

## Parenting information for parents: Efforts to prepare children to experience menarche in prepubertal young girls

Lena Marianti<sup>1</sup>, Kushendar<sup>2</sup>, Hartika Utami Fitri<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1,3</sup>Universitas Islam Negeri Raden Fatah Palembang, Indonesia

<sup>2</sup>Institut Agama Islam Ma'arif NU (IAIMNU) Metro Lampung, Indonesia  
ushenefrans@gmail.com

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**Abstract:** The role of parents is very important as an effort to provide information to their children, especially young women about the fulfillment of education, especially as women. The purpose of this study was to determine the effectiveness of parenting information to prepare young women for prepubertal menarche. The research method used is a mixed methods model, with a concurrent model design that combines qualitative and quantitative data. This research involved 66 research subjects who were selected purposively from 360 female students at State Junior High School 8 Pagaram. The research instrument used was the menarche scale and interview guidelines. The collected data were analyzed using multiple regression. The results of the menarche scale analysis and interviews before providing information services about menarche, the percentage of children who are not ready to face menarche is 81% thus there are still children who are afraid, embarrassed, and even anxious about facing menarche. After providing parenting information to parents as an effort to prepare children to experience menarche, prepubertal young women experienced a decrease in the number of children to 18%. Thus parenting information plays a very important role in increasing the knowledge of parents and children about menarche.

**Keywords:** Manarches; Parenting; Prepuberty

### Introduction

Adolescence is a transitional period between childhood and early adulthood. The age range of adolescents generally starts at the age of 12 years up to the early twenties (Miller et al., 2020; Sawyer et al., 2018). In this phase, there are many changes, both physical changes or reproductive function and emotional changes and the importance of social functions (Pfeifer & Allen, 2021). During this phase, adolescents also experience significant changes in hormones, physique, and the brain, as well as changes in the function of the reproductive organs in an increasingly complex social world (Arsini et al., 2022). During the adolescent phase, physical changes are rapid, while physical changes are marked by taller body posture, muscle growth, the appearance of pimples, armpit and pubic hair, enlarged breasts for women, and a changed voice for pre and growth of a mustache. In addition to physical development, the reproductive function is starting to become active (Alsaker & Flammer, 2020; Setiawan et al., 2022). Reproductive maturation that occurs in early adolescents is marked by menstruation for women and wet dreams for men. Towards facing adolescence, adolescents facing and responding to change have different responses, the changes they face are both women and men (Pratiwi, 2022; Stark et al., 2021). So children need to be prepared to face physical and psychological changes.

The more children are prepared to face changes entering adolescence, they will be positive in dealing with them and vice versa (Marza, 2017). Children's unpreparedness to face puberty, on the psychological aspect of menarche, raises fear and anxiety (Ramulya et al., 2022; Schmitt et al., 2021; Villasari et al., 2021). Unpreparedness to face menarche causes confusion and sadness in young women, for this reason, correct information is needed about puberty issues, especially for women. In preparing children as a strategy to experience menarche,

including providing information about sex education, with this information children will be better prepared to accept any changes that occur physically and psychologically besides that it can avoid panic and even anxiety that occurs. The first main information that children get is from parents (mother) and sisters (Le & Nguyen, 2020; Salafuddin et al., 2020; Utami & Raharjo, 2021).

The magnitude of the role of parents, especially mothers in parenting, provides adequate information when the child will face menarche which aims to prepare the child and also avoid mental problems that occur because of the child's unpreparedness. However, in reality, there are still many parents who are reluctant to provide information about child development or menarche. This is due to parents' ignorance of the importance of preparing children for menarche. In addition, many parents still think that sex education is not familiar to talk about. Perceptions of menstruation can be in the form of positive perceptions when associated with maturity; and negative perceptions, when associated with limiting conditions, menstrual myths, and discomfort (Hidayah & Palila, 2018). According to Hidayah & Palila (2018) of 475 young women, most of them feel normal, anxious, or afraid, and only 10% of them feel enthusiastic, curious, and proud when experiencing menarche. Meanwhile, research conducted by Bharatwaj et al (2014) stated that out of 101 young female respondents, only 33.6% had knowledge about menstruation and felt comfortable facing menarche, while 61.3% of respondents did not know about menstruation. Approximately 49.5% of the respondents in the study felt panicked and 50.49% felt bad, restricted, and depressed. Meanwhile, girls who lack information raise negative emotions at the beginning of menstruation (Saragih & Sirait, 2019).

