

# **Menstrual Hygiene Management among Adolescent Girls: A Study in Keonjhar District in Odisha**

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## **ABSTRACT**

**Objective:** To assess menstrual hygiene management among adolescent girls. **Methodology:** A total 150 number of adolescent girls students were randomly selected to be the respondents of the study at the Govt. Women's Higher Secondary School in Keonjhar district of Odisha. Descriptive statistics like frequency, percentage, and arithmetic mean were adopted to analyze the data. A semi-open and close-ended questionnaire was prepared for data collection and was filled by the students themselves. Kuppaswami SES scale (2024) is used to evaluate the socio-economic status of the respondent. **Result:** The study found that 76% are using pads and the rest are using cloth. However Majority of the respondents 92% regularly wash their hands after changing pads/cloth whereas 62% of the respondents wash the perineum during menstruation and only 30% are after every urination by the use of soap and water (64%), water (18%) and water and antiseptic (18%). And the most significant factor for purchasing the pad was its absorbing capacity (58%). **Conclusion:** There is a need for an awareness program regarding menstrual hygiene and its management with the help of print and social media.

**Keywords:** Adolescent girl, SES Scale, Menstruation, Menstrual hygiene management

## **INTRODUCTION**

Adolescence is the period of transition between childhood and adulthood. Many physical, sexual, cognitive, social and emotional changes occur in this stage (Udgata *et al.* 2023). Adolescence is a very crucial stage of human development. According to WHO adolescence is the period between the ages of 10-19 years which is characterized by human growth and development. Adolescence is the period of transition from childhood to adulthood. The term "Adolescence" came from the Latin word "Adolescere" this means "to ripen" or "to grow up". So it describes that unique age when kids start growing into something closer to grown-up.

In the process of attaining puberty when a girl experiences their first menstruation is known as "menarche". The word menarche is derived from the Greek words 'men' meaning a month and 'arche'

meaning the beginning. Menstruation is the regular discharge of blood and mucosal tissue from the inner lining of the uterus through the vagina. The menstrual cycle is characterized by the rise and fall of hormones.

Appropriate menstrual health and hygiene management (MHM) plays an essential role in allowing girls and women to attain their fullest potential. Girls and women needed access to water, sanitation, and hygiene facilities, affordable and appropriate menstrual hygiene materials, information on best practices, and a supportive environment where they could manage menstruation without embarrassment or stigma.

India has around 253 million adolescents in the age group of 10-19 years, which is about 21% of the country's population. This makes India the country with the largest adolescent population in India.

India has the largest adolescent population in the world, with approximately 253 million adolescents

**How to cite this Article:** Behera, Namita Rani (2025). Menstrual Hygiene Management among Adolescent Girls: A Study in Keonjhar District in Odisha. *Internat. J. Appl. Home Sci.*, 12 (3 & 4) : 85-88.

between the ages of 10 and 19, or roughly 21% of the total population.

## METHODOLOGY

The present study was conducted in the Keonjhar District of Odisha. In this study, we collected data from 150 respondents from 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> class students from Govt. Women's Higher Secondary School, Keonjhar. We conducted a descriptive cross-sectional study from 1 to 15 September 2023. A semi-open and close-ended questionnaire was prepared for data collection and was filled by the students themselves.

### Analysis of Data:

All the data obtained through the questionnaire method was coded and entered into a computer taking into consideration all the parameters of the relevance and importance of the study. Various parameters are used to evaluate the data like Frequency, Percentage, and Arithmetic Mean, and tabulated in Microsoft Excel.

### Socio-Economic Status:

To identify the socio-economic status of the respondents use the Kuppuswami scale (2024). Socio-economic status (SES) is an important indicator to evaluate the socio-economic status of the respondent.

