KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDE AND PRACTICE OF MENSTRUAL HYGIENE AMONG PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN OGBOMOSO SOUTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF OYO STATE

ADIGUN Omoniyi Oladipupo
Department of Physical and Health Education
Emmanuel Alayande College of Education, Oyo

Abstract

This study was designed to ascertain the knowledge, attitude and practice of menstrual hygiene among public secondary school students in Ogbomoso south local government area of Oyo State. One (1) research questions and three (3) null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. Descriptive research design of survey type was adopted. Multistage sampling technique was used to select one thousand and twenty (1020) junior/senior secondary school students for the study. Stage 1; 30% of the school using proportional sampling technique 18 schools Stage 2; Purposive to select J.S.S.1 and 2 and S.S 1 and 2 because S.S 3 and J.S.S 3 were writing exams. Stage 3; Simple random sampling to pick an arm in all the selected classes. Stage 4; Systematic random sampling to pick 25 female students in each class. The research instruments that was used for this study was a Standardized questionnaire. The reliability coefficient of the instrument yielded 0.77 using Cronbach Alpha formula. Frequency count, percentage and bar chart was used to analyze demographic Information. While inferential statistics, Pearson product moment correlation, was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. The study revealed among others that there is no significant relationship between knowledge and practice of menstrual hygiene among secondary school students in Ogbomoso South Local Government area. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that health educator and other health practitioners to have a shift in paradigm from theoretical teaching to skill based health education in order to improve their services to clients especially the adolescents. Also, efforts should be made in the area of interdisciplinary collaboration to ensure that dialogue and intervention on adolescent reproductive health (menstrual hygiene) integrate these contextual factors into social welfare practice.

Key Words: *knowledge, Attitude, Practice, Menstrual Hygiene*

Introduction

Hygiene refers to personal and environmental cleanliness which particularly help to minimize exposure to germs. Hygienic practices vary widely, and what is considered acceptable in one culture might not be acceptable in another. Hygiene in home and everyday life setting play an important part in preventing spread of infections. The aim of personal hygiene is to promote standards of personal cleanliness within the setting of the condition where people live. Personal hygiene include: bathing, clothing, washing hands, and toilets, care of nails, feet and teeth, personal appearance and inculcation of clean habits in the young. Environmental hygiene deals with the home and other surroundings. It involves proper disposal of waste, possible and adequate water supply, hygienic storage of food among others. Poor environmental hygiene leads to health problems (Ojo, 2003). Therefore, hygiene practices during menstruation are of great importance. Menstrual hygiene is defined

as a practice by which women and adolescent girls use a clean material to absorb or collect menstrual blood, and this material can be changed in privacy as often as necessary for the duration of menstruation.

Araoye (2003) stated that it also include using soap and water for washing the body as required and having access to facilities to dispose materials. Menstrual hygiene can be essential in ensuring that a woman's everyday life is not interrupted by menstruation. It ensures that a woman can continue with her daily routine such as going to school, going to work or doing household chores.

Menstruation stops occurring after menopause, which usually occurs between 45 and 55 years of age. Periods also stop during pregnancy and typically do not resume during the initial months of breastfeeding. Up to 80% of women report having some symptoms prior to menstruation. Common signs and symptoms include acne, tender breasts, bloating, feeling tired, irritability, and mood changes. These may interfere with normal life, therefore qualifying as premenstrual syndrome, in 20 to 30% of women. In 3 to 8%, symptoms are severe. (Kauffman, 2005).

There is a substantial lacuna in the knowledge about menstrual hygiene among adolescent girls which is also part of the variables considered in the study. Several research studies have revealed this gap and they showed that there was a low level of awareness about menstruation among the girls when they first experienced it. The knowledge of menstrual hygiene among the adolescents is a strong determinant of the effectiveness on the attitudes and practices, the menstrual period is a physiological process that occurs throughout the reproductive years of every woman, this process is associated with various mental as well as physical morbidities like premenstrual syndrome, menstruation can also predispose women to life threatening RTI if hygiene is not maintained throughout menstruation (Bashford, 2003).

Several research studies have revealed gap between facts and beliefs of adolescent girls and showed that there is low level of awareness about menstruation among girls when they first experience it.

Research Question

1. What are the sources of information in menstrual hygiene and adolescents?

Hypotheses

1. There will be no significant relationship between knowledge and practice of menstrual hygiene among secondary school students in Ogbomoso South Local Government area.
2. There will be no significant relationship between attitude and practice of menstrual hygiene among secondary school students in Ogbomoso South Local Government area.
3. There will be no significant relationship between knowledge and attitude towards practice of menstrual hygiene among secondary school students in Ogbomoso South Local Government area.

