



MENSTRUAL HYGIENE MANAGEMENT: KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDE AND PRACTICES AMONG FEMALES IN BHOPAL CITY

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Abstract:

Hygiene refers to keeping oneself and surrounding clean in order to avoid poor health and disease. During the menstrual cycle, it is crucial to practice good hygiene habits including washing your genitals thoroughly and using sanitary pads. In order to safeguard their health over time against numerous illnesses, women and girls of reproductive age require access to sanitary products that are clean, supple, and absorbent. This study is focused on hygiene practices followed by females during menstruation, the beliefs and conception they have also restrictions practiced by them. A cross sectional study was conducted among 362 females of Bhopal city. A structured questionnaire including 25 close ended question was designed to collect the data and data analysis was done using MS Excel and SPSS. Entire data was coded and compiled for descriptive and inferential statistics. Out of 358 respondents, 84% girls of 18-25 years have participated in the survey. 77% girls said that mother was the first source of information about menstruation. As a hygiene practice, 78.2% females take shower every day and 41% females are using 1-2 sanitary napkins per day during menstruation. Regarding restrictions practiced, 85% girls practiced different restrictions during menstruation. 57.5% females believe that during menstruation there is no need to stay away from pickles, Kitchen, Holy Books. 96.6% Females feels that periods are important. Due to the physical and psychological changes brought on by the menstrual cycle, women's bodies produce certain hormones each month to maintain their health and prepare them for pregnancy.

Keywords: Menstrual Hygiene, Feminine Hygiene Products (FHP), Hygiene practice, Sanitary Napkins, Bhopal City.

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Introduction

Hygiene refers to keeping oneself and surrounding clean in order to avoid poor health and disease. Maintaining a clean, healthy external body requires good personal hygiene. Maintaining both physical and mental wellness depends on it. People with poor personal hygiene give the body the perfect conditions for germs to flourish, making them more susceptible to sickness. A person with poor personal hygiene may experience social isolation and loneliness as a result of people avoiding them.

Menstrual hygiene

1.8 billion People menstruate each month in the world. Unable to control their menstrual cycle in a respectable and healthy manner are millions of these girls, women, transgender men, and non-binary people.

Teenagers' life enter a new phase with the onset of menstruation, which also brings with it new vulnerabilities. However, many adolescent girls experience stigma, bullying, and social exclusion when they are menstruating. Due to discrimination based on gender identity, transgender males and non-binary people are denied access to the resources and facilities they require.

Menstrual health and hygiene requirements may not be satisfied due to gender inequity, discriminatory social norms, cultural taboos, poverty, and a lack of basic amenities like restrooms and sanitary products.

During your monthly cycle, the blood creates an ideal habitat for bacteria to thrive, thus cleaning the vaginal area at least twice a day is recommended. Even after removal of sanitary napkin, the organisms cling to the body.

Personal care items used for menstruation, vaginal discharge, and other body processes involving the vulva and vagina are known as feminine hygiene products. Menstrual pads, tampons, panty liners, menstrual cups, menstrual sponges and period pants are examples of items that might be referred to as menstrual hygiene products. The term "feminine hygiene products" also refers to items like douches, feminine wipes, and soap that are used to clean the vulva or vagina.

Hygiene Practices & Etiquettes

In general, proper hand washing, body washing, and facial cleanliness are looked of as aspects of hygiene. Even while these actions are crucial to maintaining general cleanliness and halting the transmission of disease, good hygiene also includes following proper hygiene protocol.

Literature Review

- Authors (Sapkota, Anju et al., 2022) have made an attempt to determine the level of menstrual hygiene awareness and practise among teenage girls living in Nepal's Panauti Municipality. According to the study's findings, 53.5% of adolescent girls had good awareness of menstruation hygiene, and 59% of females really practised it. Menstrual hygiene practises were strongly influenced by socioeconomic and environmental

factors such as respondents' ages, levels of education, mothers' occupations, annual household income, and the availability of water in the home.

- Authors (**Surendran G., Ghelawat M. et. al. , 2021**) the percentage of adolescent girls who receive sanitary napkins from a rural health training centre (RHTC) in Puducherry, the degree of satisfaction with the government's supply, and the causes of non-access were the objectives of this study. Adolescents in rural areas may use sanitary pads more frequently if the government provides them in greater quality and quantity and if they are made aware of the government's offer.
- Author (**Nirmala, 2020**) has explored the knowledge and attitude of adolescent girls pertaining to menstrual hygiene during menstruation. Also, studied the major concerns and realities regarding menstrual hygiene among adolescent girls during menstruation.
- The study conducted by (**Goli S., Sharif N. et. al., 2020**) targeted at examining regional variations in the uptake and use of menstruation absorbents among Indian females aged 15 to 24; it also sought to discover the sociodemographic parameters linked to the use of various menstrual absorbent types. Regardless of the geographic location and economic status of the adolescent girls, the state must assume responsibility for guaranteeing universal access to menstrual absorbents.
- Authors (**Rastogi S., Khanna A. et. al., 2019**) have made an effort to comprehend the problem, and they want to let us know that they found that the moms of girls were the primary sources of knowledge regarding menstruation. Mothers, however, thought that teachers in schools should also be transferring this knowledge. Teachers shared the opinion that girls' menstrual hygiene was subpar. The availability of free sanitary napkins in schools has increased levels of hygiene. The purpose of this study was to determine the knowledge, attitudes, and practises of adolescent girls (13–15 years old) with relation to menstrual hygiene issues as well as to identify any obstacles standing in their way.
- Authors (**Choudhary N. and Gupta M., 2019**) have assessed and compare the knowledge, perceptions, and practices of adolescent girls regarding menstrual hygiene in rural and urban areas of Jodhpur. A typical physiological phenomenon that marks the start of reproductive life is menstruation. It is, yet because to cultural taboos, a lack of knowledge, and inaccurate information, it is occasionally seen as an impure phenomenon in Indian society, which unnecessarily restricts menstruation females' ability to go about their daily lives as normal. As part of a cultural tradition, the knowledge is typically incomplete and occasionally even incorrectly transferred from mother to daughter. Girls also ask their friends for advice because they don't know any better than they do. As a result, there is a persistent information deficit in this area.
- Authors (**Hennegan J. and Montgomery P., 2016**) tried to summarize and critically appraise evidence for the effectiveness of menstruation management interventions in improving women and girls' education, work and psychosocial wellbeing in low and middle income countries.
- Authors (**Shah S., Nair R. et. al., 2013**) emphasized that the Indian government has launched a new programme to provide sanitary pads to adolescent girls living in rural areas at a discounted price. The

