

PRACTICES OF MENSTRUAL HYGIENE AMONG WOMEN OF REPRODUCTIVE AGE IN SABON GARI LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, KADUNA STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

The study assessed practice of menstrual hygiene amongst women of reproductive age in Sabon Gari Local Government Area of Kaduna state. Research question was raised and the hypothesis was tested. Descriptive survey research design was adopted. The population of this study comprised one hundred and sixty-three (163) women of reproductive age between 15-49 years old in Sabon Gari Local Government Area of Kaduna state. The sample size of the study comprised the entire one hundred and sixty-three (163) women of reproductive age between 15-49 years old in Sabon Gari Local Government Area of Kaduna state. Thus, enumerative census method was employed to draw the entire population because it is manageable and within the reach of researcher. The research instrument for this study was structured and self-developed questionnaire. The questionnaire was validated by the experts in measurement and evaluation and human kinetics and health education. The reliability of the instrument was determined using test-retest method with reliability index of 0.83. The research questionnaire was collected, coded and analyzed using both descriptive and inferential analysis. Descriptive statistics of frequency counts and percentages, mean was used to analyze the data collected from the respondents. The findings of the study revealed that the factors hindering effective menstrual hygiene management practice among women of reproductive age was lack of money to buy sanitary pads where more of the population are complaining. It was also observed that about 96.9% of the research population said they always take their bath frequently when menstruating, and use more of water to wash their genitals at that period. It was recommended that, proper awareness should be done to the residents of that locality, also special curriculum should be developed at all level of education as a form to improve proper menstrual hygiene management practice.

Keywords; *menstruation, hygiene, practice*

Introduction

Understanding the practice of menstruation hygiene is vital for healthy, productive and dignified lives of women and adolescent girls. Access to information to understand menstrual cycle and how to manage menstruation hygienically contributes to better management of the menstrual cycle, as women spend an equivalent of an average of six to seven years of their lives menstruating (W.H.O 2002). Menstruation refers to the recurring peeling of the inner part of the uterus or the shedding of the uterine lining on a regular basis in the reproductive-aged females during the monthly menstrual cycles (Aniebue, & Nwankwo, 2009). Menstruation is a normal biological process and a key sign of reproductive health, yet

in many cultures it is treated as something negative, shameful or dirty. The continued silence around menstruation combined with limited access to information at home and in schools results in millions of women and girls having very little knowledge about what is happening to their bodies when they menstruate and how to deal with it. Globally, about 52% of the female population are at reproductive age and commence menstruation between the ages of 10 and 19 (World Health Organization, 1996). The menstrual cycle averages about 28 days, though ranges between 21 and 35 days in some females. The menstrual period lasts from 2 to 7 days, but most females experience menstrual flow for 3–5 days. However, the duration and intensity of menstrual flow varies between individuals and at different times in their lives (House et al. 2012) and ceases temporarily during pregnancy and lactation, and ends at menopause (Ali & Rizvi, 2010). Reproductive age is understood as a stage in the lives of females, which indicates their transition from girlhood to womanhood. This also constitutes an important milestone, which is marked by the onset of menarche (Nagar & Aimol, 2011). From this stage onwards until menopause, reproductive health and menstrual hygiene are important aspects in the lives of females.

(W.H.O 2002) asserted that reproductive age of women begins from the ages of 10 and 45 years and they constitute about 16% of world's women total population. It is a transition period from childhood to adult life and is an important and sensitive phase of life. Many physical, mental and social developments take place during this phase (Ghongdemath, Sidhmalswamy, Mallapur and Shindholimath, 2016). For an adolescent girl, this phase is a period of rapid transition to womanhood. The onset of menstruation is one of the most important changes that occur for girls during the adolescent years (Haque, Rahman and Itsuko, 2014). Menstruation occurs periodically throughout the child bearing years, except during pregnancy and lactation. It commences with menarche and ends with menopause. Throughout this period, observe changes happen with menstruation. Even though menstruation is a physiological process; it is linked with several misconceptions and malpractices which may result in adverse health outcomes. Menstruation and menstrual hygiene related practices are still clouded by taboos and sociocultural restrictions (Ghongdemath, Sidhmalswamy, Mallapur and Shindholimath, 2016). Poor hygiene practices and management during menstruation has been associated with serious ill-health, including reproductive tract and urinary tract infections.

Pokharel, Kulczycki, and Shakya, (2006) found that 60.9% of them had adequate knowledge of MHM. They also discovered that teachers were their primary source of MHM information. However, in Nepal. Awareness was greater among schoolgirls in India and Pakistan. Education level had a significant influence on menstrual knowledge in India and Nigeria (UNICEF, 2017).

