



# International Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecological Nursing

E-ISSN: 2664-2301  
P-ISSN: 2664-2298  
IJOGN 2023; 5(1): 116-118  
Received: 10-01-2023  
Accepted: 15-03-2023

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## A study to assess the knowledge on menstruation and practices regarding menstrual hygiene among the adolescent girls in the selected rural area of Ludhiana, Punjab

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.33545/26642298.2023.v5.i1b.114>

### Abstract

Adolescent is a period of transition between childhood and adulthood. It is a time of biological intellectual, psychosocial, and economic changes, at this stage of adolescent majority of girls attain menarche. Menarche is the first menstruation of the girls which occur every month periodically. The objectives of the study were to assess the knowledge on menstruation, practices regarding menstrual hygiene and to determine the association regarding menstruation with selected demographic variables.

Quantitative research approach was adopted for the study and descriptive survey design was used. Purposive sampling technique was used to collect the data from 200 Adolescent girls of Sarabha, Pakhowal Ludhiana. Data was collected using Tool was divided into four parts i.e. Socio-Demographic profile, self-structured Knowledge Questionnaires and Menstrual practice Questionnaire. Data was analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics.

The result of the study revealed that that maximum (39%) of the participants having average knowledge regarding menstruation.

As regard to practices, (65%) of the participants using disposable sanitary pads, (41%) of participant's change 3 times of their menstrual material on the heaviest day of period, (51%) of participants wash their hands after changing menstrual materials. (26%) of participants once per day wash their genitals & (42%) sometimes wash genitals with soap. (33%) of the participants burned menstrual material at home. (32%) of the participants dispose in the toilet when they are away from home. There were significant association of knowledge with socio-economic demographic variable.

The study concluded that maximum girls adolescent girls having average knowledge & having significant association with socio-economic status.

**Keywords:** Knowledge, practice, menstrual hygiene, adolescent girls

### Introduction

Menstruation is a normal natural process that occurs in all healthy adult women and girls of reproductive age. Simply stated, menstruation is like a house cleaning. Each month a women's body lines her uterus with rich bed of blood vessels, glands and cells in anticipation of new life. The ovaries sprout a harvest of eggs and then pop out the best one for conception. When the egg does not meet a sperm, the womb must shed its lining and start anew. During a menstrual period, a woman/girl bleeds from her uterus <sup>[1]</sup> Issues related to menstruation and its practices are still foggy due to taboos and socio-cultural restrictions. Adolescent girls remaining uninformed of the technical facts and hygienic practices to keep good health that is why sometimes it results in to adverse health outcomes <sup>[2]</sup>.

Hygiene related practices of women during menstruation are of great importance, as has a health impact in terms of increased vulnerability to reproductive tract infections <sup>[3]</sup>.

### Need of the study

The poor knowledge and understanding of menstruation may lead to unsafe hygienic practice that increases the risk of reproductive tract infections, cervical cancer, school drop-out, poor academic performance and overall poor quality of life <sup>[4]</sup>. The knowledge and hygienic practice of adolescent girls towards menstruation is not well addressed particularly among adolescent girls.

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However, improving the knowledge about menstruation even before menarche can improve menstrual hygiene [1]. Menstrual Hygiene deals with a woman's special health care needs and requirements during her monthly menstruation or menstrual cycle. These areas of special concern include choosing the best "Period Protection" or feminine hygiene products, how often and when to change her feminine hygiene products bathing, care of her vulva and vagina as well as the supposed benefit of vaginal douching at the end of each menstrual period [5].

Therefore, a descriptive study was planned to assess the knowledge on menstruation & practices regarding menstruation hygiene.

**Objectives**

1. To assess the knowledge on menstruation among adolescent girls.
2. To assess the practice regarding menstrual hygiene among adolescent girls.
3. To determine the association of knowledge regarding menstruation with selected demographic variables.

**Methodology**

The Research approach was Quantitative with Descriptive Research design. The study was conducted at Village Pakhowal and Sarabha, Ludhiana, Punjab. Purposive Sampling technique was adopted for the study. The data was collected from Adolescent girls between the age 13-19 years. Data was collected from 200 Adolescent girls. The data was collected using Socio- Demographic profile for sample characteristics, Menstrual Profile, Self-structured knowledge questionnaires to assess the knowledge regarding menstruation and Modified menstrual practice questionnaires to assess the practices. Self-Report (Paper & Pen method) was the method of data collection.

