



unicef 
for every child

MENSTRUAL HYGIENE MANAGEMENT OF ADOLESCENT SCHOOL GIRLS AND NUNS



A Knowledge, Attitude, and
Practices Study in Bhutan

2018



SCHOOL HEALTH AND NUTRITION DIVISION (SHND),
DEPARTMENT OF SCHOOL EDUCATION, MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

MENSTRUAL HYGIENE MANAGEMENT OF ADOLESCENT SCHOOL GIRLS AND NUNS

*School Health and Nutrition Division (SHND),
Department of School Education, Ministry of Education*

KAP (Knowledge, Attitude and Practices) of Menstrual Hygiene Management by
Adolescent school-going girls and nuns in Bhutan.





ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This survey is a byproduct of the Department of School Education (DSE), Ministry of Education in partnership with the UNICEF, Bhutan.

The DSE would like to acknowledge M/S Bhutan A2Z Statistics, Economics & Environmental Consultancy, all institutions and individuals at various capacities who contributed to the successful completion of this study: Menstrual Hygiene Management of adolescent school-going girls and nuns 2017. The department in particular would like to acknowledge the following individuals and institutions:

Technical Working Group:

- Jamyang Choeden, Chief Program Officer, SHND, DSE, MoE.
- Deki Tshomo, Dy.Chief Program Officer, SHND, DSE, MoE.
- Karma Yangchen, Dy. Chief Program Officer, SHND, DSE, MoE.
- Sangay Thinley, Program Officer, MoH.
- Cheku Dorji, Chief Statistical Officer, NSB.
- Ani Namgay Om, Program Officer, Bhutan Nuns Foundation.
- Thinley Dem, WASH Advisor, SNV Bhutan
- Sonam Gyaltsen, WASH Officer, UNICEF, Thimphu, Bhutan.

Lastly, the DSE would like to thank all those respondents, surveyors, Principals and teachers of those sampled schools for rendering their kind support in realizing this survey. We hope that the findings of this study would be beneficial to relevant stakeholders, researchers and in particular our planners and program implementers in directing the way forward for smooth execution of school health programs.



PREFACE



SECRETARY

དཔལ་ལྷན་འབྲུག་གཞུང་། ཤེས་རིག་ལྷན་ཁག།

Royal Government of Bhutan

Ministry of Education

— *Rethinking Education* —



PREFACE

The introduction of life skills education in schools across the country is Ministry of Education's constant and ongoing initiative to equip school children with multifaceted life skills that go beyond mere academic empowerment. The modern approach to educating does not rely on academic excellence alone – but all round development of the child with skills that contribute to their employability in a crowded job market, but also as a competent human resource who will contribute to nation building, when called upon to do so.

The Ministry's Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) programme in schools is one such program that is designed to inculcate healthy living habits among the school children, as part of their education process. However, one area in which the Ministry had poor understanding was in an area that is no less important: Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices (KAP) of menstrual hygiene in schools and nunneries. Thus, a study was undertaken in 2017 to assess the prevailing menstrual hygiene management practices among adolescent school girls and nuns. The publication of "Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) of Adolescent School Girls and Nuns" by the Department of School Education of the Ministry of Education is the result of the findings from this study.

It is hoped that the findings of the study that is presented in this publication will contribute towards formulating sound school health and nutrition programmes, understand critical issues that need addressing, identify vulnerable areas and at-risk groups, and design interventions as well as adopt policies and monitor programmes.

As can be seen from the report that is contained within this publication, our adolescent school going girls and nuns are obviously faced with three kinds of challenges caused mainly by misconceptions surrounding menstruation: emotional, physical and social. For example, one of the findings of the report is that menstruation is perceived as something of a taboo - both by school girls as well as nuns themselves. Many of them consider the menstruation cycle as something repulsive and abnormal. It would appear that something as natural as menstruation is looked upon as a happenstance that should be shunned and abhorred. This mind set needs an overhaul.

The Ministry would like to express our deep appreciation for the cooperation received from all the respondents and facilitators of this survey, for their invaluable support. We would also like to thank our partner, UNICEF, for their technical and financial support. This report is critical to design further interventions for every adolescent girl, to advocate menstrual hygiene.


(Karma Yeshey)



ACRONYMS

CSPro	Census and Survey Processing
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Science
PSU	Primary Sampling Unit
SSU	Secondary Sampling Unit
CSS	Circular Systematic Sampling
PPS	Probability Proportional to Size
NSB	National Statistics Bureau
FDG	Focused Group Discussion
DSE	Department of School Education
MoE	Ministry of Education
MHM	Menstrual Hygiene Management
KAP	Knowledge Attitude Practices
SHND	School Health and Nutrition Division
PS	Primary School
LSS	Lower Secondary School
HSS	Higher Secondary School
CS	Central School



Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
Background and Objectives	1
Key Findings	1
Recommendations:.....	2
CHAPTER 1:INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY	4
Background	4
Significance of the study	4
1.4.1 Sampling Design	5
Field Operation	7
Response rate.....	8
Limitations of the study	9
CHAPTER 2: SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS	10
CHAPTER 3:KNOWLEDGE ON MENSTRUAL HYGIENE AND MANAGEMENT	13
CHAPTER 4:ATTITUDE TOWARDS MENSTRUATION	17
4.5 Menstruation as taboo to adolescent school girls	20
CHAPTER 5: PRACTICES OF MENSTRUAL HYGIENE MANAGEMENT IN SCHOOLS	22
5.1 Type of menstrual absorbents used	22
CHPATER 6: SUMMARY FINDINGS FROM NUNNERIES	27
6.1 Socio-demographic characteristics of nuns	27
6.2 Socio-economic Characteristics of parents and guardians	27
CHAPTER 6.1 KNOWLEDGE AND INFORMATION ON MENSTRUATION	29
6.1.1 Awareness on menarche and its causes	29
6.1.2 Sources of information on menarche	30
6.1.3 Awareness on menstrual related infections	31
CHAPTER 6.2 ATTITUDE ON MENSTRUAL HYGIENE	33
6.2.1 Misconceptions and taboos.....	33
6.2.2 Physical impacts of menstruation.....	34
6.2.3 Emotional impacts produced by menstruation	34
6.2.4 Social impacts produced by menstruation.....	36
6.2.5 WASH facilities to counter menstruation hygiene management	38
CHAPTER 6.3:PRACTICES ON MENSTRUAL HYGIENE	39
6.3.1 Sanitary facilities at nunneries	40
6.3.2 Practice of Menstrual Hygiene at nunneries	42
6.3.3 Empirical Analysis	44
6.4 Comparative Statics of Schools intervened by SHND on MHM and the control group (not intervened by SHND with MHM)	45
CHAPTER 7: KEY FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS.....	47
i) Key findings for adolescent school girls:	47
7.1 Socio-demographic, Economic and Educational Characteristics	47
7.2 Girls' current knowledge and information on menstruation	47
7.3 Menarche—knowledge and information	47
7.4 Source of information regarding menstruation and menstrual hygiene	48
7.5 Attitude towards menstruation.....	48
7.6 Social Impacts produced by menstruation	48
7.7 Physical Impacts of menstruation	48
7.8 Emotional Impacts	49
7.9 Menstruation as taboo to adolescent school girls	49



8.0	Type of menstrual absorbents used	49
8.1	Menstrual hygiene management prevailing	49
8.2	Adolescents' response to menstruation and practices developed as a result	49
8.3	WASH facilities available at schools to combat menstruation	50
ii)	Key findings of adolescent nuns:.....	50
8.4	Awareness on menarche and its causes	50
	Sources of information on menarche	50
8.6	Adolescent nuns' knowledge on menstrual hygiene	50
	Awareness on menstrual related infections	50
	Misconceptions and taboos	50
8.9	Physical impacts of menstruation	51
9.	Emotional impacts produced by menstruation	51
10.	Social impacts produced by menstruation.....	51
11.	Sanitary facilities to counter menstruation hygiene management	51
	Practices on menstrual hygiene by adolescent nuns	51
	WASH facilities at nunneries	52
	Practice of Menstrual Hygiene at nunneries	52
	Empirical Findings.....	52
	Regional situation of MHM.....	53
	Qualitative Findings	53
	CHAPTER 8:CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	54
8.1	Conclusion	54
8.2	Recommendations & way forwards	54
8.3	Future Research	55
	REFERENCES	56
	Annexure I: Questionnaires	57
	Annexure II: REBH Approval Letter	64



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background and Objectives

This report highlights the findings of the Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM): KAP (Knowledge, Attitude & Practices) prevailing among adolescent schoolgirls and nuns of Bhutan as of 2017. This study is the first of its kind. The Ministry of Education had initiated WASH (Water, sanitation and hygiene) program across schools of Bhutan many years ago. The impact assessment of WASH in Schools 2013 had revealed various positive impacts, but very little are known about the menstrual hygiene management in terms of its knowledge and information, attitude and practices.

To find the facts and figures regarding Menstrual Hygiene and Management among the adolescent schoolgirls across schools of Bhutan and nunneries, a need assessment for Menstrual Hygiene Management study was carried out. Following were the broad objectives of this study:

- ✓ To assess awareness (knowledge) about menarche and their sources of information before its onset;
- ✓ To find out the prevailing practices for menstrual hygiene among adolescent girls;
- ✓ To assess restrictions practiced by adolescent school girls during menstruation;
- ✓ To ascertain the association of awareness of menstruation before menarche and practices for menstruation hygiene with educational status of respondents and their mothers; and
- ✓ To assess the relative contribution of educational status of respondents and their mother's on the likelihood of using unhygienic practices during menstruation.

Key Findings

a) Adolescent schoolgirls and nuns' knowledge and information on menstruation

- A vast majority (83%) of the schoolgirls and nuns (43%) recognized menstruation as a physiological process.
- Around 2 percent of schoolgirls and nuns (5.4%) defined menstruation as a disease. About 1 percent of former and about 7.1% of the latter defined menstruation as a curse.
- About 5.2 percent of the schoolgirls and nuns (37.5%) were of the opinion that menstruation is a 'Curse'.

b) Source of information regarding menstruation and menstrual hygiene

- For both schoolgirls and nuns, mothers are the primary source of information

regarding menstruation. About 42 percent of schoolgirls and more than half (54.9%) of nuns received first-hand information on menstruation from their mothers.

c) Misconceptions and taboos

- One out of every ten (10.4%) schoolgirls still disagree the statement that 'it is important to talk about menstrual period with men.' Similarly, One-quarter (25%) of the adolescent nuns are unaware whether they should enter shrines/temples during menstruation.
- Close to one-third (63.5%) of the adolescent schoolgirls reported that during menstruation, a woman must not enter shrine or temple. Further augmenting this superstition, about 21 percent of the respondents agreed that women in menstruation are susceptible to get possessed by evil spirit.
- Similarly, about 33.2 percent of the adolescent nuns reported that women in menstruation are susceptible to possession by evil spirits.

d) Type of menstrual absorbents used

- It was found that every nine out of ten (91.9%) schoolgirls used sanitary pad. However, around 3 percent of the adolescent schoolgirls did not use any kind of absorbent material. Similarly, almost nine out of every ten (87.5%) nuns used sanitary pad followed by around 11 percent who used napkin/cloth or towel.

e) Prevailing MHM in schools

- Around three-quarters (75.2%) of schoolgirls reported that they dry their cloth pads in sunlight. And around one out of every ten (9.6%) dried their pads inside the house. There are around 8 percent of schoolgirls who hid reusable sanitary pad beneath another cloth and dry them together. Similarly, about 7.1 percent of nuns dried the reusable sanitary pad beneath another cloth.

f) Adolescent school girls' response to menstruation

- More than half (52.5%) of the schoolgirls reported of taking rest during menstruation. It also revealed that close to one-quarter (21.1%) of them reported that they thoroughly involved in activities to forget the discomforts while 6.4 percent of the rest resorted to medication



followed by Yoga and meditation (3.1%) and prayers (1.7%).

- Similarly, close to half (46.4%) of the adolescent nuns took rest during menstruation followed by 19.6 percent of them who underwent medication. On an equal proportion, about 7.1 percent of them reported that they said prayers or meditated

g) *WASH facilities at schools to combat menstruation*

- The survey revealed that close to half (45.9%) of the school girls agreed that they took half body bath during menstruation due to lack of hot water.
- More than two-thirds (78.6%) of the adolescent nuns agreed that they missed classes or activities during menstruation since the toilets were dirty and discouraged them to change.

h) *Social Impacts produced by menstruation*

- About 43 percent of the adolescent schoolgirls reported having missed school during menstruation because it made them uncomfortable. The study has also revealed that about 9.7 percent of the boarding schools girls missed school as opposed to 31 percent of the day scholars, About 59.3 percent of both the day and boarding schoolgirls missed classes.
- More than two-thirds (76.8%) of the adolescent nuns reported that it was important to buy sanitary pad without being seen.

i) *Physical Impacts of menstruation*

- Close to half (48.1%) of the respondents agreed that they missed school during period since it was painful.

j) *Emotional Impacts*

- More than half (57%) of the respondents agreed that they got easily upset during pre-menstrual and menstrual periods than at other times.
- More than two-thirds (82.2%) of the respondents reported that they "just have to tolerate" with menstruation

i) *Menstrual case of special children:*

- *It was found that teachers advised parents to keep their child at home during menstruation. (Suggested)*

- This they do since the school did not have capabilities to render help to those special children during menstruation; and
- All the participants of FDG unanimously agreed that they didn't have enough WASH facilities to combat menstruation in their schools.

j) *Efficacy of SHND's interventions of MHM programs in schools and nunneries.*

The study revealed a vast difference between schools with SHND's intervention MHM programs and those that did not have the intervention. The comparative statics revealed that more than three quarters (80.6%) of the adolescent girls in those schools intervened by the MHM program of SHND had correct knowledge on menstruation. Interestingly, after the intervention of the program, none of them believed that menstruation is a curse. However, there are still about 4.4 percent who still considers that menstruation is a disease. Around 5 percent of them reported of not knowing what menstruation is all about. The study has also revealed that only around 38 percent of the adolescent girls in those schools, which did not receive MHM program knew about menstruation. About 9.5 percent of them still consider menstruation as a curse followed by 2.2 percent of them considering menstruation as a disease. About half (50.4%) of them didn't know about menstruation. This clearly indicates the efficacy of the SHND's MHM awareness programs in the schools.

