

Citizen Charter makes public services citizen-centric in following ways:

- It ensures better **service quality**, and **grievance redressal systems** in place for citizens.
- It **deepens democracy** by involving common citizens in policy making.
- It ushers in a regime of **transparency and openness** by clearly pronouncing the standards and timing of service delivery.
- It **promotes good governance**, by realizing the values of equality, democracy, and transparency. It **incorporates citizens' feedback** in improving service delivery quality, thus ensuring citizen participation in evaluation as well as implementation of policy.
- It **incentivizes accountability** in administration, by clearly laying down the service standards.

Adopting **SEVOTTAM Model** proposed by II ARC would bring in standardization of citizen charters across the country and facilitate good governance.

8. Given the effects that cultural attitudes about menstruation have on women, there is need to follow a strategic approach in combating these. Discuss. 10

Approach:

- Explain the prevailing cultural attitude with respect to menstruation in India and its impact on women.
- How can negative attitudes towards menstruation be changed amongst men and women. Give suggestions.
- Conclude.

Answer:

In many parts of the country, menstruation has been surrounded by taboos and myths which exclude women from various aspects of socio-cultural life, because it is considered dirty and impure.

In almost every faith, women are regarded as impure during menstruation and their activities like cooking and their access to places like temples and mausoleums is restricted during menstrual cycle. While this is the time that women need care from other members of the family, they are rather banished from the house.

Such actions impact the confidence and emotional state of women and young girls in many societies in India. It creates obstacles for working women and school going girls. Many girls skip or drop out of school when their menstrual periods begin because of lack of information. The school and workplace cultures are often unfriendly towards them. There also exist hygiene and health issues. Inadequate attention to this issue leads to poor protection and inadequate washing facilities, which increases susceptibility to infection.

Strategic approach to combat menstruation related taboos

The first step of the strategy to combat these myths and their effects should be to raise awareness among adolescent girls about menstrual hygiene and health. This is because often the elders in the family, the mother included, shy away from discussing these issues with them.

The awareness is also to be spread amongst the women, elders and school teachers. This also includes proper training and sensitization of ASHA and Anganwadi workers about the issues. Making the fathers, brothers and husbands aware is a must in order to bring about an effective change. Menstrual hygiene management curriculum introduced in schools by the government is a step in this direction.

Further, adequate provision of low cost sanitary napkins, sanitation, washing and disposal of the napkins in both rural and urban areas of the country, must be ensured, as the lack of these provisions often leads to improper health and hygiene. Distribution of low cost sanitary napkins in rural areas is already being implemented through the National Rural Health Mission.

In this way, the issue can be tackled with a holistic strategy making use of a multi-sectoral approach.