Dasgupta and Sarkar (2008) studies show that most educational institutions do not provide adolescents with the necessary information prior to menarche. Mothers and female family members, who may not have the necessary knowledge and skills in MHM, are often the main source of information for most adolescents. Literature shows that most adolescents have inaccurate knowledge, cultural practices and taboos and misconceptions about menstruation. Those that have knowledge tend to practice wrong menstrual hygiene management due to factors such as inadequate menstrual sanitary materials, poverty and lack of emotional or physical support. Due to the cultural and taboos surrounding menstruation, the issues of menstrual hygiene practice have been ignored or misunderstood. There is lack of information on the process of menstruation, the physical and psychological changes associated with puberty and proper requirements for managing menstruation. Despite increased attention from the global institutions in addressing the menstrual hygiene management (MHM) needs of adolescent girls and women in emergency settings, this issue is often overlooked and poorly addressed. It is based on this background; the study seeks to examine menstrual hygiene management practice among women of reproductive age in Sabon Gari Local Government Area of Kaduna State.

Purpose of the Study

1. To determine the practice of Menstrual Hygiene among women of reproductive age in Sabon Gari, local government, Kaduna state.

Research Question

1. What is the practice of Menstrual Hygiene among women of reproductive age in Sabon Gari local government, Kaduna state.

Hypotheses

H0: There is no significant difference in the practice of Menstrual Hygiene among women of reproductive age in Sabon gari local government, Kaduna state.

Methodology

Descriptive survey design was used for this study. The researcher described the observed phenomena based on identified characteristics and phenomena. The intention was to describe the situation as it were without manipulation and did not establish cause- and - effect - relationship. The population of this study comprised one hundred and sixty-three (163) women of reproductive age between 15-49 years old in Sabon Gari Local Government Area of Kaduna state. The sample size of the study comprised the entire one hundred and sixty-three (163) women of reproductive age between 15-49 years old in Sabon Gari Local Government Area of Kaduna state. Thus, enumerative census method was employed to drawn the entire population because it is manageable and within the reach of researcher.

S/N	Name of the selected wards	Sample Size
1	Samaru ward area	25
2	Palladan ward area	30
3	Hanwa ward area	25
4	Boom ward area	30
5	Dogarawa ward area	28
6	Chikaji ward area	25
	Total	163

The research instrument for this study is structured and self-developed questionnaire. The questionnaire was validated by the experts in measurement and evaluation and human kinetic and health education. The reliability of the instrument was determined using test-retest method with reliability index of 0.83. The research questionnaire was collected, coded and analyzed using both descriptive and inferential analysis. Descriptive statistics of frequency counts and percentages, mean was use to analyze the data collected from the respondents.

Table 1: Frequency and percentages of Practice of Menstrual Hygiene Management among women of Reproductive age

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Do you take your bath when menstruating?		

Yes	161
98.8	
No	2 1.2
Total	163 100
Should girls take their bath frequently when menstruating?	
Yes	158
96.9	
No	1 0.6
Don't Know	4 2.5
Total	163

100

How many times do you take your bath daily when you were menstruating

None	9
5.5	
Once	3 1.8
Twice	105
27.6	
Three times or more	45 27.6
Total	162

100

Do you wash your genitals when menstruating?

Yes	156 95.7
No	4
2.5	
Total	160

100

What do you use to wash your genitals during menstruation?

Water only	122 74.8
Soap & Water	40 24.5
Noting	1
0.6	
Total	163 100

How many times do you change your sanitary products daily when menstruating?

Once	2	1.2
Twice	81	49.7
times or more	80	49.1
None		
Total	163	100

Where do you dispose the used pads?

Bury	8	4.9
Burn	28	17.2
Wash	10	6.1

Wrap & put in a dustbin	102	62.6
Flush	11	6.7
Others	3	1.8
162	100	Total

Do you change your sanitary products when in school?

Yes	127	77.9
No	34	20.9
Total	161	100

Do you get a private place to change your sanitary products if in school?

Yes	133	81.6
No	27	16.6

Total	160
100	

Which of the following absorbents do you use during menstruation?

Sanitary Pad	149	91.4
New Cloths	3	1.8
Old cloths/rag	2	1.2
Toilet Tissue paper	3	1.8
Menstrual cup	2	1.2
Reusable Sanitary Materials	4	2.5
Total	163	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
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Ever heard of menstrual hygiene management practice before

Yes	143	87.7
No	15	9.2
148	100	Total

How did you feel at the onset of your first period?

Prepared	49	30.10
Happy	13	8.0
Sad	23	14.1
Surprised	78	47.9
Total	163	100

What do you think is the duration (length) of a normal monthly period?

2 to 7 days	112	68.7
7 to 14 days	33	20.2
I don't know	4	2.5
Others	13	8.0
Total	162	100

Have you ever felt embarrassed when you have your monthly periods?

Yes	62	38.0
No	99	60.7
Total	161	100
What is/were the reasons for feeling embarrassed		
Blood leaked through my cloths	74	45.4
Feel Shy	16	9.8
My cloth or pad fell onto the ground	6	3.7
Someone saw me naked or washing pads	3	1.8
Others	17	10.4
Total	116	100
Were you taught from home about menstruation before the onset of your first experience?		
Yes	115	70.6
No	46	28.2
Total	161	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2021

In the present study, out of 163 women, majority of the women 161 (98.8%) took their bath when menstruating, 2 (1.2%) don't take their bath when menstruating. 158 (96.9%) said that girls should take their bath frequently when menstruating, 1 (0.6%) said no.