**Results**

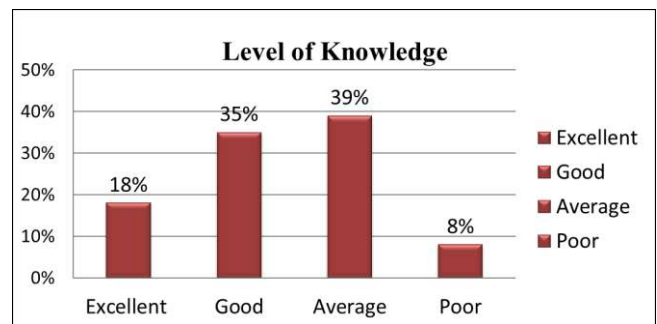
**Sample Characteristics**

- Mean age of adolescent girls was 17 ±2.36 years.

- Maximum of the respondents were form Sikh Religion.
- Most of the subjects were belong to Upper Lower class socio-economic status.

**Table 1:** Menstrual Profile N=200

Menstrual profile	f (%)
<b>1. Age of menarche (In years)</b>	
a. 10-11	24(12.0)
b. 12-13	67(33.5)
c. 14-15	63(31.5)
d. 15	46(23.0)
<b>2. Duration of menstrual cycle is (in days)</b>	
a. 1-2	16(8.0)
b. 3-4	137(68.5)
c. 5-7	47(23.5)
<b>3. Menstrual cycle is</b>	
a. Regular	146(73.0)
b. Irregular	54(27.0)
<b>4. Are you suffering from dysmenorrhoea</b>	
a. Never	85(42.5)
b. Sometimes	88(44.0)
c. Always	23(11.5)
d. Frequently	4(2.0)
<b>5. Family history of dysmenorrhoea</b>	
a. Yes	94(47)
b. No	104(52.0)



Maximum score: 22 Minimum score: 00

**Fig 1:** Frequency and percentage Distribution of level of knowledge regarding menstruation among adolescent girls.

**Table 2:** Item wise analysis of menstrual practice among adolescent girls N=200

Sr. no	Item	f (%)
<b>Menstrual Material Use</b>		
1.	What were all the materials you used to catch/absorb your menstruation when you were at home during your last menstrual period? ▪ Disposable sanitary pad	126(64.5)
2.	Did you wash and reuse any of your menstrual materials during your last menstrual period? ▪ No	157 (78.5)
<b>Changing Menstrual Materials</b>		
3.	During last menstrual period, how many times did you change your menstrual material on the heaviest day of your period? ▪ 3 times (e.g. morning, evening and once during day)	61 (40.5)
4.	Where did you most often change your menstrual materials when you were at home during your menstrual last period? ▪ Bathroom/washing space	100(50.5)
4.	How often did you change your menstrual materials? ▪ Every day of my period	86 (43.0)
<b>Hand washing</b>		
5.	Did you wash your hands before changing your menstrual materials during your last menstrual period? ▪ Every time	93 (46.5)
6.	Did you wash your hands after changing your menstrual materials during your last menstrual period? ▪ Every time	102(51.0)
<b>Genital washing</b>		

7.	How often did you wash your genitals during your last menstrual period? ▪ Once per day	52(26.0)
8.	When you washed your genitals, did you use soap? ▪ Sometimes	84(42.0)
Disposal of menstrual materials		
9.	Where did you most often dispose of your used menstrual materials when you were at home? ▪ Burned	65(32.5)
10.	Where did you most often dispose of your used menstrual materials when you were away from your home? ▪ Bin in the latrine	63(31.5)
11.	When disposing of your used menstrual materials, did you usually wrap them in anything? ▪ Plastic bag, cover of pad	117(58.5)

### Association of knowledge with selected demographic variables

- The result showed that, socioeconomic status ( $p=0.014^*$ ) was found significantly associated with knowledge score regarding menstruation at 0.05 level of significance.

### Conclusion

The following conclusions were drawn on the basis of the findings of the study:

- Maximum subjects had average knowledge regarding menstruation.
- Maximum participants use disposable sanitary pad to absorb menstruation.
- Maximum respondents wash genitals Once per day.
- Socio-economic status had significant association with knowledge scores regarding menstruation.

### Limitations

- The study was conducted in selected rural area.
- Limited to 200 study subjects only.

### Recommendations

- The study can be replicated on large sample to validate and generalize its findings
- This study can be comparative between rural and urban areas.
- Pre-experimental study can be conducted regarding menstruation and hygiene practices.

### Conflict of Interest

Not available

### Financial Support

Not available

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#### How to Cite This Article

Kanika, Jyotika. A study to assess the knowledge on menstruation and practices regarding menstrual hygiene among the adolescent girls in the selected rural area of Ludhiana, Punjab. International Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecological Nursing 2023; 5(1): 116-118.

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