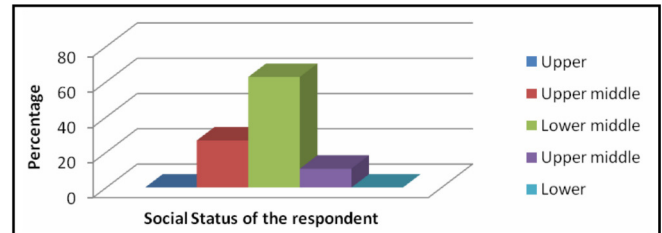
## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Distribution of the respondents according to the Kuppuswami SES scale:

The study found that there is a maximum number of respondents 62.66% from the lower middle class. The study also found that 26.66% of the respondents are from the Upper middle class and 10.66% of the respondents are from the upper middle class. The research also evident that there are no respondents from the upper class as well as the lower class (0%). The major research finding

**Table 1 : Distribution of the respondents according to the Kuppuswami SES scale**

Sr. No.	Status	Scale	Frequency (f)	Percentage (n=150)
1.	Upper	26-29	0	0
2.	Upper middle	16-25	40	26.66
3.	Lower middle	11-15	94	62.66
4.	Upper middle	5-10	16	10.66
5.	Lower	<5	0	0
	Total		150	100



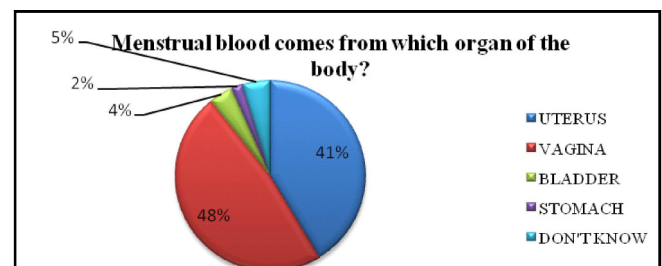
**Fig. 1 : Distribution of the respondents according to the Kuppuswami SES scale**

of the study concluded that more than half of the respondents belong to families having lower middle socioeconomic status (Table 1 and Fig. 1).

### Distribution of the respondents according to Knowledge about Menstruation:

The present study revealed 60% of the respondents said menstruation is an unclear material where as 17.33% and 22.66% responded that it was a curse and a normal phenomenon accordingly. The research also reveals that only 43.33% of girls had awareness about menstruation at the time of menarche and the mother was the first source of information about menstruation. Panda (2023) concluded that, mothers were the primary source of information for 74.3% of the respondents. Aggarwal *et al.* (2021) also evaluated that girls received information about menstruation mostly from their mothers (51.6%), teachers (27%), friends (16.4%), sisters (3.3%), relatives (0.8%), and grandmothers (0.8%).

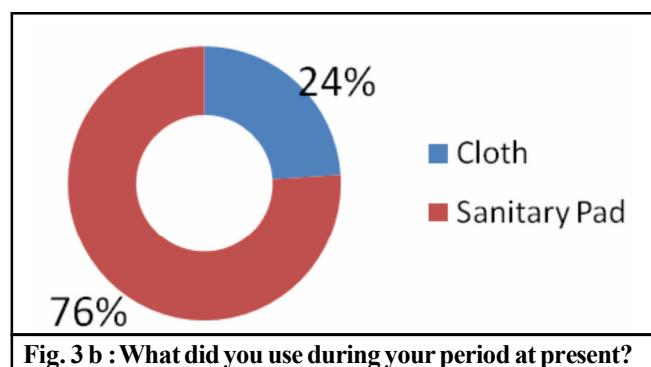
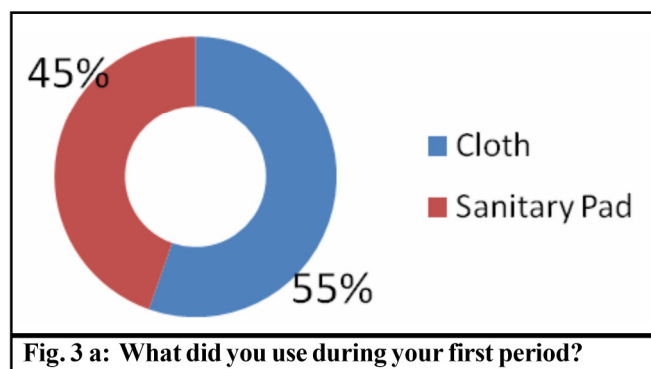
The investigation discovered that a maximum number of girls responded that menstrual blood comes from the vagina (48%) whereas 41.3%, 4%, and 2% are responding that it has come from the uterus, bladder, and stomach accordingly. And 4.66% of the girls are unaware of it. Deshpande *et al.* (2018) examined that only 16% of the girls knew that bleeding occurs from the uterus, whereas 84% had no idea of the organ from where bleeding occurs (Fig. 2).