Recommendations:

- ✓ Every school and nunnery need to enhance their WASH facilities;
- ✓ Every school and nunnery need to enhance their sanitary facilities viz. sanitary pad disposal bin, facility to dry improvised sanitary pad, renewable materials to wrap the disposable pads and etc;
- ✓ Enhance sexuality education programs in every school and nunneries;
- ✓ Education Ministry to bring the adolescent nuns into mainstream in terms of sexuality education and any other forms of education imparted to the mainstream adolescent girls for their overall development;
- ✓ The School Health and Nutrition Division to spearhead the development of spot-check and Observation checklist to account the existing WASH facilities for each school (inclusive of nunneries) and compute ratio of users to WASH facilities;
- ✓ Ministry of Education to closely liaise with Ministry of Health on their public health



development facilities and endeavor to realize WASH facilities in schools and nunneries;

- ✓ Schools needs to enhance the MHM service providers in their schools;
- ✓ Ministry of Education to ensure the establishment of disable-friendly WASH facilities in each school and duplicate this process in nunneries as well;

- ✓ MoE to liaise with relevant coordinating partners to promote MHM program in all the schools and nunneries; and
- ✓ Ministry of Education to liaise with the Ministry of Health to reach out MHM programs beyond schools and nunnery.



CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

1.1 Background

May 28 is considered as the global *Menstrual Hygiene Day* initiated by WASH United. It was created mainly to publicly recognize the right of women to hygienically manage their menstruation wherever they are. Although it is a normal biological process and a key sign of reproductive health, yet in various cultures, it is treated as something negative, shameful or dirty. A study from the UNICEF found that 1 out of 3 girls in South Asia are completely oblivious about menstruation prior to getting it. There are also evidences like 48 percent of girls in Iran and 10 percent of girls in India believe that menstruation is a disease (WaterAid 2013, Menstrual Hygiene Matters). Besides continued social taboos related to menstruation, women and girls' ability to manage the same is affected by various other factors viz. limited access to affordable and hygienic sanitary materials and disposal options leading to unhygienic practices. *The International Conference on Population and Development reaffirmed women's reproductive rights and the right to development.*

Bhutan is no exception in terms of Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) especially among the female adolescent group. The WASH assessment carried out in 2013 had revealed some of the following disturbing facts and figures:

- Washing hands with soap in schools is still very low (only 55% use soap);
- Sanitary pad disposal facilities for girls in schools are nonexistent in most schools. The lack of such facilities in schools actually compels menstruating girls to take leave;
- A large number of "WASH schools" do not have bathing facilities;
- Students in the CPS are too small to clean their toilets properly. Lack of wet sweepers/cleaners pose a challenge to maintain the toilets clean; and
- There is a general lack of understanding surrounding the girl's menstruation issues.

1.2 Significance of the study

It was observed both casually as well through regular reports and reviews conducted by the School Health and Nutrition Division (SHND) of the Ministry of Education that WASH facilities in schools and nunneries had been neglected. It was also noted that adolescent girls often risk their health using unhygienic clothes and rugs and even missing out classes during menstruation. To this

effect, SHND in 2014 piloted project for MHM Programme in 3 nunneries and 10 schools across the country in collaboration with Bhutan Nuns Foundation (BNF) through technical and financial support from UNICEF. The core objective was to educate young girls and nuns on menstrual hygiene management and to train them to make re-usable sanitary napkins. Further, after seeing the success of the programs, it got expanded to 10 more schools and nunneries. The trained girls and nuns in turn trained their peers. SHND and BNF reported that they were able to manage menstrual hygiene in a much better way.

Nonetheless, there is still inadequate quantitative and qualitative information to address the issues around MHM in schools and nunneries. To set the blueprint for MHM to fuse into all the schools and nunneries across the country, a need assessment is of paramount importance for the reusable sanitary napkin and disposable methods covering other thematic areas viz. existing KAP (Knowledge, Attitude & Practice) of girls and nuns, believes related to menstruation, key drivers, challenges etc.

1.3 Objectives

Following are the objectives of the proposed study:

- ✓ To assess the awareness (knowledge) about menarche and their sources of information before its onset;
- ✓ To find out the prevailing practices for menstrual hygiene among adolescent girls;
- ✓ To assess the restrictions which were practiced by adolescent schoolgirls during menstruation;
- ✓ To ascertain the association of awareness of menstruation before menarche and practices for menstruation hygiene with educational status of respondents and their mothers; and
- ✓ To assess the relative contribution of educational status of respondents and their mother's on the likelihood of using unhygienic practices during menstruation.

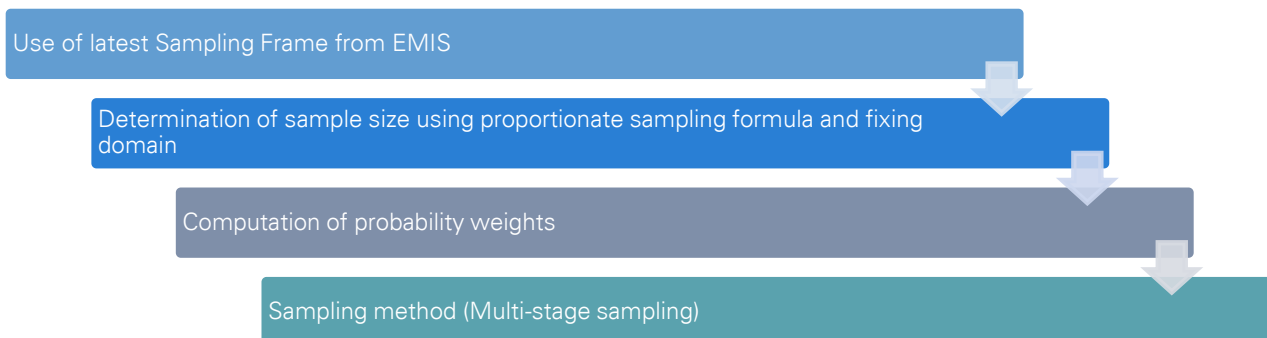
1.4 Methodology

The central focus of this study was to determine the knowledge, attitudes and practices of the adolescent (aged 10-19) female students and nuns specifically focusing on the biological, psychological and socio-cultural factors that may affect attitudes and beliefs towards menstruation. The following sub-sections entail the detailed methodology involved in this study:



1.4.1 Sampling Design

The diagram below illustrates the suitable sampling method for this survey.



1.4.2 Sampling frame and coverage

The latest sampling frame 2016 extracted from EMIS (Education Monitoring and Information System) is used as a universe for sampling. The map below represents sampling distribution for this study across 20 districts.



1.4.3 Sample size determination

The sample size determination formula for proportion is adopted as depicted below.

$n = (z_{\alpha/2})^2 p(1-p)/e^2$, where n = sample size for proportion, $z_{\alpha/2} = 1.96$ @ 95% confidence level, p = proportion of picking 50-50 right answer and $e = \pm 5\%$ confidence interval/margin of error. This requires the sample size of only 384 at the national level reporting, which is up to 95% level of confidence. However, to minimize the width of confidence interval, so as not to misguide the probability of estimating the true answers in that wide margin of error *afpc* needs to be computed.

fpc (finite population correction): $n_1 = n / (1 + (n-1)/N)$ where, n_1 is the new sample size and N = total households

Therefore, the new sample size after adjusting for *fpc* is 383 as illustrated below:

$n_1 = 384 / (1 + (384-1)/166,550) = 383$. Nonetheless, the domain is kept both at the areas of residence (urban & rural) and regional (eastern, central & western) levels and finally the sample size tantamount to **1,560**.



1.4.4 Sampling method

A multi-stage sampling method is applied for this study. Each Dzongkhag was considered a stratum.

- a) *Stage one [Selection of primary sampling units (PSUs)]:* The adolescent schoolgirls and nuns were considered the PSUs. The selection of the PSUs from each stratum was done by applying *Probability Proportional to Size (PPS)* method of selection.

- b) *Stage two [Selection of schools]:* The schools were selected automatically by fixing 40 respondents from each school.
- Stage three [Selection of secondary sampling units (SSUs)]:* The individual adolescent girls and nuns were considered as SSUs.
- c) A fixed number of them from each school were selected by applying *Circular Systematic Sampling (CSS)* method after listing them in each sampled school using *school register*.

1.4.5 Summary of sampling plan and computation of weights

Table 1 illustrates the sampling plan and computation of statistical weights.

Dzongkhag	Female Enrolment (aged 10-19)	Sampled Female (PPS)	Disp. Allocation	Sampled Schools	SF	SK	W _b
Bumthang	1,412	36	40	1	2.8	1412	0.35
Chhukha	4,094	105	120	3	2.9	1365	0.34
Dagana	2,402	62	40	1	1.7	2402	0.60
Gasa	305	8	40	1	13.1	305	0.08
Gelephu Thromde	1,265	33	40	1	3.2	1265	0.32
Haa	1,207	31	40	1	3.3	1207	0.30
Lhuentse	1,261	32	40	1	3.2	1261	0.32
Mongar	3,306	85	80	2	2.4	1653	0.41
Paro	3,530	91	80	2	2.3	1765	0.44
PemaGatshel	2,065	53	40	1	1.9	2065	0.52
Phuntsholing Thromde	1,582	41	40	1	2.5	1582	0.40
Punakha	2,823	73	80	2	2.8	1412	0.35
SamdrupJongkhar	2,465	63	40	1	1.6	2465	0.62
Samtse	5,254	135	120	3	2.3	1751	0.44
Sarpang	2,839	73	80	2	2.8	1420	0.35
SJongkhar Thromde	702	18	40	1	5.7	702	0.18
Thimphu	1,385	36	40	1	2.9	1385	0.35
Thimphu Thromde	7,848	202	240	6	3.1	1308	0.33
Trashigang	4,094	105	80	2	2.0	2047	0.51
Trashiyangtse	1,748	45	40	1	2.3	1748	0.44
Trongsa	1,292	33	40	1	3.1	1292	0.32
Tsirang	1,972	51	40	1	2.0	1972	0.49
WangduePhodrang	2,844	73	80	2	2.8	1422	0.36
Zhemgang	1,681	43	40	1	2.4	1681	0.42
Total	59,376	1,526	1,560	39	2.6	1522	0.38
<i>N.B: Sf = Sampling fraction, SK = Skip interval & W_b = Base weight</i>							

Similarly, table 2 depicts the sampling framework for nuns.



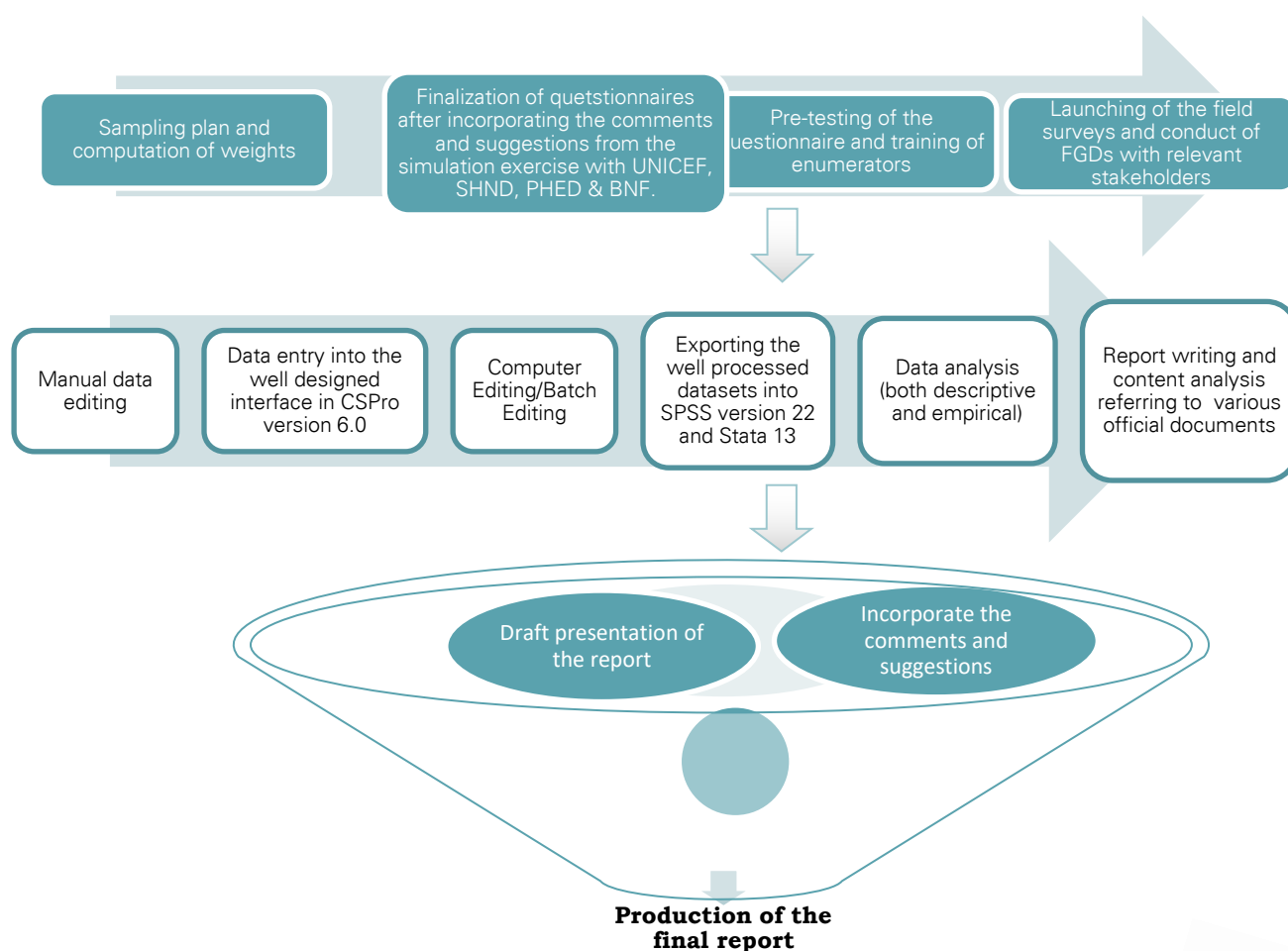
Table 2: Sampled nunneries and nuns

Dzongkhag	Nunnery	Total nuns	Sampled Nuns	Response	Wb	Wa
Bumthang	PemaThegchokCholing,Tang	130	62	15	2.10	8.7
Trashigang	SamtenChoeling, Womrong	19	9	2	2.10	9.5
Thimphu	Shechen Ugyen Choezong, Sisina	130	62	13	2.10	10.0
	Sangchen D. Lhendup, Punakha	90	43	12	2.09	7.5
	ThangthongDewacenGonpa, Zilukha	55	26	14	2.10	3.9
Total		424	202	56	2.10	7.6

1.5 Quality Control Process

The quality control process spans from development of sampling frame to the final analysis of the enumerated data from the field. The sampling frame was developed based on the administrative statistics maintained by the Policy and Planning Division of the Ministry of Education in their Education Monitoring Information System (EMIS). The data pertaining to adolescent schoolgirls (aged 10-19) were extracted for all the schools of Bhutan and treated that as a sampling frame for the KAP study of Menstruation Hygiene Management (MHM).