Methodology

The descriptive survey research design was used for this study. This was considered appropriate because of its merit that suit a study of this nature as it will enable the researcher to carefully describe and explain factual and detailed information about the opinion of respondents on issues. The population of this study will be Senior and Junior secondary school female adolescents in Ogbomoso South Local Government Area of Oyo State. The study made use of multi stage sampling technique from the main population. 1020 female junior/senior secondary school adolescents in some selected schools in Ogbomoso South Local Government Area of Oyo State. Stage 1; 30% of the school using proportional sampling technique 18 schools Stage 2; Purposive to select J.S.S.1 and 2 and S.S 1 and 2 because S.S 3 and J.S.S 3 were

writing exams. Stage 3; Simple random sampling to pick an arm in all the selected classes.

Stage 4; Systematic random sampling to pick 25 female students in each class. The research instruments that was used for this study was a Standardized questionnaire. The questionnaire was in four sections (A-D). Section A was used to gather information on the demographic data of the respondents. Section B was Menstrual Hygiene Knowledge questionnaire (MHKQ). Section C was attitude towards menstrual hygiene questionnaire (ATMHQ). While section D was menstrual hygiene practice questionnaire (MHPQ). Items of the instrument were close ended and were designed in line with the 4- points modified likert type scale. It was rated as follows:

SA – Strongly Agree, A – Agree (3), D – Disagree (2), SD – Strongly Disagree (1). To ensure validity of instrument, a draft copy of the questionnaire was presented to the researcher's supervisor and other experts in the department Health Education, Ekiti State University for comments and suggestions to improve the quality of the instrument and to remove ambiguous statement from the instrument. Reliability refers to the degree of consistency of an instrument in measuring what it is designed to measure. The instrument was administered personally with the help of research assistants. The completed questionnaires were collected from participants on the spot. The descriptive statistics of frequency count, percentage and bar chart was used to analyze section A (demographic Information). While inferential statistics, Pearson product moment correlation, was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance.

Data Analysis

Research Question: What are the sources of information in menstrual hygiene?

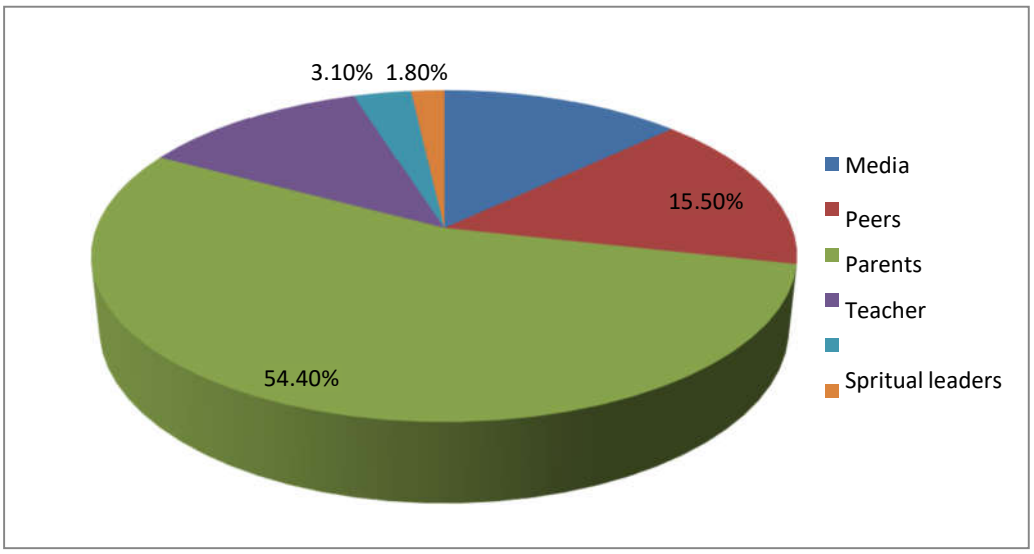

Fig. 1.0: Bar chart showing different sources of menstrual hygiene information to secondary school students

Figure 1 above provided answer to research question one. From the chart 140 (13.0%) of the respondents consulted media for most of their reproductive information, 167 (15.5%) consulted peers/friends, 588 (54.4%) consulted their parents, 133 (12.3%) consulted teachers, 33(3.1%) consulted spiritual leaders while 19

(1.8%) consulted other sources such as seminars and workshops. This result shows that majority of in-school adolescents consulted their parents for most menstrual hygiene information.

Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: There will be no significant relationship between knowledge and practice of menstrual hygiene among secondary school students in Ogbomoso South Local Government area.

Table 6: Correlation table showing the relationship between knowledge and practice of menstrual hygiene

		Knowledge of menstrualhygiene	Practice of menstrualhygiene
Knowledge of menstrual hygiene	Pearson Correlation	1	.855
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	1020	1020
Practice of menstrual hygiene	Pearson Correlation	.855	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	1020	1020

The table above shows that there is a significant relationship between knowledge and practice of menstrual hygiene among secondary school students in Ogbomoso South Local Government area. (r=.855, p>.05), therefore the null hypothesis is rejected.

Hypothesis 2: There will be no significant relationship between attitude and practice of menstrual hygiene among secondary school students in Ogbomoso South Local Government area.

Table 6: Correlation table showing the relationship between attitude and practice of menstrual hygiene

		Attitude towards menstrual hygiene	Practice of menstrual hygiene
Attitude towards menstrual hygiene	Pearson Correlation	1	.021
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.510
	N	1020	1020
Practice of menstrual hygiene	Pearson Correlation	.021	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.510	
	N	1020	1020

The table above shows that there is no significant relationship between attitude and practice of menstrual hygiene among secondary school students in Ogbomoso South Local Government area. (r=.021, p>.05), therefore the null hypothesis is accepted.

Hypothesis 3: There will be no significant relationship between knowledge and attitude towards practice of menstrual hygiene among secondary school students in Ogbomoso South Local Government area.

Table 6: Correlation table showing the relationship between knowledge and attitude towards menstrual hygiene

		Knowledge of menstrual hygiene	Attitude towards menstrual hygiene
Knowledge of menstrual hygiene	Pearson Correlation	1	.011
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.719
	N	1020	1020
Attitude towards menstrual hygiene	Pearson Correlation	.011	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.719	
	N	1020	1020

The table above shows that there is no significant relationship between knowledge and attitude towards menstrual hygiene among secondary school students in Ogbomoso South Local Government Area. ($r=.011$, $p<.05$), therefore the null hypothesis is accepted.

Discussion of findings

The finding of this study is in line with UNESCO (2014) who found that every year approximately 10 % of women worldwide are exposed to genital infections including urinary tract infections and bacterial vaginosis, and 75 % of women have a history of a genital infection. Specifically, the common risk factors for vaginal infections include pregnancy and poor hygiene (both perennial and menstrual hygiene).

The finding of this study tallied with the finding of Park, (2007) which is a survey of 160 girls in West Bengal, India, when they found that 67.5 per cent were aware of menstruation prior to menarche, but 97.5 per cent did not know the source of menstrual bleeding.

The result of this study is also in support of the view of Moronkola and Usegbu, (2010) who concluded that poor menstrual health management (MHM) in schools have been shown to cause adolescent girls worry and humiliation, contribute to monthly absenteeism and lead to poor performance in schools. Also the result agreed with the view of UNESCO (2014) who stresses the importance of school toilets which are built to accommodate menstruating girls' specific needs for privacy, space, washing facilities and correct disposal or cleaning of menstrual pads. The finding of this study is also in line with Kirk and Sommer (2006) who suggests that acquaintance with a country's beliefs around menstruation and providing girls with correct information about puberty are important elements in a holistic school MHM package. They stated further that ignorance about menstrual issues is prevalent not only amongst schoolgirls butalso in organizations and communities.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions were drawn;

1. There is no significant relationship between knowledge and practice of menstrual hygiene among secondary school students in Ogbomoso South Local Government area.
2. There is no significant relationship between attitude and practice of menstrual hygiene among secondary school students in Ogbomoso South Local Government area.
3. There is no significant relationship between knowledge and attitude towards practice of menstrual hygiene among secondary school students in Ogbomoso South Local Government area.

Recommendation

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

- The result from this study has confirmed the need for health educator and other health practitioners to have a shift in paradigm from theoretical teaching to skill based health education in order to improve their services to clients especially the adolescents.
- Efforts should be made in the area of interdisciplinary collaboration to ensure that dialogue and intervention on adolescent reproductive health (menstrual hygiene) integratethese contextual factors into social welfare practice. Finally;
- These findings implicate the need for health teachers to have adequate training and knowledge of adolescent reproductive health for effective dissemination and better result cumulating into reduction in reproductive health related social vices among the adolescent.

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