105 (27.6%) took their bath daily when menstruating, 45 (27.6%) took their bath three times or more, 9 (5.5%) did not take their bath when menstruating. 156 (95.7%) wash their genitals when menstruating, 4 (2.5%) do not wash their genital when menstruating.

Majority of the women 122 (74.8%) use water only to wash their genitals during menstruation, 40 (24.5%) used soap and water, 1 (0.6%) used noting to wash their genitals during menstruation.

Majority of the women 81 (49.7%) changed their sanitary pads twice, 80 (49.1%) changed their pads three times or more daily and 2 (1.2%) changed once daily.

Most of the women 102 (62.7%) wrap and put in a dustbin their used pads, 28 (17.2%) burnt it, 11 (6.7%) flushed it, 10 (6.1%) wash their used pads.

Most of the women 149 (91.4%) used Sanitary pad absorbents during menstruation, 4 (2.5%) used reusable sanitary materials during menstruation, 3 (1.8%) used new cloths during menstruation.

Table 2: Showing Chi-Square analysis of menstrual hygiene practice employed by women of reproductive age in the study area

Items	Chi-Square	DF	Asym. Sig
do you take bath when menstruating	155.098 ^a	1	.000
should girls take their bath frequently when menstruating	296.773 ^b	2	.000
how many times do you take your bath daily when menstruating	162.444 ^c	3	.000
do you wash your genitals during menstruation	289.037 ^d	2	.000

what do you use to wash your genitals during menstruation	140.405 ^b	2	.000
how many times do you change your sanitary products daily when menstruating	75.620 ^b	2	.000
where do you dispose your pads	263.259 ^e	5	.000
do you change your sanitary products when in school	53.720 ^f	1	.000
do you get a private place to change your sanitary product if in school	70.225 ^g	1	.000
which of the following absorbents do you use during menstruation	655.761 ^h	5	.000

Table 2 shows ($P < 0.05$), shows that there is a significant menstrual hygiene practice employed by women of reproductive age in the study area, this is because the chi square calculated value is greater than the chi square critical value, this implies that the null hypotheses which states that there is no significant menstrual hygiene practice employed by women of reproductive age is rejected.

Discussion of Findings

It was observed in Table 1 that about 96.9% of the respondents said girls should take their bath frequently as a way of good menstrual hygiene management, furthermore 74.8% of the respondent said water are mostly used to wash genitals during menstruation while 24.5% some said they use soap and water to wash their genitals during their menstrual period, it was also observed that about 49.7% of the respondent said that at least sanitary pads should be washed twice while a good number of 49.1% said it should be washed three time or more. The findings also discovered that 62.6% of the respondent do disposed their pads by wrapping it and throwing it in a dustbin while just 17.2% said they burn it. In finding out what kind of absorbents they use, about 91.4% of the respondent said they use sanitary pads. The findings of the hypothesis shows that there is a significant menstrual hygiene practice employed by women of reproductive age in the study area. This is in line with Tegegne and Sisay (2014), which found that 67.4% of female adolescent students were aware of Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM), about a quarter (26.4%) of them had adequate knowledge of MHM. In Western Ethiopia. Marvan & Molina-Abolnik, (2012) conduct a study in Nigeria and 55.2% school-going girls were “trained” prior to reaching menarche, which included being made aware of what to expect at menarche and how to collect blood and dispose of materials. A study conducted by Gena (2020) found that only 66.1% of the girls used commercial disposable sanitary pads, the possible reasons for this discrepancy might be due to the socioeconomic status to buy appropriate sanitary products, availability and accessibility of appropriate sanitary materials, and knowledge towards menstrual hygiene. In a study conducted by, Sonnen , Somterimmam , and Rimande (2021) it was found that seventy percent of respondents experienced first menstruation between ages 13–15 year and that mothers were the leading source of information about menstruation to the students also sanitary pads were the most used absorbent 127 (42.8%) among the adolescents. In line with this study, a similar study conducted by Shivaleela p. u , Tesfalidet ,t & Jalane m (2015) reported that more than half (60.9 %) of the students had good knowledge about menstruation and menstrual hygiene. The majority (76.9 %) girl knew that menstruation was a physiological process, whereas 9.7 % of them believed that it was a curse from God and that The knowledge level of menstrual hygiene appears to be increasing with an increase in time spent on watching TV/listening to radio.

Conclusion

Menstrual hygiene practice among women in Sabon Gari Local Government of Kaduna State was found to be significant. This shows that they practice the hygiene but needs better awareness to improve their involvement in maintaining good personal menstrual hygiene.

Recommendations

This study is therefore recommended that:

- Proper awareness should be done to the residents of that locality,
- Special curriculum should be developed at all level of education to improve proper menstrual hygiene management practice.

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