A probability sampling was adopted to select the required number of students from each school based on the determined sample size. To capture the relevant variables based on the objectives of the study, a well-structured questionnaire was designed and pre-tested. After incorporation of the missing variables and other relevant information, the questionnaire was finalized and presented to the Technical Working Group comprised of officials from UNICEF, SNV, Bhutan Nuns Foundation, Ministry of Health, and Ministry of Education as a part of the simulation exercise.





Field Operation

To enumerate the data based on the sample size determined for this study, two teams with two supervisors were fielded into those sampled schools. The data enumeration commenced from 4th April to 5th May, 2017.

Response rate

There were about 3.9 percent computed as non-response rate, meaning the survey covered only around 96 percent of the sampled respondents. This non-response rate is due to minor errors in the sampling frame generated from the EMIS whereby some sampled schools lacked 40 adolescent girls aged 10-19, some refused to answers, some were too young to understand the questions despite concerted effort to guide the interview etc. The same situation arose due to reasons like partially completed forms as well.

1.5.3 Data processing and analysis

The data is processed using Census and Survey Processing software (*CSPPro. 6.2* version) and then exported to the *SPSS 24* and *Stata 12* for analysis.

1.6 Literature Review

A transition phase from girlhood to womanhood is a special period in a life of adolescent girls. Thakre et al. (2011) pointed out that there is a substantial lacuna in the knowledge about menstruation among adolescent girls. Good hygienic practices such as the use of sanitary pads and adequate washing of the genital area are essential during menstruation (Dhingra R, 2009).

Menstruation is generally considered as unclean in the Indian society. Isolation of the menstruating girls and restrictions being imposed on them in the family has reinforced a negative attitude towards this phenomenon. This has blocked the access of adolescent girls to the right kind of information, especially in the rural and tribal communities. Several research studies have revealed this gap and they showed that there was a low level of awareness about menstruation among girls when they first experienced infections due to lack of hygiene during menstruation (Ahuja A, 1995), (H, 1998), (KhannaA, 2005). Many studies have revealed that most of the adolescent girls had incomplete and inaccurate information about the menstrual physiology and hygiene. It also revealed that mothers, television, friends, teachers and relatives were the main sources which provided information on menstruation to the adolescent girls (Ghattargi CH, 2005), (Dasgupta A, 2008). A key priority of this study was to have women and girls the necessary knowledge, facilities and the culture environment to manage menstruation hygienically

and with dignity. It was also to investigate the menstruation related knowledge and practices among school-going adolescent girls which is beneficial for planning a program for improving the awareness level with respect to their life processes and promoting their quality of life. A community based cross sectional study was conducted on 387 school-going girls of Class 8 and 9 for the study. The study was undertaken among adolescent school-going girls in the field practice area of the Rural Health Unit and Training Centre, Saoner, in the Nagpur district, with the aim to assess the knowledge and the practices of menstrual hygiene among rural and urban school going adolescent girls. The studies have reported that only 36.95% of the girls were aware of menstruation before menarche. The major source of information about menstruation for them was found to be their mothers. More than three fourth of the girls in the study were not aware of the cause and the source of the bleeding. A majority of them had the knowledge about the use of sanitary pads. Sanitary pads were used by 49.35% and 45.74% practice the use of old clothes. Satisfactory cleaning of the external genitalia was practiced by 33.85% of the girls. Some menstrual hygiene indices have shown a significant difference in rural and urban girls. A variety of the factors are known to affect menstrual behaviors, the most influential being economic status and residential status (rural and urban). Awareness regarding the need for information about healthy menstrual practices is very important. This study has highlighted the need of adolescent girls to have accurate and adequate information about menstruation and its appropriate management. In view the mother and teacher plays vital role, it is important to have correct and appropriate information on reproductive health. Much more efforts are needed to curb the misbeliefs and taboos among adolescent schoolgirls. It is found that adolescent schoolgirls in both urban and rural areas have poor knowledge on menstruation and the practices are often not optimal for proper hygiene. Menstrual hygiene is an issue needs to be addressed at all (THAKRE, 2011, Oct).

According to the study, Soap stories and toilets tales (2012), many adolescent girls in low-income countries struggle to find proper places and facilities in their school that support management of menstrual hygiene. Although menstruation is a natural phenomenon, in many communities like in Bangladesh, it is deemed to be shameful with many negative impacts, and should be hidden and ignored. According to the adolescent girls the old menstrual cloths are buried in the ground for fear to get possessed by evil spirits. They hide their cloths from their fathers and brothers, as it is



believed if men see menstrual blood, misfortune will befall on them. Women on their period are not allowed to visit temple or the mosque. Some women do not leave their homes for seven days each month during her period. Others observe dietary restrictions or refrain from reading the Koran. They are even not allowed to touch food, cooking utensils or the kitchen gardens (Soap stories and toilet tales: 10 Case studies Bangladesh: tackling menstrual hygiene taboos (2012)).

Many girls prefer to stay home during their menstruation due lack of adequate facilities at schools, which is effectively one quarter of their school time that has direct impact on the student's leading to dropping out school. When girls choose to go to school while they are menstruating, they often do not change their menstrual pad for a whole day which affect their concentration due to concerns of overflow and staining of clothes lest it might lead to deep embarrassment and uncomfortable (Equity in School Water and Sanitation - Overcoming Exclusion and

Discrimination in South Asia (Bangladesh Country Report) 2009).

The study, Issues in Managing Menstrual Hygiene in Rural Schools of Sri Lanka (2014) depicted that many school does not have facilities of getting sanitary napkins, changing and washing sanitary napkins and safe disposal. Appropriate disposal are not recommended and practiced by schools and this has led to environmental problem as well. The promotion of menstrual hygiene in school is still challenging though schools provide the facilities. Adolescent girls and female teachers should be empowered in taking the lead and managing menstrual hygiene with dignity, safety and personal hygiene. The behavior and attitude change in children is needed for positive effects on menstrual hygiene components of school water, sanitation and hygiene programs.

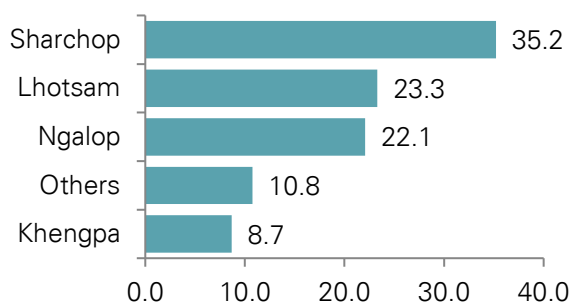
Limitations of the study

All the WASH facilities and the menstrual hygiene management practices reflected in this report are purely based on verbal report and no spot-checks were carried out.



CHAPTER 2: SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

Figure 5: Percentage distribution of respondents by mother tongue



This chapter deals with the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents who took part in this study. The analysis in this chapter begins at the national level and then delves into disaggregated information. Figure 1 shows that most of the respondents covered in this study were from the Central Schools (35.6%) followed by Primary Schools (20%) and Lower Secondary Schools (14.9%). Going by the areas of residence, around half of the respondents were from rural schools and close to half (49.7%) from urban schools.

Figure 1: Respondents by level of schools

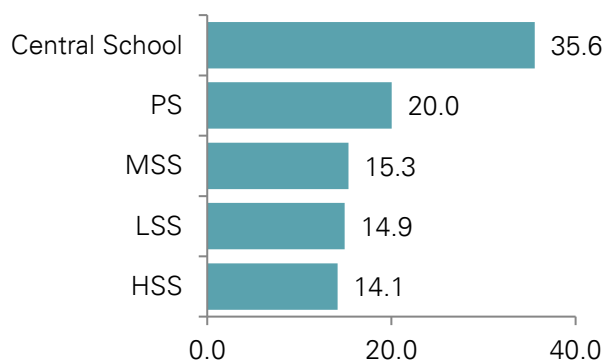
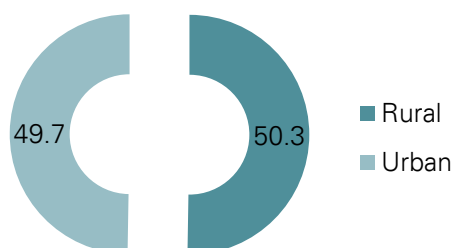


Figure 2: Respondents by area of residence



The survey also revealed that almost one-third of the respondents belonged to the age bracket of 12-17. Sharchop speaking respondents were the highest number who participated in this study (35.2%) followed by Lhotsam (23.3%) and Ngalop (22.1%).

Figure 3: Percentage distribution of respondents by age

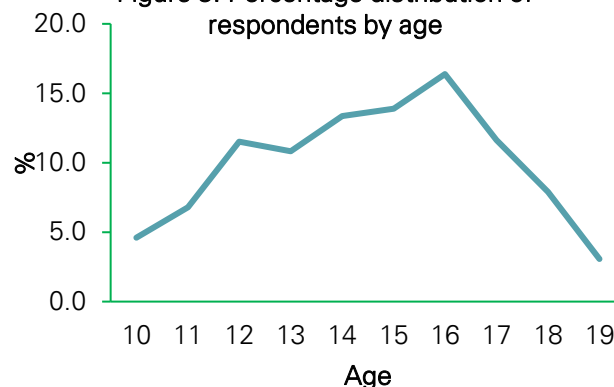
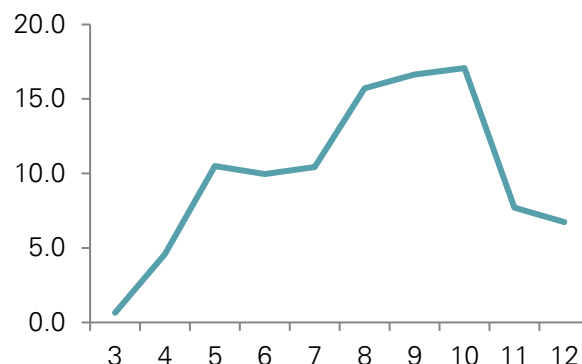
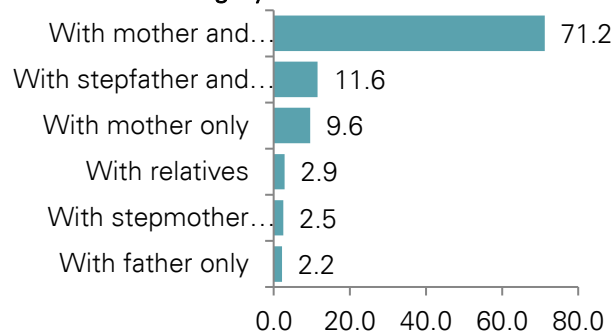


Figure 4: Grades of the respondents



The respondents comprised of diverse levels of education spanning from class 3 to class 12. Almost half of the respondents fall between classes 8 and 10. Hardly one percent of the respondents comprised of grade 3 students.

Figure 6: Girls living back at home by category of their caretakers



A vast majority (71.2%) of the respondents lived with mother and father followed by around 12 percent of them living with stepfather and mother.



About 9.6 percent of them with single parent (mother). The lowest is the 2.2 percent of them who live with lone parents (fathers). Among the adolescent respondent girls, maximum were Buddhist (81.5%) followed by Hindu (13.3%) and Christian (4.7%). Less than one percent belongs to other faiths.

Figure 7: Respondents by religious background

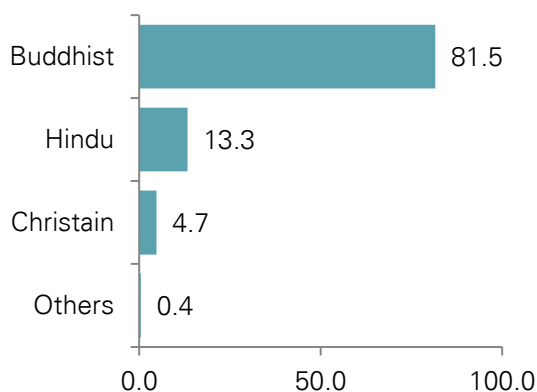
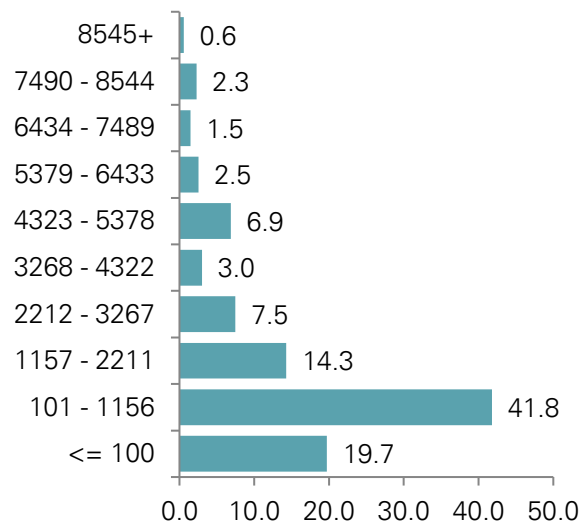


Figure 8: Percentage distribution of adolescent girls receiving yearly pocket money



The survey revealed that only about 65 percent of the respondents received pocket money. Figure 8 shows the amount of yearly pocket money received by the respondents. The supply of pocket money ranges from Nu. 50 to 9,000 a year. Less than half of the respondents received the yearly pocket money between Nu. 100 and 1,156 followed by around 20 percent who received even less than Nu. 100 a year.

