that for most young women menstruation is associated with physical discomfort, increased emotionality, and disruption of activities Concerning arabic world , such as jordan ,the attitudes of secrecy and negativity surrounding menstruation seemed to be enforced by adults in the community, through signals and gestures.

Conclusion

In Arabic-Islamic culture, menarche and puberty in general are still taboo subjects leading to an enormous lack of information among younger women. Dialogue within the family regarding puberty education is imperative. A relationship between students and the educational setting must be established, particularly through clubs dealing with puberty education in schools

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