



MENSTRUATION AND COVID-19 VACCINATION: SOCIETAL APPROACH TO SOCIAL MEDIA IN RESPONSE

Neelam Bhavesh Patil¹, Ravindra Kshirsagar², Ikram Qureshi³

Shri Jagdishprasad Jhabarmal Tibrewala University, Rajasthan, India^{1&3}

Modern College of Arts, Science and Commerce, Pune, India²

Email: neelamredekar256@gmail.com

ABSTRACT:

Menstruation and menstrual practices are still clouded by taboos and socio-cultural restrictions. And amidst the Covid-19 pandemic yet again a new surge of bias approach towards vaccination during menstruation has now come across. It is this lack of knowledge that fuels myths which ostracize and humiliate women during their monthly cycles. Women face discrimination, harassment, and are looked down upon because of menstruation, as it is seen as a form of weakness rather than a necessary biological function. Several social media platforms are now flooded with viral content which somehow is trying to mislead the masses. It has been noted that unnecessarily this has to chaos. The current study will throw light on grey areas of our so called aware society who still falls prey to wrong notions.

Keywords: menstruation, pandemic, rumors, social media

INTRODUCTION:

Menstruation is an aspect of our health that is often overlooked and, in some ways, stigmatised. What we don't know about menstruation can be harmful. Misinformation or a lack of information about menstruation contributes to sexism and stereotypes, excluding women from seeing it as a normal aspect of puberty. It also prevents culture from comprehending and normalising its significance, since they, too, have a part to play.

We welcome the growing global initiatives to inform, motivate, and involve country leaders, cultures, households, and teenage girls and boys about menstruation, as well as the right of women and girls to handle their cycles in a healthy manner. In the areas of global child and adolescent wellbeing, reproductive health, and women's rights, enormous progress has been achieved. Despite this, the interests of the 300 million women and girls who

menstruate on every given day are buried low on the public health agenda, simply because many women and girls are too ashamed to mention their periods openly. It's beyond time to put an end to the ludicrous secrecy and embarrassment that has surrounded this natural biological occurrence. Menstruation must be normalized and honored as a symbol of good health.

DISCUSSION:

When the potential effects of vaccine-preventable conditions is minimal, vaccine complacency develops. Vaccination does not seem to be a sufficient preventative measure since the potential threats are minimal. Human actions are strongly constrained by predetermined rituals and conventions, and as a result, they are often carried out without any consideration or question due to ingrained practises and regulated cultures. As a result, in a conventional culture, an individual's options are minimal. Technology advances, as

well as the global growth of capitalism, mass media, and industrialism, have aided research and development.

Vaccine hesitancy does not imply full vaccine refusal, and vaccine-hesitant individuals are not inherently anti-vaccine; however, vaccine hesitancy emphasises the uncertainty and aversion to vaccination. It is not always easy for people to embrace the concept of vaccination, and vaccine hesitancy, which applies to a “delay in approval or rejection of vaccinations notwithstanding the availability of vaccination services,” is one of the more widely used frameworks to explain vaccination's poor acceptability.

The decision to get vaccinated does not simply reflect an individual's views on vaccination; rather, it is a liberating mechanism that includes debating and weighing the risks of various health concerns. The convolution of the concept of vaccine hesitancy is built on the idea that it should be focused not only on an individual's actions, but also on the factors that influence the decision-making process. It's not all about whether individuals fail to get vaccinated; we can look at what helps people reject or support vaccines in the first place. This vaccine hesitancy matrix shows how a variety of influences, ranging from the micro/personal to the macro/societal, influence vaccination decision-making. The whole mechanism of vaccine hesitancy should be understood as a dialectic that is manipulated by multidimensional layers of elements from environment, history, economy, politics, personal knowledge, and literacy, as well as vaccine-related matters, when combined with the vast spectrum of powerful influences.

Reflexive modernity brought with it a greater sense of risk, uncertainty, and instability, as well as the emergence of distinct sets of beliefs, desires, and expectations. It is the product of the mechanism of weakening tradition and reconstructing modernity's expectations. As a result, this characteristic in modern cultures has an effect on vaccination-related matters. Technology and medicine are among the values that are being questioned in today's society. Vaccination-related reservations and reservations derive from the method of reconstructing beliefs and understanding.