2.1 Educational and Economic Characteristics

This sub-section deals with the educational and economic characteristics of respondents' parents and guardians. Around eight in every ten (77.6%) of the respondents' mothers have no education. Similarly, figure 10 has revealed that almost six out of every ten (65.5%) fathers lack education.

Figure 9: Mother's education

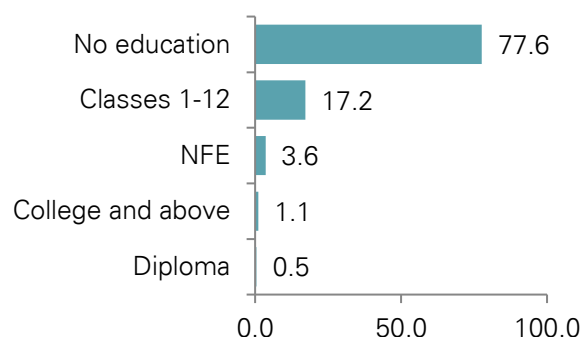


Figure 10: Father's level of education

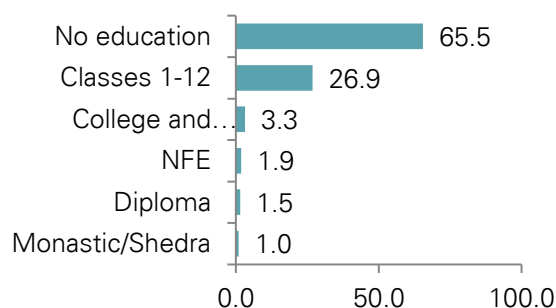


Figure 11 has yet again revealed that a large majority of the respondents' guardians lack education. About nine in every ten (90.7%) of the guardians lack education.

Figure 11: Education level of guardian

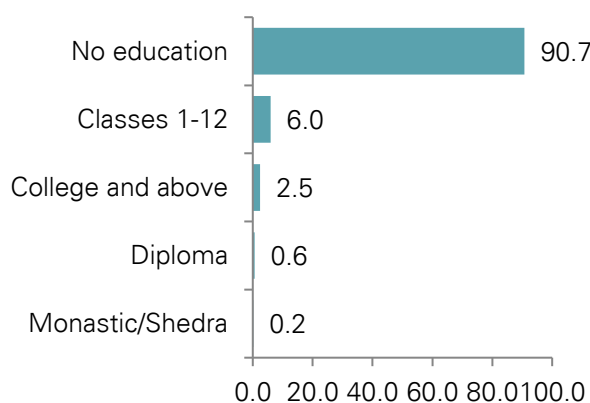




Figure 12: Father's occupation

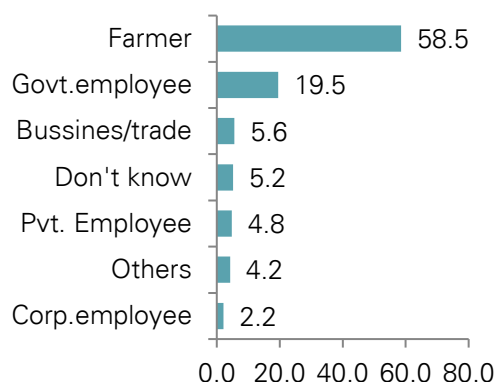
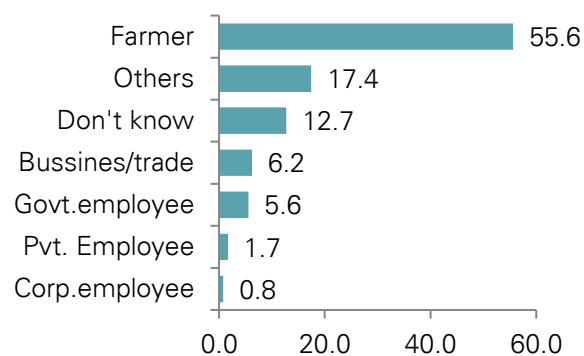
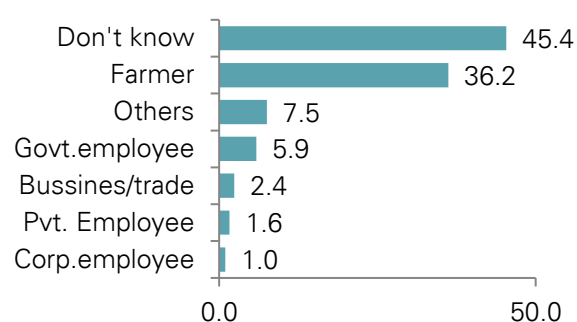


Figure 13: Mother's occupation



Similar to the educational background, parents and guardians of the respondents are mostly farmers. There are almost equal proportions of fathers (58.5%) and mothers (55.6%) whose are farmer. Less than half of the respondents reported that their guardian's occupation is farmer and on the contrary, close to half (45.4%) did not know the occupation of their guardians.

Figure 14: Guardian's occupation





CHAPTER 3: KNOWLEDGE ON MENSTRUAL HYGIENE AND MANAGEMENT

This chapter discusses the level of girls' knowledge on menstruation. The sampled school adolescent girls were asked few questions intended to gauge their level of knowhow on menarche and its hygiene and management. The lack of knowledge, awareness and information is quite detrimental to adolescent girls' health both in the present and in future.

3.1 Girls' current knowledge and information on menstruation

This section deals with the knowledge level of the adolescent girls on menarche. The survey revealed that a vast majority (83%) of the girls know the definition of menstruation as the 'natural shedding of blood on a monthly basis.' On the contrary, there are about 14.1 percent of them who don't know the same. Around 2 percent of them defined menstruation as a disease followed by around 1 percent who defined menstruation as a curse as depicted in figure 15. When asked about the causes of menstruation, about five in every ten (51.9%) reported that it is caused by hormones. However, four in every ten (37.2%) have reported that they don't know the causes. About 5.2 percent of the respondents were of the opinion that menstruation is a 'Curse of God' followed by around 2 percent of them who were of the take that menstruation is caused by disease.

Figure 15: Respondents' knowhow on menstruation

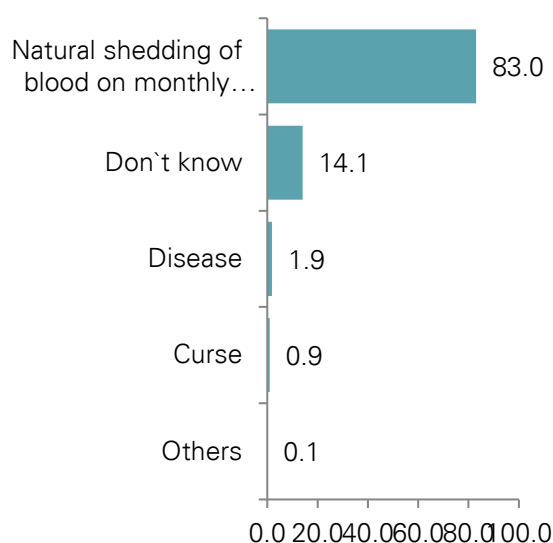
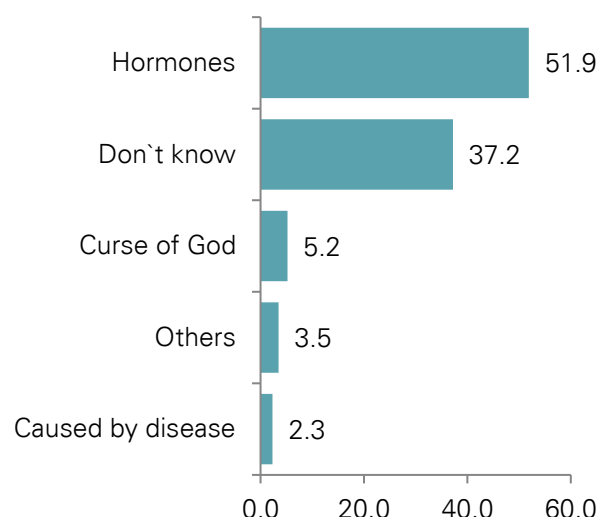


Figure 16: Causes of menstruation



The survey also sought to find out whether the ethnicity matters regarding the knowhow on menstruation amongst those adolescent girls in the schools. Figure 17 revealed some of the glaring facts regarding the misconceptions about menstruation. Around 40 percent of the Lhotsampa adolescent girls perceived menstruation as disease followed by close to 30 percent of Ngalop adolescent girls. Around 17 percent of the sharchop adolescent girls too perceived menstruation as a disease. Figure 17 revealed some more interesting facts regarding menstruation in terms of ethnicity. More than 30 percent of the sharchop adolescent girls have perceived menstruation as a curse. Nonetheless, on an average, about 20 percent of the respondents girls by various ethnicity perceived menstruation as physiological phenomena. On the other hand, the survey revealed that as the age keep increasing till 16 years, the knowledge on menstruation as physiological phenomena keeps increasing. Figure 18 reveals that from the age of 17 till 19 the knowhow on menstruation as natural shedding of blood on a monthly basis gradually keeps declining. In terms of other beliefs viz. menstruation as disease, cure and etc, age has no much effect since the opinion shared by the respondents seems sinusoidal.



Figure 17: Perception of menstruation by ethnicity

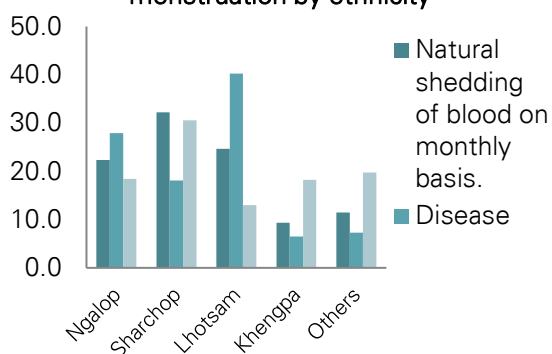
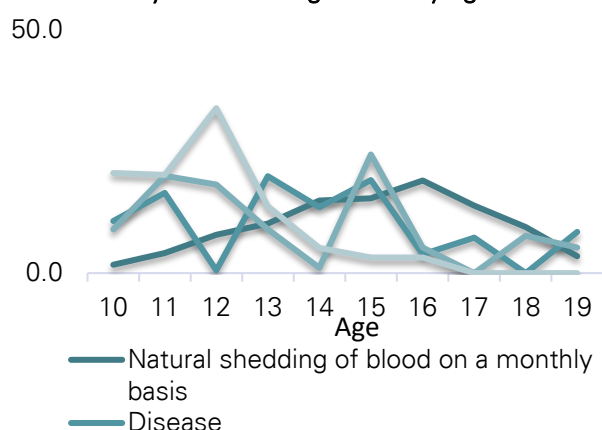
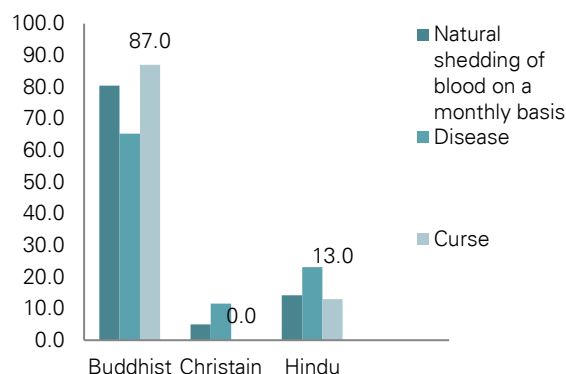


Figure 18: Perception on menstruation by adolescent girls and by age



Close to two-third (65.3%) of Buddhist adolescent girls believed that menstruation is a disease followed by Hindu (23.1%) and Christian adolescent girls (11.6%). On the contrary, Buddhist adolescent girls have rightly described menstruation as the normal physiological process. Eight out of ten (80.4%) of the Buddhist adolescent girls have rightly perceived menstruation as the natural shedding of blood on a monthly basis. Only 14.2 percent of the Hindu adolescent girls have perceived menstruation as the normal physiological process followed by about 5 percent of Christian adolescent girls. Buddhist and Hindu adolescent girls have misconceived menstruation as curse. Figure 19 reveals that about 87 percent of the Buddhist adolescent girls have reported that menstruation is a curse followed by 13 percent of Hindu adolescent girls.

Figure 19: Perception on menstruation by religious background



3.2 Menarche—knowledge and information

This sub-section discusses about the menarche and its related knowledge and information. The survey revealed that more than half (59.4%) of the adolescent girls reported that menstruation came from uterus. However, there are around 24 percent of them who are oblivious about the flow of menstruation. This could be due to the fact that around 11 percent of the adolescent girls who participated in this survey are in the age bracket of 10-11. Figure 20 shows that about 8.2 percent of the respondents reported that menstruation came from the birth canal. Adding further to this shock, about 5.4 percent of them said that menstruation came from bladder. Asked at which age most girls usually experience their first period, around 51 percent of the respondents reported 12 as the age. Figure 21 shows that around 13 percent of them don't know the age at which menstruation begins.