menstrual hygiene and practises of adolescent girls in a rural, tribal area of South Gujarat, India, are discussed in this paper, as well as their experiences with using old cloths, a new soft cloth, and sanitary pads.

Research Questions

- Which hygiene practices are followed by females of Bhopal city?
- What are the beliefs and conception females have about menstruation?
- What are the restrictions practiced by females during menstruation?

Research Objectives

- To study the menstrual hygiene practices among females of Bhopal City.
- To elicit the beliefs and conception regarding menstruation among the study population.
- To assess the restrictions practiced by them during menstruation

Research Hypotheses

- **H0₁:** Age does not have a significant influence on menstrual hygiene practices followed by females of Bhopal City.
- **H0₂:** Qualification does not have a significant influence on restrictions practiced by females during menstruation.

Materials and Methods

- **Study Design:** A cross sectional study was conducted among 362 females of Bhopal city.
- **Study Participants:** Females who lives in Bhopal city have participated in this study.
- **Sample Size:** Sample size of the study is 362 females.
- **Data Collection:** A structured questionnaire including 25 close ended question was designed to collect the data from females of Bhopal city.
- **Data Analysis and Interpretation:** Data analysis was done using MS Excel and SPSS. Entire data was coded and compiled for descriptive and inferential statistics.

Hypothesis Testing

H0₁: Age does not have a significant influence on menstrual hygiene practices followed by females of Bhopal City.

Table: 1.1 Anova between age and restriction practices

Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	F crit	P-value
Between Groups	79.558	1	79.558	219.194	3.854	1.663
Within Groups	262.055	722	0.363			
Total	341.613	723				

Here $p > 0.05$ at 5% level of significance. Hence, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternate hypothesis. *It depicts that age have a significant influence on menstrual hygiene practices followed by females of Bhopal City.*

H0₂: Qualification does not have a significant influence on restrictions practiced by females during menstruation.

Table: 1.2 Anova between qualification and restriction practices

Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	F crit	P-value
Between Groups	118.505	2	59.252	100.370	3.004	1.025
Within Groups	639.337	1083	0.590			
Total	757.842	1085				

Here $p > 0.05$ at 5% level of significance. Hence, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternate hypothesis. *It depicts that qualification have a significant influence restrictions practiced by females during menstruation.*

Results

Out of 362 respondents, 84% girls of 18-25 years have participated in the survey. 77% girls said that mother was the first source of information about menstruation. **As a hygiene practice**, 78.2% females take shower every day and 41% females are using 1-2 sanitary napkins per day during menstruation. **Regarding restrictions practiced**, 85% girls practiced different restrictions during menstruation including prohibitions on attending religious ceremonies, visiting religious spaces, handling food or sleeping in the home. On the other hand, 57.5% females believe that during menstruation there is no need to stay away from pickles, Kitchen and Holy Books.

Whereas, 96.6% Females feel that periods are important. Women's body goes through various physical and mental changes due to the menstrual cycle such hormones are made which keep the body healthy every month these hormones prepare the body for pregnancy. As per the analysis, age and qualification have a significant influence on menstrual hygiene practices followed by females of Bhopal City.

Limitation and Future Scope of the Study

This study was conducted for the first time in Bhopal city. It will aid in understanding the importance of the issue and will help the females to have an idea about menstruation hygiene practices. However, the study was limited to Bhopal city only. Further, nearby rural areas can be covered to get a real picture of the issue. It will help the researcher to create awareness among the females of rural area.

Conclusion

According to the study, the majority of respondents have a generally adequate level of awareness regarding menstruation hygiene. False beliefs, misinformation, and dangerous menstrual practises, however, are still prevalent in a small percentage of responders. The results of the study highlight the need to improve safe and hygienic practises during menstruation and support people in letting go of long-held preconceptions, traditional beliefs, and constraints placed on them during this time. It is certain that behaviour modification communication with various stakeholders for adopting positive attitudes towards menstruation will aid in resolving issues with menstruation among females in the city of Bhopal.

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