Whereas in the adolescent phase they need attention at the stage of development, if there is a failure then the failure will then interfere with the stage of development or developmental tasks. Information services in guidance and counseling are one of the services, namely information services provided to parents to understand the importance of direct information from parents to children in preparing children for their first menstruation (Tambusai, 2020). Information services in the form of parenting information will equip parents with knowledge about menarche.

This parenting information will provide understanding to interested individuals and groups, by providing information that provides understanding to parents in preparing their children to experience menarche in prepubertal teenage girls. Parents are the first educators or teachers for children from birth because parents are the first to interact with children so the first information received by children is from parents who raise them from what children see and listen to what is imitated. This type of information service is one type of service that exists in guidance and counseling. Parenting information is an information service that seeks to meet individual deficiencies in the information they need, information services in guidance and counseling as a strategy that is expected to be able to provide sufficient steps in anticipation of increasing understanding in dealing with adolescents in the face of menarche.

## **Method**

This research is a mixed methods research, using a concurrent that combines quantitative and qualitative methods to obtain comprehensive, valid, reliable, and objective data. This study involved 108 female students at State Junior High School 8 Pagaralam whose ages ranged from

11-12 years. The data collection instrument in this study was carried out using instruments in the form of Menarche and interviews. scale menarche gave consists of 22 items with a reliability coefficient of 0.705 which can be said to be reliable. The interview guide consisted of an interview guide for parents and female students.

The data analysis technique used in this study is multiple linear regression analysis. It is based on a causal relationship between the independent and dependent variables. Qualitative data analysis uses descriptions and is described in words from the opinions of respondents, then also analyzed with words that are the background of the respondent's behavior. Respondents' opinions obtained from the results of interviews were angulated with observation and documentation. This triangulation is done by analyzing the data, namely data reduction, data display, and conclusions or verification.

## Results and Discussion

Knowledge about menarche is divided into medical knowledge, psychology, vaginal hygiene, sources of information, and children's understanding of menarche. The knowledge of students' menarche is displayed in the following table:

**Table 1. Medical Knowledge**

Class	Medical Knowledge		
	Low (0-6)	Medium (7-12)	High (13-18)
	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)
<b>VII A</b>	7 (43)	5 (18)	4 (17)
<b>VII B</b>	3 (19)	6 (22)	7 (30)
<b>VII C</b>	3 (19)	7 (30)	6 (26)
<b>VII D</b>	3 (19)	9 (33)	6 (26)
<b>Total</b>	<b>16 (100)</b>	<b>27 (100)</b>	<b>23 (100)</b>

In table 1 it shows that respondents who have good knowledge in medical knowledge aspect were in the medium category in the amount of 27 people, having high knowledge with a total of 23 people, while there are still students who do not know about menarche on the aspect of medical knowledge as many as 16 people.

**Table 2 Psychological Knowledge**

Class	Psychological Knowledge		
	Low (0-6)	Medium (7-12)	High (13-18)
	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)
<b>VII A</b>	3 (20)	7 (23)	5 (24)
<b>VII B</b>	4 (26)	8 (26)	6 (28)
<b>VII C</b>	5 (33)	8 (26)	5 (24)
<b>VII D</b>	3 (20)	7 (23)	5 (24)
<b>Total</b>	<b>15 (100)</b>	<b>30 (100)</b>	<b>21 (100)</b>

Table 2 shows 30 respondents who have good knowledge of the psychological knowledge aspect in the medium category, 21 people who have high knowledge, while there are still 15 students who do not know about menarche in the medical knowledge aspect.

**Table 3 Vaginal Hygiene**

Class	Knowledge of Vagina Cleanliness		
	Low (0-6)	Medium (7-12)	High (13-18)
	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)
VII A	3 (25)	8 (23)	4 (20)
VII B	3 (25)	9 (26)	6 (30)
VII C	2 (16)	9 (26)	5 (25)
VII D	4 (33)	8 (23)	5 (25)
<b>Total</b>	<b>12 (100)</b>	<b>34 (100)</b>	<b>20 (100)</b>

Table 3 shows respondents who have good knowledge of the knowledge aspect of vaginal hygiene in the medium category as many as 20 people, who have high knowledge with total of 20 people, while there are still students who do not know about menarche the aspect of medical knowledge as many as 12 people.