Figure 20: Knowhow on the organ from which the menstruation come

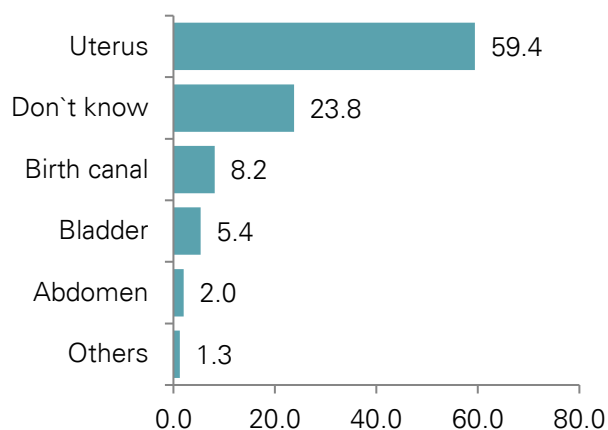


Figure 22: Duration of normal menstruation (days)

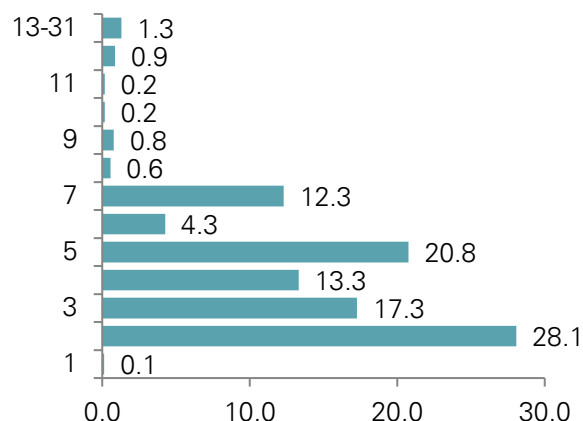


Figure 21: Age at which most girls usually get their first period

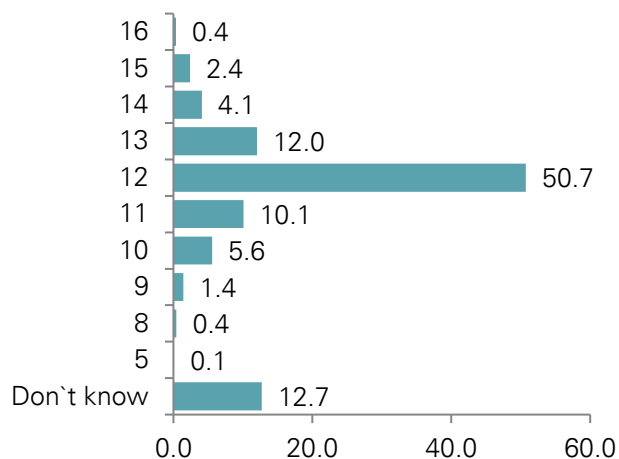
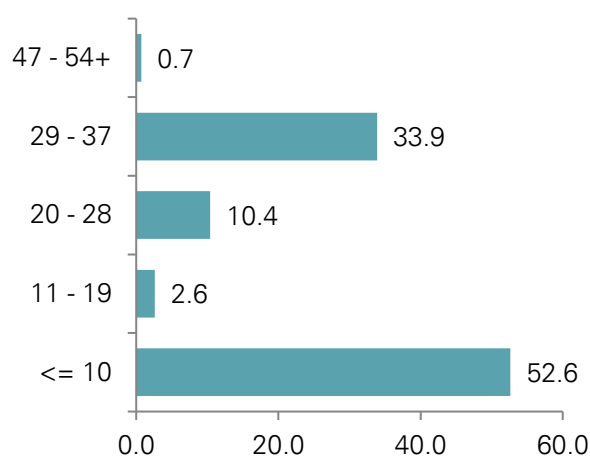


Figure 23: Interval between two menstrual cycles



When asked about the duration of normal menstruation, a majority of them were not aware of the same. Around six in ten (58.8%) are of the view that duration (days) of menstruation for a normal person lasts between 1-4 days. On the contrary, there are about 1.3 percent of them who believe that menstruation lasts for about 13-31 days in a normal person. About 20.3 percent of the respondents have reported that the menstruation lasts between 6-12 days. There are only around 21 percent who has reported that the menstruation lasts for about 5 days in a normal person. The survey found that about 18.2 percent of the adolescent girls have reported that the interval between two menstrual cycles comprised of 28 days. There are more than half (52.6%) of them who reported that the interval between two menstrual cycles is less than 10 days. On the other extreme, less than 1 percent has reported that the interval lasts between 54 days and above.

The survey also sought to know the sources of information regarding menstruation to adolescent girls. More than two-third (86%) of them have reported that they heard about menstruation from someone. Figure 24 revealed that mothers (42%) often provided them with information after menarche is reached followed by teachers (27.1%) and sisters (15.6%). Around 14 percent of the respondents reported that they received information on menarche from their friends. About 1.8 percent of them availed information on menstruation from other sources viz. books, TV, Radio and etc.



Figure 24: Sources of information regarding menstruation

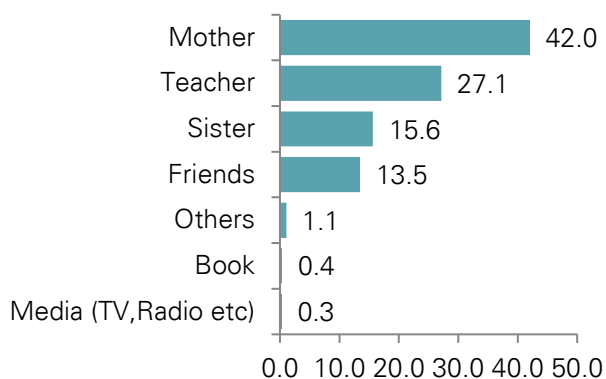


Figure 26: Reproductive Tract Infection due to poor menstrual hygiene

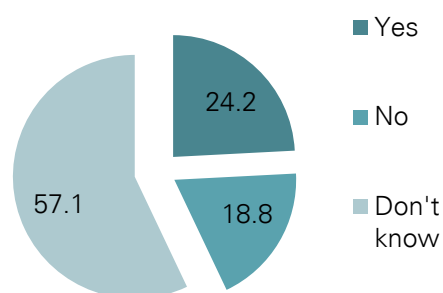


Figure 25: Fungal Infection due to poor menstrual hygiene

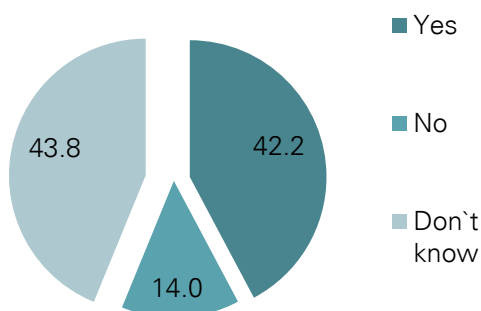
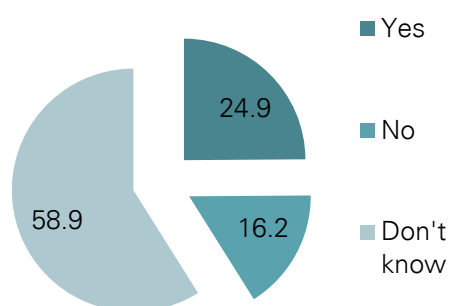


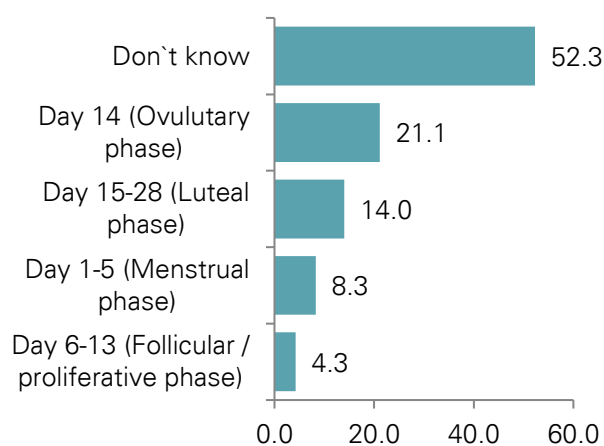
Figure 27: Urinary Tract Infection due to poor menstrual hygiene



Asked whether those adolescent schools girls knew about menstrual hygiene, around 61 percent of them reported 'Yes'. The survey also delved into finding whether those girls knew about infections related to poor menstrual hygiene. Four types, viz. fungal infection, reproductive tract infection, urinary tract infection and infertility related to menstrual hygiene were asked. Figure 25 reveals that close to half (42.2%) have reported that they are aware of the fungal infection due to poor menstrual hygiene. On the contrary, about 57.1 percent of them have reported that they are not aware about reproductive tract infection (figure 26). When asked if they knew about Urinary Tract Infection (UTI), more than half (58.9%) said no. Only around 25 percent of them have reported that they were aware of UTI.

The adolescent girls were also asked about the four menstrual phases. This study has revealed that more than half (52.3%) of them are not aware of the menstrual phases.

Figure 28: Menstrual phases





CHAPTER 4: ATTITUDE TOWARDS MENSTRUATION

This chapter deals with adolescent schoolgirls' attitude towards menstruation. This chapter also further delves into the misconception created around menstruation by the society and the impacts produced by it to schoolgirls especially in terms of their school attendance and societal taboo and discrimination as well.

4.1 Sub-factors contributing towards attitude of adolescent girls on menstruation

The Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was applied to factor out the sub-factors contributing to the attitude of adolescent schoolgirls on menstruation. Considering or restricting the factor loadings more than 0.5, a sum of 12 sub-factors had been identified as factors contributing towards the attitude of adolescent schoolgirls on menstruation. Following are the sub-factors identified by the EFA:

- I can tell my period is approaching because of the breast tenderness, backache, cramps or other physical signs;
- It is important to talk about menstrual period with men;
- It is important to discuss the topic of period at school with boys and girls;
- We women wish that the period would last for a few minutes;
- It is important to buy sanitary pad without being seen;
- Women wish that we do not have our period;
- I miss school during my period because am afraid of staining my clothes;
- I miss school during my period because am afraid of others making fun of me;
- I miss school during period because it can cause pain;
- I miss school during my period since it can make me feel uncomfortable or tired;
- I miss school during my period because there are no places for girls to wash and change at school; and
- I miss school during my period because there is nowhere to dispose-off sanitary pad.

4.2 Social Impacts produced by menstruation

Close to one-third (63.5%) of the adolescent schoolgirls reported that during menstruation, a woman must not enter the shrine or temple. Further augmenting this superstition, about 21 percent of the respondents agreed that women in menstruation are susceptible to get possessed by an evil spirit.

Figure 29: Women must not enter the shrine /temple during period

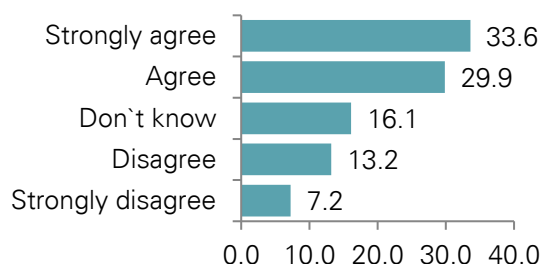
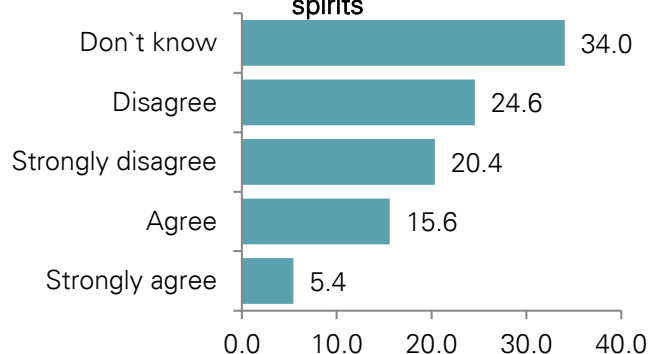


Figure 30: Women in menstruation are susceptible to get possessed by evil spirits



The survey had revealed that close to two-third (65%) of the adolescent school girls have agreed the approaching of their period signals with varieties of pains viz. breast tenderness, backache, cramps or other physical signs. Around two-third (67.7%) of them have again agreed that the only good thing about menstruation is that they know they are free from pregnancy.

Figure 31: I can tell my period is approaching because of the breast tenderness, backache, cramps or other physical signs

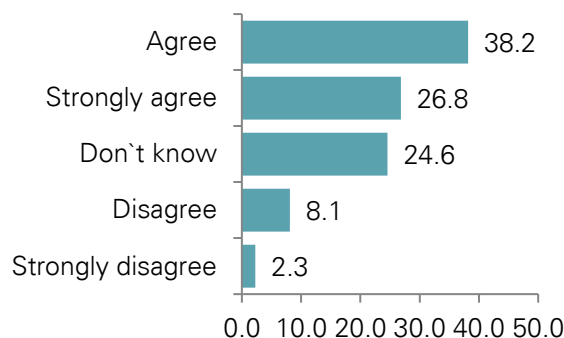
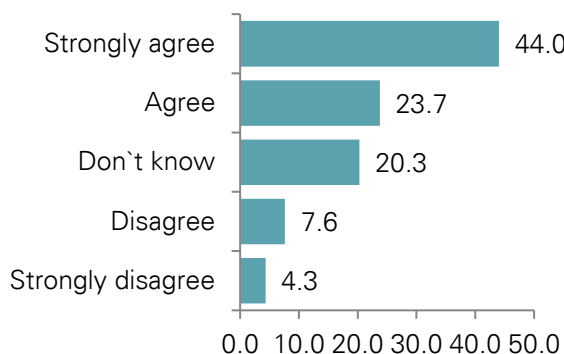


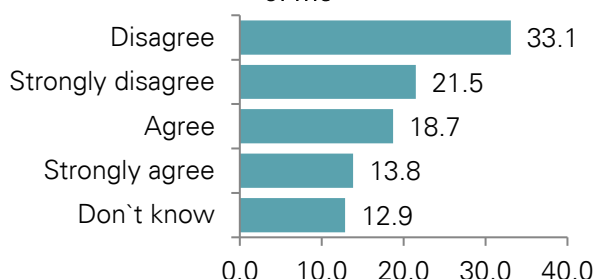


Figure 32: The only thing good with menstruation is that I come to know that I am not pregnant



The survey revealed that absenteeism in school by the adolescent school girls as a result of menstruation is quite detrimental. About 32.5 percent of the adolescent schoolgirls have reported that they miss school during the period since they fear others making fun of them.

