

## **Abstract**

### **Introduction**

Menstruation is a normal physiological process. Menstrual hygiene is masked by misconceptions, taboos and cultural believes.

### **Objective**

To assess knowledge on menstruation and menstrual hygiene and attitudes and practices on menstrual hygiene, associated factors related to knowledge, attitudes and practices, and the impact of menstruation on selected daily activities among grade 10 school girls in Minuwangoda Educational Division.

### **Methods**

A descriptive cross sectional study was conducted among grade 10 school girls, in Minuwangoda Educational Division. Multistage stratified cluster sampling was done to obtain 31 clusters and a total sample of 610 grade 10 school girls. Self-administered questionnaire which included socio-demographic details, practices related to menstrual hygiene, attitude related to menstrual hygiene, knowledge related to menstrual hygiene and impact of menstruation on selected daily activities was used to gather data. Data was analyzed using SPSS version 25. Knowledge and practices were categorized as satisfactory and not satisfactory .The attitudes were categorized as favorable and unfavorable. The Chi-square test was done to test for statistical associations and  $p < 0.05$  was used as the cut-off.

### **Results**

Overall 60.1 % (95%CI 0.57-0.65) had satisfactory knowledge on menstruation and menstrual hygiene. Nearly 70% (95% CI0.27-0.34) students had unfavorable attitudes

regarding menstruation and menstrual hygiene. Overall 24.6% (95%CI 0.92-0.96) of the students reported to have satisfactory practices.

Regarding impact of menstruation on daily activities, school absenteeism during menstruation was 37.7%. Nearly 28% of students avoided sports during menstruation. The most common physical symptom was abdominal pain and the psychological symptom was anger during the menstrual cycle.

The commonest source of information was family members, 81.3% (95%CI 0.56-0.67) and the source of information is significantly associated with level of satisfactory knowledge ( $p<0.0001$ ). Mothers educational level was significantly associated with attitudes on menstruation ( $p=0.05$ ).

### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

The grade 10 school girls of Minuwangoda Educational Division had unfavorable attitudes towards menstrual hygiene. Thus it is recommended to improve attitudes of grade 10 school girls towards menstrual hygiene.

**Key words:** knowldege, attitudes, practices, menstruation, menstrual hygiene, adolescent girls