**Fig. 2 : Menstrual blood comes from which organ of the body?**

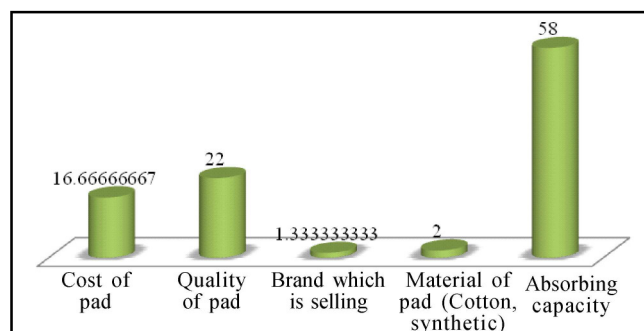
### Distribution of the respondents according to Menstrual Hygiene Management and Sanitary Practice:

The research found that 45% of the respondents used pads during the first period whereas the remaining 55% used cloth. At present 76% of the respondents use sanitary pads whereas 24% are still using cloth and the reason for not using pads was unaffordability (69.2%) whereas 30.7% are not comfortable using the sanitary pads. The data also confirm that those who are reusing their clothes wash them with soap, water and dry in sun (44%). Parikh and Nagar (2022) evaluated that a majority of the respondents (96.06%) used sanitary pads, 2.36% used reusable cloths, 3.15% used fresh cloths, 1.57% used tampons, and 0.7% used menstrual cups. Das and Gautam (2022) evaluated that 39.1% of girls are using sanitary napkins, whereas the remaining 60.9% are still using old clothes. Swain and Nayak (2018) also concluded 65.5% of the girls use the sanitary napkin while the rest 34.5% use rags during menstruation (Fig. 3a and 3b).



The research found that (68.6%) of the respondents stated that they change pads at least thrice a day and 21.3% of the respondents stated that they change pads more than thrice a day. However Majority of the

respondent 92% are regularly washing their hands after changing pads/cloth and urinating by the use of soap and water (78.4%). The research found that the most significant factor for purchasing the pad was its absorbing capacity (58%) followed by the quality of the pad (22%) (Fig. 4).



**Fig. 4 : What factors do you consider while purchasing sanitary pad?**

The research found that 87.3% of the respondents took a bath once a day while 10.6% took it twice a day and 2% took alternate days. The research found that 62% of the respondents wash the perineum during menstruation while only 30% after every urination use water (18%), soap and water (64%), and water and antiseptic (18%). Altaf *et al.* (2023) reported that menstrual hygiene is dependent on the type of material used, the frequency with which it is changed, daily bathing, and cleansing of the vaginal.

### Conclusion:

The present study was conducted to assess the demographic profile and Menstrual Hygiene Management and Sanitary Practices of adolescent girls in the Keonjhar district of Odisha. The study revealed that demographic profile plays a crucial role in their menstrual hygiene practice. Menstrual hygiene practice and its management is an essential aspect of cleanliness for menstruating adolescent girls. Better awareness and safe menstrual practices can prevent reproductive system infections and their consequences. There is a need for an awareness program regarding menstrual hygiene and its management with the help of print and social media. Moreover, the government should make plans and implement those plans to promote knowledge and awareness on TV, and radio, and through demonstration programs to improve menstrual hygiene and its practice among adolescent girls.

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