Figure 33: I miss school during my period because am afraid of others making fun of me



4.3 Physical Impacts of menstruation

The survey had unfolded various physical impacts produced as a result of menstruation. Figure 34 reveals that adolescent schoolgirls miss school during menstruation since it causes them pain. Close to half of the respondents agreed that they miss school during period since it causes pain. About 43 percent of the adolescent schoolgirls have reported that they miss school during period because it is uncomfortable.

Figure 34: I miss school during my period because it cause pain

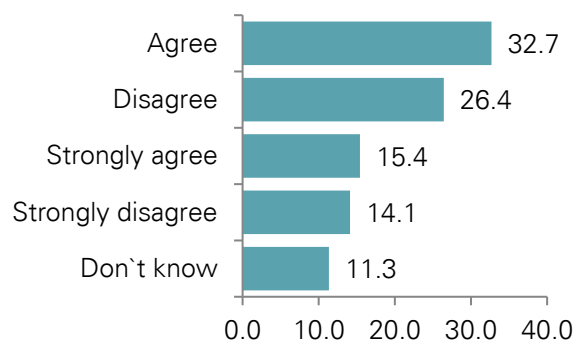
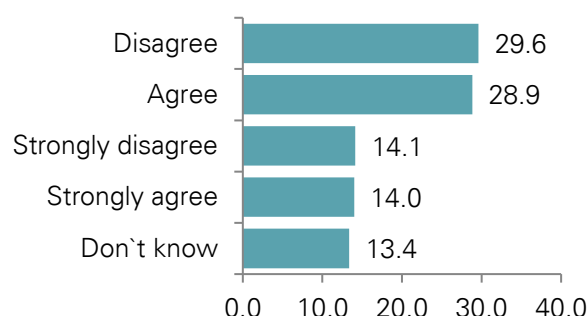


Figure 35: I miss school during my period because it makes me feel uncomfortable or tired



Around one quarter (24.9%) of the adolescent schoolgirls reported that they miss the school during period there are no places for girls to wash and change while in school. In the same manner, figure 37 revealed that close to one quarter (21.3%) of the respondents reported that they miss school during menstruation because there is no place to dispose off sanitary pad.



Figure 36: I miss school during my period because there isn't anywhere for girls to wash and change at school

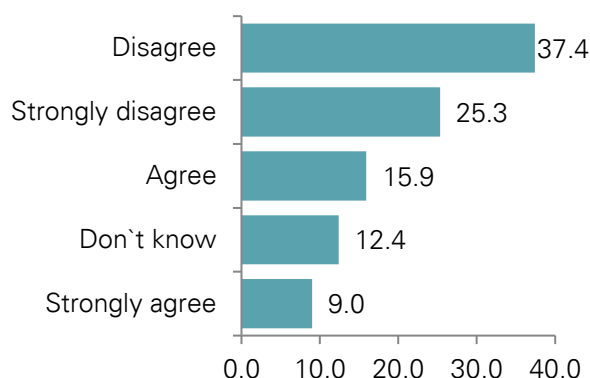


Figure 38: I am more easily upset during pre-menstrual and menstrual periods than at other times of the month

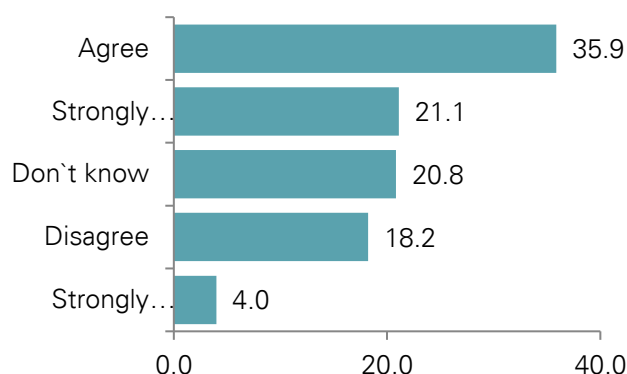


Figure 37: I miss school during my period because there is nowhere to dispose off sanitary pad

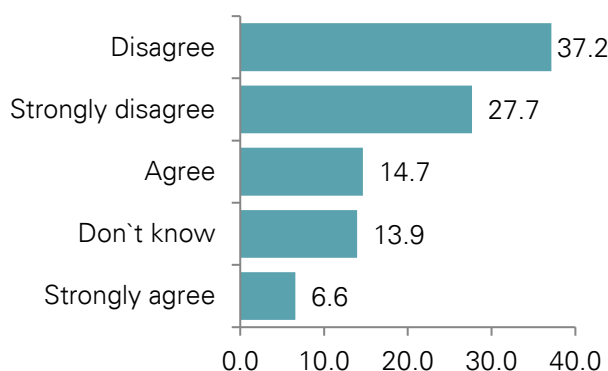
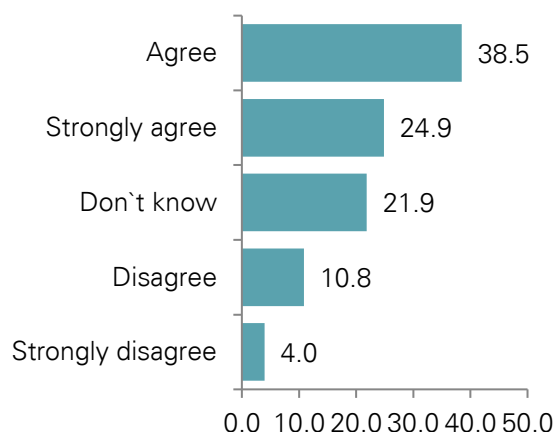


Figure 39: Menstruation is something that I just have to put up (tolerate) with



4.4 Emotional Impacts

This section explains about the emotional impacts produced as a result of menstruation to adolescent schoolgirls. More than half (57%) of the respondents agreed that they get easily upset during pre-menstrual and menstrual periods than at other times. Some girls are of the opinion that they just have to put up with the menstruation. Figure 39 revealed that close to two-third (63.4%) of the respondents agreed that menstruation is something that they just have to tolerate with.

Figure 40 shows one of the emotional impacts of menstruation. Little more than two-third (69.8%) of the adolescent schoolgirls agreed to the statement, 'men have real advantage of not having monthly period.' However, on the contrary, around 13 percent of them contradicted the statement. Figure 41 revealed that one out of every ten (10.1%) of the adolescent schoolgirls have disagreed that a woman who attributed her irritability to her approaching menstrual period as neurotic.



Figure 40: Men have real advantage of not having monthly period

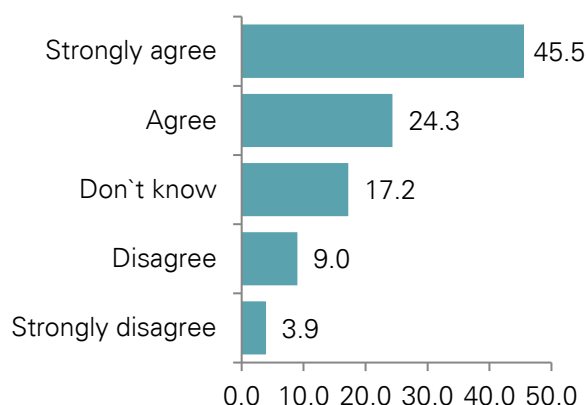


Figure 41: A woman who attributes her irritability to her approaching menstrual period is neurotic

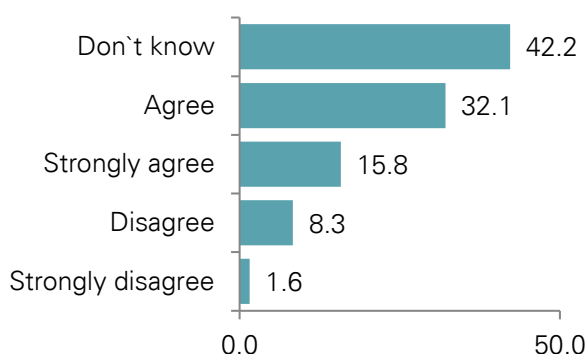


Figure 42 Shows that about 38.3 percent of the adolescent schoolgirls agreed that women complaining of menstrual distress are just using it as an excuse. Almost equal proportion (78.3%) of the respondents agreed that women are more tired than usual when they are menstruating (figure 43).

Figure 42: Women complaining of menstrual distress are just using that as an excuse

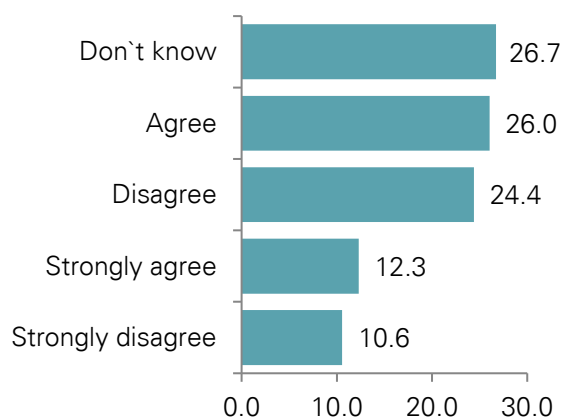
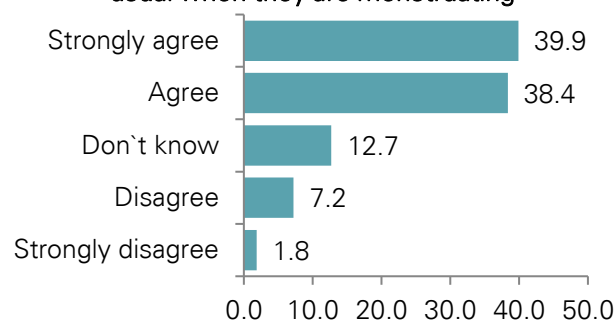


Figure 43: Women are more tired than usual when they are menstruating



4.5 Menstruation as taboo to adolescent school girls

Close to three out of every ten (27.7%) still disagrees the statement that 'it is important to talk about menstrual period with men.' Figure 45 has revealed that there are still around 19 percent of the adolescent schoolgirls who do not yield to the statement, 'it is important to discuss the topic of period at school with boys and girls.'

Figure 44: It is important to talk about menstrual period with men

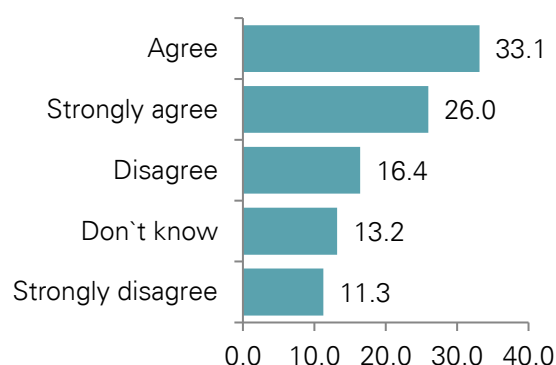


Figure 45: It is important to discuss the topic of period at school with boys and girls

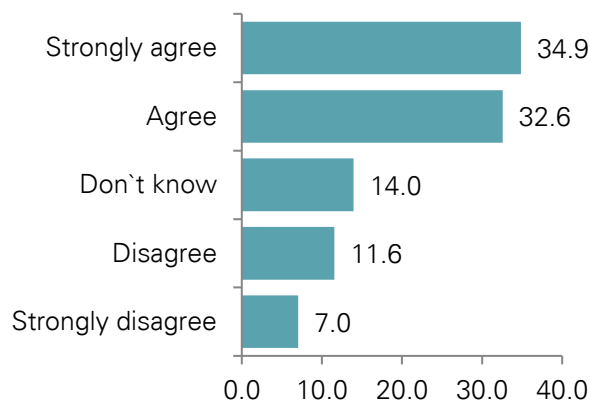




Figure 46 reveals the general attitude of adolescent schoolgirls. More than two-thirds (80%) of them agreed to the statement, 'we women wish that the period would last for few minutes.' Like in many Asiatic world, this survey revealed that menstruation has become a great taboo to the extent that even a simple phenomenon like buying sanitary pad is taken with great care by adolescent schoolgirls. Figure 47 shows that more than half (55.8%) of the school adolescent girls have reported that 'it is important to buy sanitary pad without being seen by others.'

Figure 46: We women wish that the period would last for few minutes

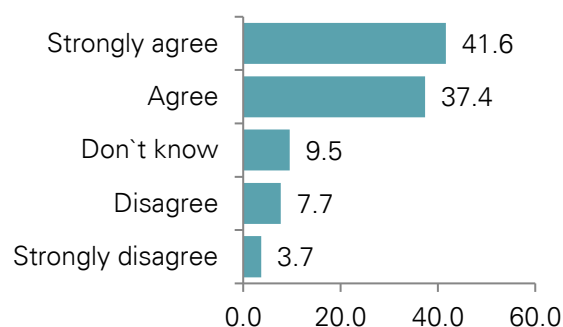
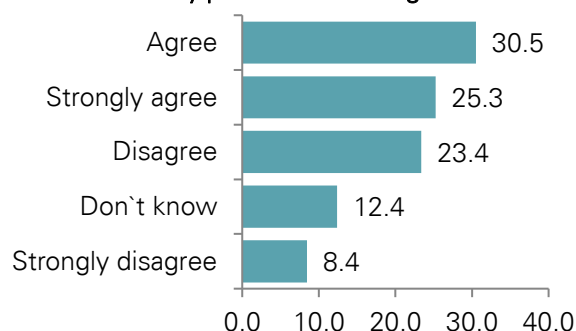


Figure 47: It is important to buy sanitary pad without being seen





CHAPTER 5: PRACTICES OF MENSTRUAL HYGIENE MANAGEMENT IN SCHOOLS

The earlier chapter discussed information on menarche awareness and attitudes towards menstruation. This chapter discusses the type of absorbent used, disposal, hygiene, and etc. Many studies have shown that Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) is a problem for adolescent girls in low and middle-income countries and in particular when attending school.¹

5.1 Type of menstrual absorbents used

The survey sought to find out the type of menstrual absorbents used by the adolescent schoolgirls. Seven specific types of absorbents were made to check, spanning from sanitary pad to tampon. The use of sanitary pad is commonly reported both in urban and rural areas with a percentage share of 52.1 percent and 47.9 percent respectively. Figure 48 has revealed that every nine out of ten (91.9%) uses sanitary pad. Figure 48 has also revealed a disturbing phenomenon that around 3 percent of the adolescent schoolgirls do not use any kind of absorbent material.