Taboos and myths associated with Menstruation.

This ignorance is what drives the misconceptions that marginalise and humiliate women during their monthly periods. Since menstruation is viewed as a sign of vulnerability rather than a vital biological feature, women experience misogyny, abuse, and ridicule. With over 3 lakh cases registered every day, COVID-19 has spread its deadly wings across the world. This has thrown the country into a serious crisis, and one way to address it is by prompt vaccination and the use of all necessary measures, such as double masking and sanitizer. Fake news and speculation, on the other hand, are exacerbating the problem. A rumour recently circulated that coronavirus vaccines could affect menstrual cycles, fertility, and even miscarriage. Not just that, but extending this fallacy to include the much more absurd idea that a vaccinated individual can somehow cause menstrual problems in an unvaccinated person is extremely frustrating for those who want to dispel misconceptions. As several cases of lies spread with false intent on these

sites have been identified lately, WhatsApp has become a den for fake news dissemination.

People are cautioned not to forward any COVID-19 vaccine WhatsApp messages without first checking with the appropriate authorities. The Indian government has also asked people around the world to provide information on the Coronavirus vaccine and pandemic through official government channels.

Fact-check: Is fertility, menstrual cycles 'affected by being around' vaccinated people?

Women's reproductive health could be significantly damaged merely by being with people who have undergone COVID-19 vaccines, according to social media reports. These papers, which are mostly based on anecdotes, are false: there is no evidence that vaccinations cause improvements in women's cycles or fertility. Furthermore, as these posts indicate, there is no process by which someone who has not been vaccinated for COVID-19 could suffer side effects passed on by someone who has been vaccinated for COVID-19.

There is no suggestion that any of the vaccinations are the cause of prolonged menstrual periods of people who receive them, nor that the vaccines cause reproductive complications. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has confirmed that existing vaccines are effective for women who are pregnant or may become pregnant. The menstrual cycle of a woman may be affected by a variety of causes, including diet, stress, exercise, sickness, and pregnancy. More study into the relationship between vaccinations and women's menstrual cycles is needed, but the current evidence does not support a connection. Pregnant mothers, according to

research, are at a higher risk of serious COVID-19 infection, necessitating more security than most stable adults. While the vaccines' effects on pregnant women are still being investigated, evidence gathered so far suggests they are healthy. Being vaccinated is the safest way to protect your physical wellbeing as well as your menstrual cycle.

Can COVID-19 Vaccine Affect Menstrual Cycle?

Women should stop getting vaccinated five days before and after their cycles, according to rumours, since their immunity is limited. As a result, it recommended that women get vaccinated after five days of their period. The American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology issued several statements refuting this study, claiming that there is no proof that vaccinations impair fertility. Several gynaecologists have also stated that a woman's menstrual has little effect on her immunity and that getting vaccinated when menstruating is secure. Not just that, but many doctors used their social media accounts to raise concern about the rumour that was circulating on all social media platforms.

CONCLUSION:

The global health issue surrounding COVID-19 has impacted people from all walks of life. Community officials, health professionals, and students are in a unique role to combat menstrual sexism, and parents and extended family members must be taught about societal practises and superstitions that may be harming women and girls inadvertently. However, education is essential for long-term social reform. To encourage them to speak freely and openly about cycles and sexual wellbeing, both girls and boys must be taught about menstruation and reproductive health.

Today, our country, India, must band together to combat the COVID-19 pandemic; otherwise, such concerns will prevent people from taking the proper precautions and will confuse a large number of people, resulting in a high rate of non-vaccination. Such rumours have the potential to inflate the number of COVID-19 cases for no cause, causing confusion among those who are conscious. As a result, it could pose a danger to a vast population of individuals nearby, as well as a significant failure on the city front. Awareness must be spread among the people, especially among the illiterate, who are easily distracted by whatsapp forwarded messages. People who have just half-baked information are more likely to send out false messages, resulting in a loss of health for the nation..

So say no to spread rumors. Stay away from rumors. Do not encourage rumors. Report rumors. Take action against rumors. Local healthcare bodies should take stand and action to search the root source of rumors and take strict action so it is set as an example for others and discourage any such further attempts.

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