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Knowledge and Practice Regarding Menstrual Hygiene among Adolescent Girls in a Selected School, Gurugram, Haryana

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Abstract

Menstrual hygiene is a critical determinant of adolescent health. This study explores the knowledge and practices of menstrual hygiene among adolescent girls in a selected school in Gurugram, Haryana. A descriptive cross-sectional design was adopted, involving 60 adolescent girls selected through random sampling. Results revealed that 58% of participants had average knowledge about menstrual

hygiene, while 61.7% demonstrated good practices. However, significant gaps in knowledge and hygienic practices were identified, particularly regarding the use and disposal of sanitary products. Findings highlight the necessity for educational interventions to promote safe menstrual hygiene practices and improve accessibility to menstrual products.

Keywords: Menstrual Hygiene, Adolescent Health, Knowledge, Practices, Sanitary Products, Menstrual Health Management

Introduction

Menstrual hygiene is fundamental to adolescent health and well-being. However, social taboos, inadequate facilities, and lack of education hinder proper menstrual hygiene management (MHM), especially in resource-limited settings like rural and peri-urban India. The World Health Organization (WHO) and UNICEF stress the importance of education and access to sanitary resources to mitigate risks such as reproductive tract infections and school absenteeism.

In Gurugram, Haryana, many adolescent girls face barriers in accessing adequate menstrual hygiene resources. This study aims to evaluate their knowledge and practices, providing actionable insights for future interventions to address gaps in MHM.

Objectives of the Study

1. To assess the knowledge regarding menstrual hygiene among adolescent girls.
2. To evaluate the practices of menstrual hygiene among adolescent girls.
3. To correlate knowledge and practices of menstrual hygiene among participants.
4. To identify associations between demographic variables and menstrual hygiene practices.

Material and Methods

A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted to assess the knowledge and practices of menstrual hygiene among adolescent girls in a selected school in Gurugram, Haryana. The study was carried out over four days in November 2024. The sample consisted of 60 adolescent girls aged 10–19 years, selected using simple random sampling. Inclusion criteria included girls willing to participate and those currently enrolled in the selected school. Participants who were unwilling to participate were excluded.

The data collection tool was a structured questionnaire developed after an extensive literature review and validated by experts in nursing and public health. The questionnaire had three sections: Demographic data, a knowledge assessment with 20 multiple-choice questions, and a practice scale with 10 questions evaluating menstrual hygiene behaviors. Knowledge scores

were classified as adequate (14–20), moderate (6–13), and inadequate (0–5). Practice scores were categorized as good (14–20), moderate (6–13), and poor (<6). A pilot study conducted with five participants ensured the tool's reliability, yielding a Cronbach's Alpha score of 0.85.

Ethical approval was obtained from Amity University, and informed consent was collected from participants. Data were collected through self-administered questionnaires in a private and distraction-free environment. Statistical analysis was performed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Frequency and percentages summarized demographic data, while chi-square tests evaluated the association between demographic variables and knowledge or practices. Pearson's correlation was used to assess the relationship between knowledge and practice scores.

Results and Discussion

Demographic Characteristics of Participants

The study included 60 adolescent girls, with a mean age of 14.2 ± 2.3 years. The majority (86.7%) were aged between 13 and 15 years, and 70% resided in urban areas. Most participants (58.3%) came from nuclear families, and 33.3% reported a family income of ₹20,001–₹30,000.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Participants

Variable	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Age (years)		
10–12	6	10
13–15	52	86.7
16–18	2	3.3
Family Type		
Nuclear	35	58.3
Joint	15	25
Extended	10	16.7
Residence		
Urban	42	70
Rural	18	30

Knowledge levels

Most participants (51.7%) demonstrated adequate knowledge about menstrual hygiene, while 43.3% had moderate knowledge. Only 5% exhibited inadequate knowledge.

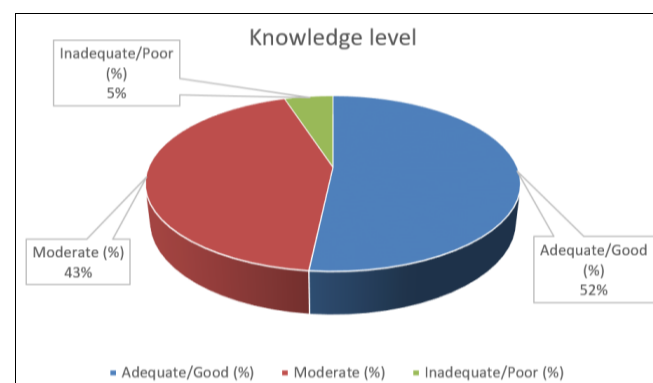


Fig 1: Knowledge Levels of Participants regarding menstrual hygiene

Practice levels

Regarding menstrual hygiene practices, 61.7% of participants displayed good practices, while 38.3% exhibited moderate practices. None reported poor practices.

Table 2: Knowledge and Practice Scores

Category	Adequate/Good (%)	Moderate (%)	Inadequate/Poor (%)
Knowledge	51.7	43.3	5
Practices	61.7	38.3	0

Correlation between knowledge and practice

A significant positive correlation ($r = 0.325$, $p < 0.05$) was observed between knowledge and practice scores, indicating that participants with higher knowledge tended to exhibit better practices.

Key Findings

- High Awareness:** 95% of participants had moderate to adequate knowledge of menstrual hygiene.
- Positive Practices:** Most participants demonstrated good menstrual hygiene practices, though gaps in disposal methods were noted.
- Disparities:** Urban participants exhibited higher knowledge and better practices compared to rural participants, but this was not statistically significant.

The findings highlight the need for targeted educational initiatives to bridge the knowledge gap and enhance the practical understanding of telenursing. While attitudes are largely positive, increased training and exposure to telenursing applications can further strengthen nurses' preparedness and acceptance of this innovative healthcare approach.

Conclusion

The study reveals encouraging trends in menstrual hygiene awareness and practices among adolescent girls, with over half demonstrating adequate knowledge and good practices. However, gaps remain, particularly in sanitary product disposal and accessibility for rural participants. Consistent with previous studies, the findings highlight the pivotal role of mothers and schools in educating girls about menstrual hygiene. Interventions, such as awareness programs and improving access to sanitary products, can further enhance MHM among adolescents.

Acknowledgment

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