Figure 48: The main absorbent material used during period/ menstruation

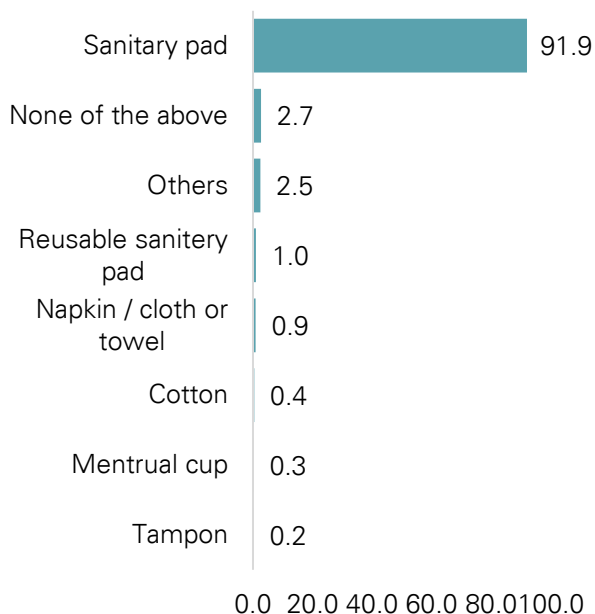
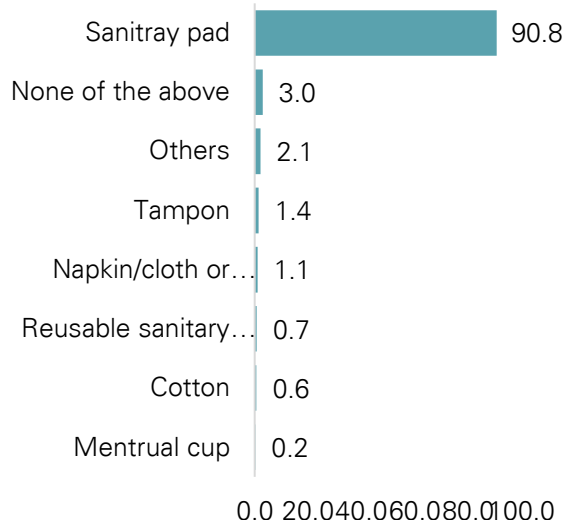


Figure 49: % share of main absorbent material preferred most by the adolescent girls



Asked why the adolescent girls preferred particular type of absorbent, almost four in every ten (38.1%) reported that they use sanitary pad as an absorbent material since it is easy to use. (32.1%), reported that they use sanitary pad since it is easily available. Around 11 percent of them have reported that sanitary pad could be used for longer duration. Affordability is also a reason why they prefer using sanitary pad. About 5.4 percent of the respondents have reported that they prefer sanitary pad to others since it is affordable. However, about 4.4 percent of the respondents said that they can't afford other good quality ones and landed up using sanitary pad as an absorbent.



Figure 50: Reason adolescent girls preferring the main absorbent material during menstruation (%)

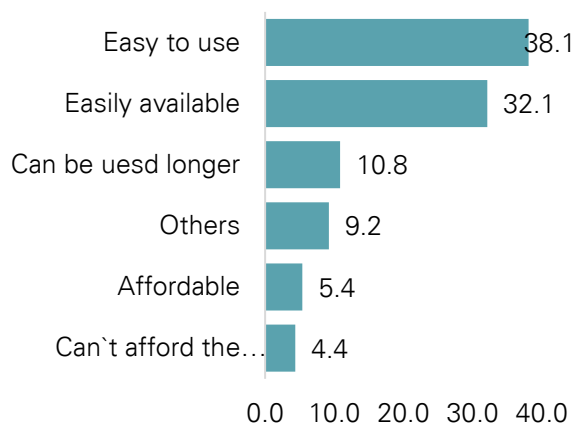
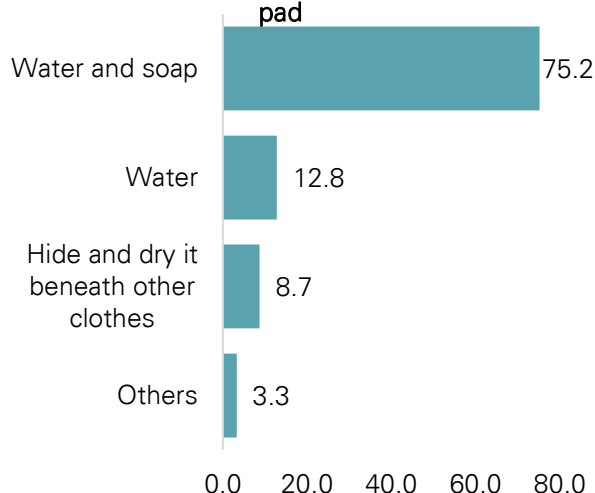


Figure 51: Method of cleaning cloth pad



Given the economic situations of different adolescent schoolgirls, an improvised version of sanitary pads had been into practices. To this effect, the survey also sought to learn about the method of cleaning cloth pad. Figure 51 revealed that around three-quarters (75.2%) of the respondents have used water and soap for cleaning their cloth pads followed by around 13 percent who used water alone. As revealed earlier, menstruation still seems a taboo. Figure 51 as well revealed that around 9 percent of the adolescent schoolgirls hide and dry cloth pad beneath other clothes to avoid seeing by others.

Figure 52: Method of drying cloth pad

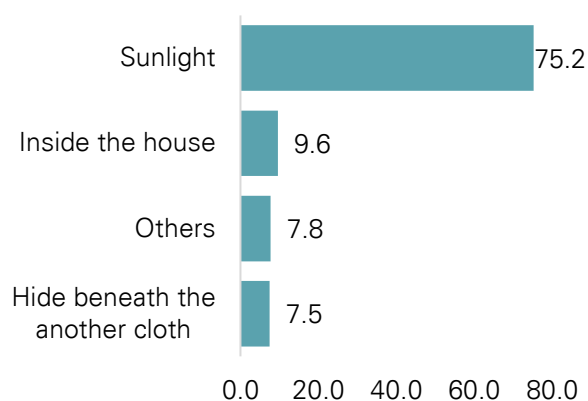
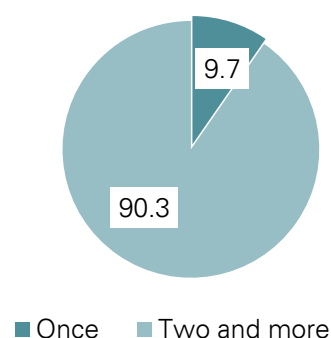


Figure 58: Number of changing pad or cloth in a day



To further assess the menstrual hygiene practices, the survey sought to find out the method of drying pad. Around three-quarters (75.2%) of them reported that they dry their cloth pads in sunlight. Figure 52 also revealed that around one out of every ten (9.6%) dry their cloth pads inside the house. Around 8 percent of them hide beneath another cloth and dry them together.



Figure 53: Types of pad wraps used for disposing it

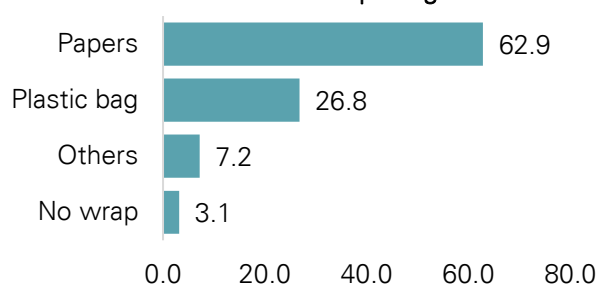
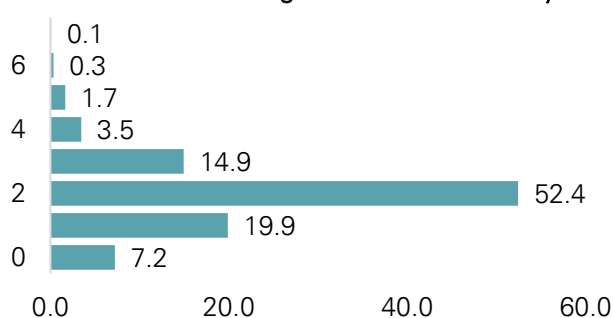


Figure 54: Number of times changing underwear during menstruation in a day



This study attempted to assess the complete practices of menstrual hygiene straddling from knowledge and information to practices and disposal of sanitary pads. Figure 53 reveals that close to two-third (62.9%) of the adolescent school girls used papers as pad wraps for disposing the kind of sanitary pads they used. It is also revealed that more than one-quarter (26.8%) of the adolescent girls have reported that they use plastic bag or polythene bag to wrap the sanitary pads and dispose it. On the contrary, there are about 3.1 percent of them who do not use any pad wraps in disposing the pads. Quite interestingly, the survey has revealed that more than half (52.4%) of the adolescent school girls changed underwear during menstruation twice a day. It was also revealed that around 15 percent of them changed underwears during menstruation thrice a day. Around 20 percent of them have changed underwears during period only once a day. The survey revealed the two extreme situations whereby about 2.1 percent of them have changed underwears during the period between 5 to 7 times a day. On the other extreme, about 7.2 percent of the adolescent girls have reported that they did not change their underwear during the period at all.

Figure 55: % share of adolescent girls coming to school during menstruation

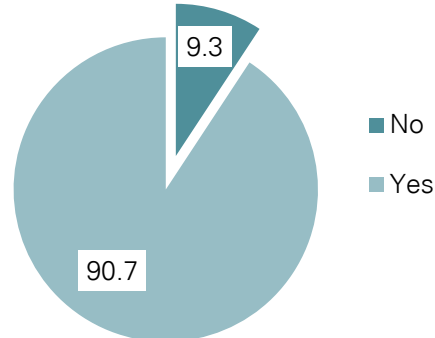
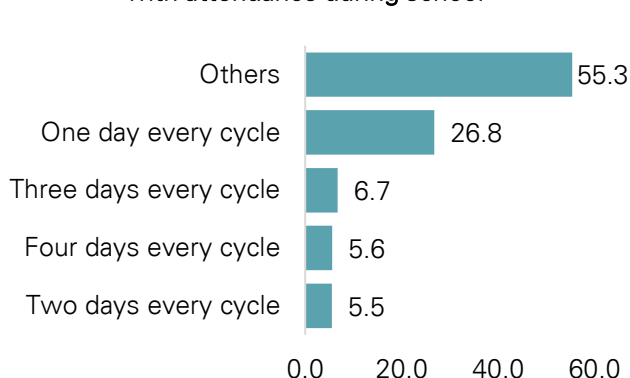


Figure 56: Menstrual problems interfering with attendance during school



Menstrual hygiene practices interfering with school attendance is one of the most common phenomenon most of the related studies have revealed. When asked whether the adolescent schoolgirls remained absent from school during menstruation, nine out of every ten (90.7%) of them have reported that they come to school despite menstruation. Figure 56 had revealed the frequency of interference with school attendance. More than half (55.3%) of the adolescent schoolgirls have reported other categories of attendance counts. This was specified by each one of them and on an average, the most common reason was that most of them did not fit into our proposed category of question. However, about 44.7 percent of them have reported that they missed school ranging from one day to four days during every cycle.



Figure 57: Remedies taken during menstruation

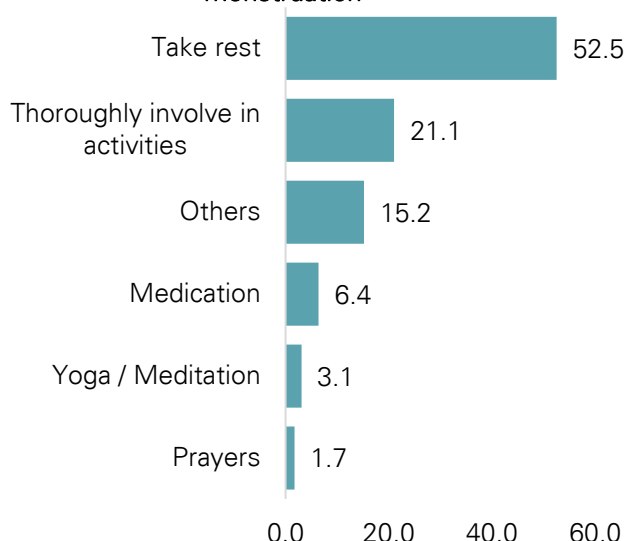


Figure 58: %share of adolescent girls taking bath during menstruation

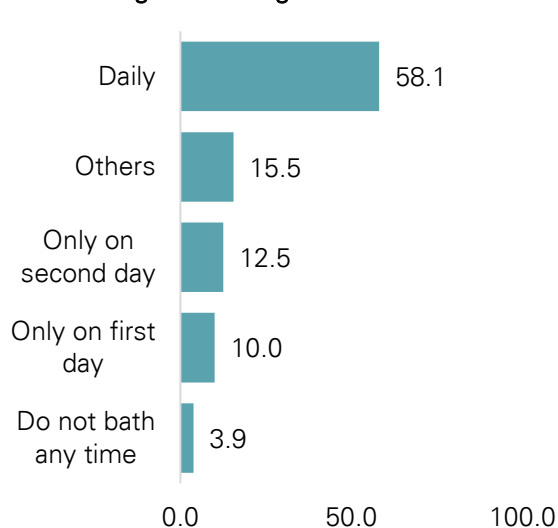


Figure 57 reveals one of the most important factors responsible to encounter the menstrual pangs of the adolescent schoolgirls. When asked what remedies they took during menstruation to overcome pangs, more than half (52.5%) reported that they take rest. It has been also revealed that close to one-quarter (21.1%) of them have reported that they thoroughly involve in activities to forget the pangs and discomforts while 6.4 percent resort to medication followed by Yoga and meditation (3.1%) and prayers (1.7%). Similarly, when asked whether they take bath during period, more than half (58.1%) reported that they do so. Around 13 percent of them reported that they take bath only on second day followed by 10 percent of them who bathe on the very first day. Around 4 percent of them do not bath any time.