**Table 4. Sources of Information**

Class	Source of Information		
	Low (0-6)	Medium (7-12)	High (13-18)
	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)
VII A	5 (22)	10 (29)	2 (20)
VII B	6 (27)	9 (26)	0 (0)
VII C	6 (27)	7 (20)	4 (40)
VII D	5 (22)	8 (23)	6 (60)
<b>Total</b>	<b>22 (100)</b>	<b>34 (100)</b>	<b>10 (100)</b>

Table 4 shows respondents who have good knowledge in the aspect of knowledge about sources of information in the medium category as many as 34 people, have high knowledge with a total of 10 people, while there are still students who do not know about menarche in the aspect of medical knowledge as many as 22 people.

**Table 5. Pretest and posttest scores of children's understanding of menarche**

Process	Children' Understanding on <i>menarche</i>		
	Low (0-6)	Medium (7-12)	High (13-18)
	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)
<i>Pre Test</i>	81 (81)	158 (37)	104 (48)
<i>Posttest</i>	18 (18)	263 (62)	112 (56)
<b>Total</b>	<b>99 (100)</b>	<b>421 (100)</b>	<b>216 (100)</b>

Table 5 shows that based on the analysis results of the role of parenting information to prepare students for menarche, with a low category in the pre-test 81 people and researchers provide information services for parents and children directly and the results after the provision

of information services about preparing children for menarche has increased with posttest results of 263% moderate and 122% high.

## **Discussion**

The level of knowledge and assistance of parents in preparing children for menarche is relatively low, from the results of questionnaire analysis and interview results there are still parents who have not provided assistance to their children in facing menarche, thus there are still children who don't know what menstruation is and what changes will occur. Even though the impact if the child is not ready to face menarche is very large. Children do not accept the changes that occur within them, such as physical changes, hormones, and social life (Hosseini, 2020; Juwita & Yulita, 2018). So it will appear behavior or attitudes that are less appropriate.

After parenting information was provided for parents in preparing students for menarche, students' knowledge also increased. This shows that parenting information plays a role in increasing both parents and children's knowledge about menarche. Parenting information is considered very helpful for parents in providing good care according to children's needs (Baker et al., 2017). Providing information to parents greatly influences their parenting style to assist children in various situations (Hurley et al., 2021)

The relationship between parents and children, especially in the pattern of communication in parenting, greatly influences the child's readiness to face menarche (Suleiman & Dahl, 2019). Even though adolescents spend more time with their peers, parents must continue to provide important support and information while they are learning and experiencing growth (Suleiman & Dahl, 2019). The interaction of parent-child relationships and neurodevelopment related to pubertal development may play a key role in determining adolescent readiness for menarche.

In addition, adolescents whose parents tend to be supportive rather than controlling show more positive behavior, such as their readiness regarding what to do when they first experience menarche and how they should behave (Dimler et al., 2017). On the other hand, girls who experience poor quality care in childhood, especially the level of parental overprotection, may be at higher risk of an unfavorable reproductive health profile characterized by late or early menarche, early menopause, and shorter reproductive age (Demakakos et al., 2019). Thus parents need to have knowledge and information about preparing children for menarche.

Providing information to parents through training activities, seminars or workshops has proven to be very important to find out the treatment of parents according to children's needs (Daley et al., 2018). Information services provided by guidance and counseling teachers usually only involve students. However, in this parenting information, parents are involved and targeted in research thus they can find out the relationship between parental knowledge and student readiness.

## **Conclusions and Suggestions**

The results of the study indicate that there is an increase in knowledge and readiness of young women to face menarche. This shows that parenting information for parents is effective in helping to prepare prepubertal young women for menarche. So parents need to assist children thus they don't experience confusion about menarche. The school should develop a program

that provides information to students and parents to prepare students for menarche. Guidance and counseling teachers are expected to be able to provide information services about reproductive health, especially for puberty children to understand biology and self-care during menstruation just like parents.

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