Figure 59: % share of adolescent girls cleaning their genital area during menstruation

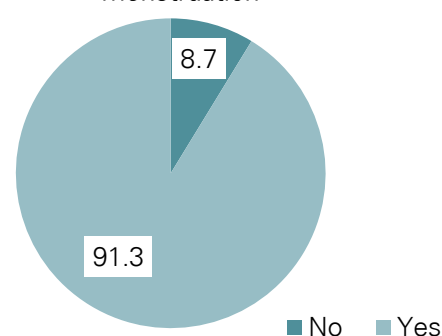
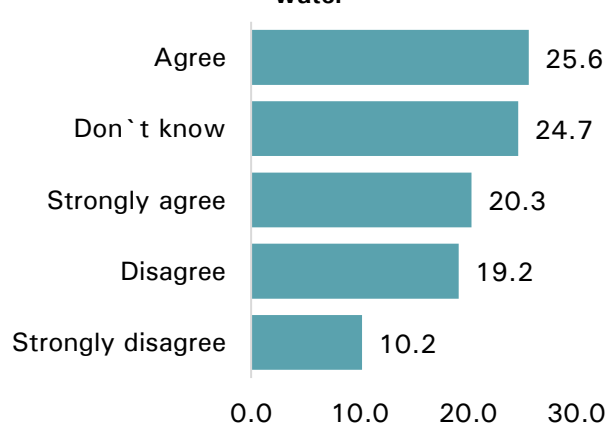


Figure 60: % share of taking half body bath during period due to lack of hot water



Asked whether adolescent schoolgirls clean their genital area during menstruation, this survey had revealed that nine out of every ten (91.3%) of the adolescent schoolgirls clean their genital area during menstruation. Figure 60 revealed that close to half (45.9%) of the respondents agreed that they take half body bath during period due to lack of hot water. Figure 61 shows the affordability of sanitary pad. More than two-thirds (73.8%) of the respondents reported that they could afford sanitary pad during menstruation. On the contrary, there are around 8 percent who cannot afford and similarly, about 4.2 percent of reported unavailability of sanitary pad.



Figure 61: % afforded to buy sanitary pad during menstruation

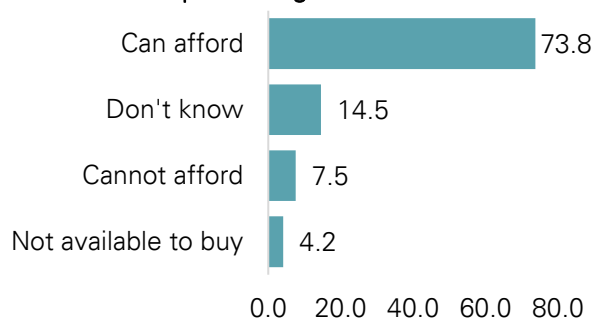
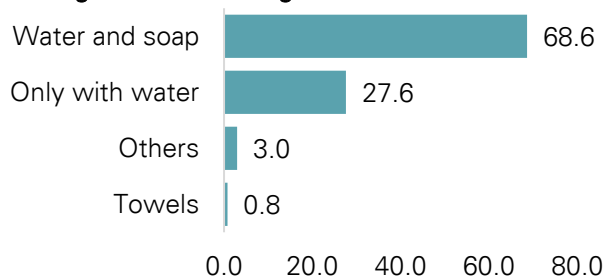


Figure 62: Materials used to clean genital area during menstruation



More than two-thirds (68.6%) of the respondents reported that they used water and soap for cleaning genital area during menstruation followed by only water (27.6%). Less than one percent have reported that they use towels.

Figure 63: % share of disposal facilities used to dispose sanitary pads

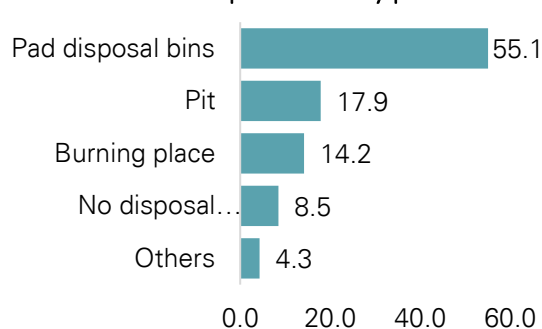
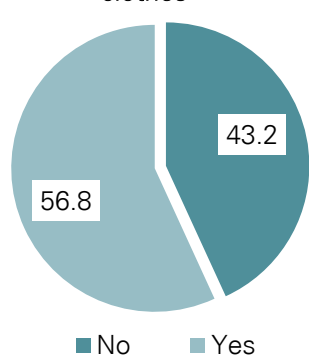


Figure 64: % share of place for drying clothes



The survey also delved into finding out the facilities available at schools for menstrual hygiene practices. Figure 63 reveals that more than half (55.1%) of the adolescent school girls reported that they dispose pads into pad disposal bins followed by around 18 percent of them who dispose into pit. About 14.2 percent of the respondents reported that they dispose off the pads in burning place. However, around 9 percent of them reported that there is no disposal facilities at schools. Figure 64 shows the percentage share of place for drying clothes. About 43.2 percent of the respondents have reported that there are no place for drying clothes.

Figure 65: % share of toilet/ bathing facilities enough for addressing issues related to menstruation

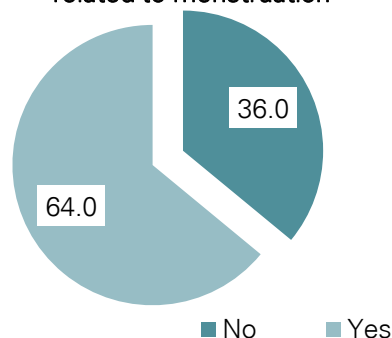
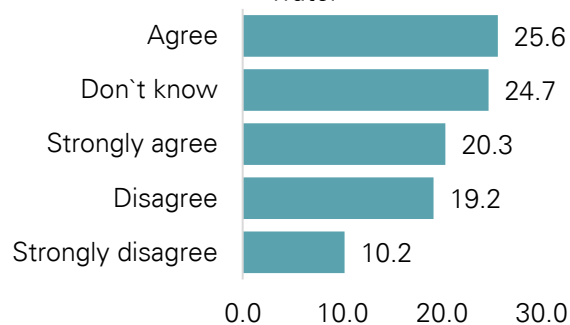


Figure 66: % share of taking half body bath during period due to lack of hot water



The survey also explored to seek the availability of toilet/bathing facilities enough for addressing issues related to menstruation. Figure 65 reveals that only about 64 percent of the respondents reported that they have adequate toilet/bathing facilities enough for addressing issues related to menstruation. The survey had also revealed that close to half (45.9%) of the respondents agreed that they take half body bath during period due to lack of hot water.



CHPATER 6: SUMMARY FINDINGS FROM NUNNERIES

Concurrently, the adolescent nuns in nunneries were also surveyed using the same questions. Out of the sampled 202 nuns in the three regions viz. eastern, central and western, only around 30 percent of the adolescent nuns were covered. This is due to the lack of proper sampling frame for the nuns and those sampled nunneries felt short of adolescent nuns falling in the age bracket of 10-19. However, for a pocket study a fairly representative sample of 56 nuns were covered and upon applying the weights, it has been extrapolated to 202 sampled nuns.

6.1 Socio-demographic characteristics of nuns

A majority of the participants of this survey were aged 12, 15 and 17. Figure 68 shows the grade wise distribution of adolescent nuns. They call their grading system a "Zindra." More than half (57.3%) of the respondents are in Zindra one followed by close to one-quarter (22%) of them in Zindra two. About 12 percent of them have no grade so far.

Figure 67: Percentage distribution of age of respondents

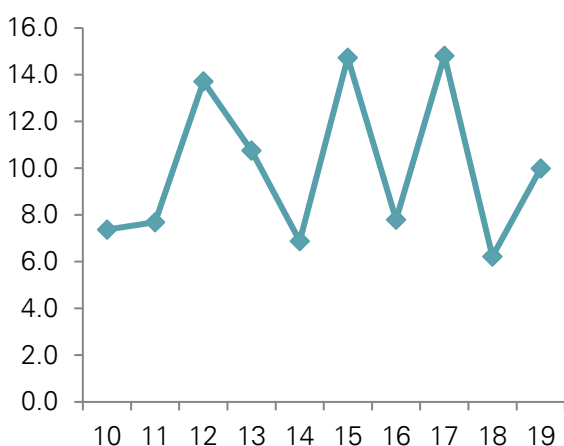


Figure 68: Grade wise distribution of respondents (Zindra)

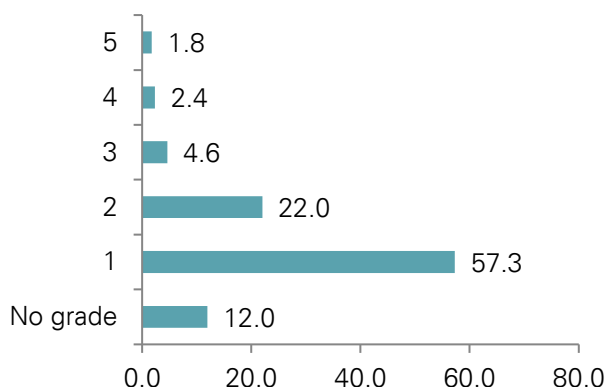


Figure 69 reveals that only around 57 percent of the nuns received the yearly pocket money. The nuns have received the yearly pocket money ranging from ngultrum 100 to 10,000. Figure 70 reveals that most of the adolescent nuns have received the yearly pocket money ranging from ngultrum 100 to 1,200.

Figure 69: Yearly pocket money received by nuns

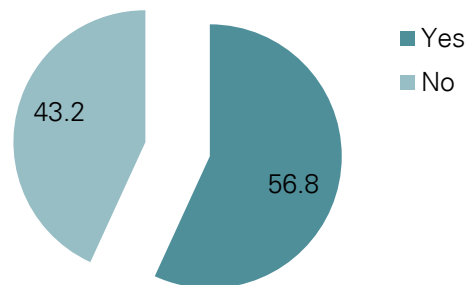
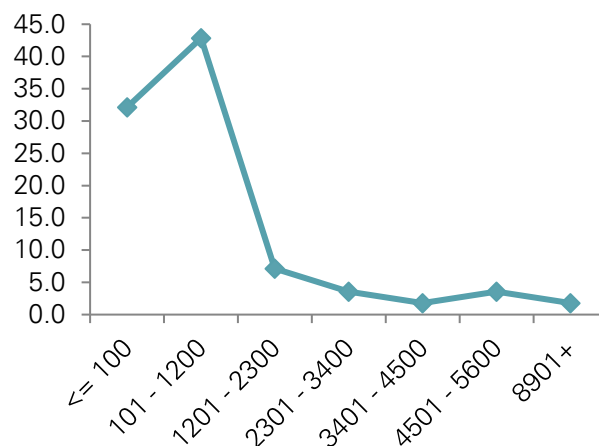


Figure 70: Yearly pocket money received by the respondents



6.2 Socio-economic Characteristics of parents and guardians

Almost on an equal proportion (more than two-thirds) of the adolescent nuns' parents do not have modern education. On an average, close to quarter of their parents have education ranging from classes 1-12. Very few have non-formal education and monastic/shedra.



Figure 71: Father's education level

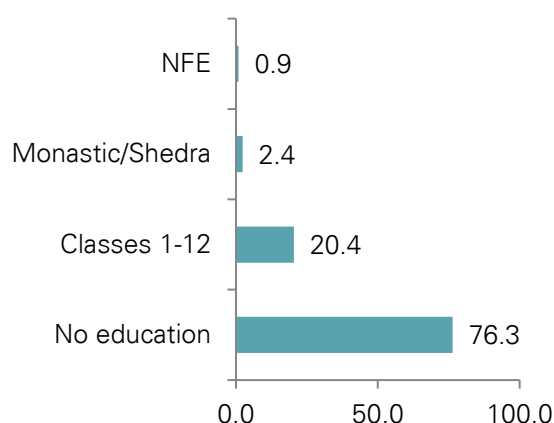


Figure 73: Father's occupation

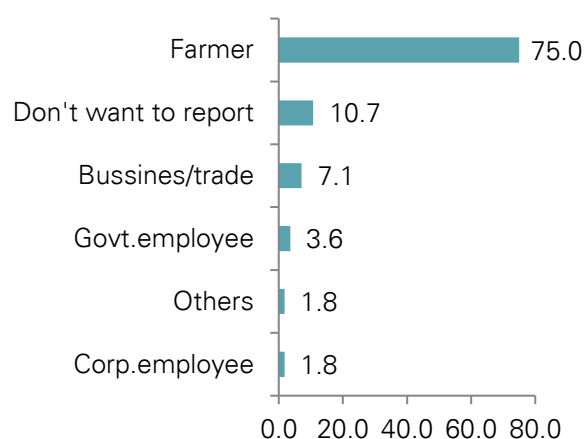


Figure 72: Mother's education level

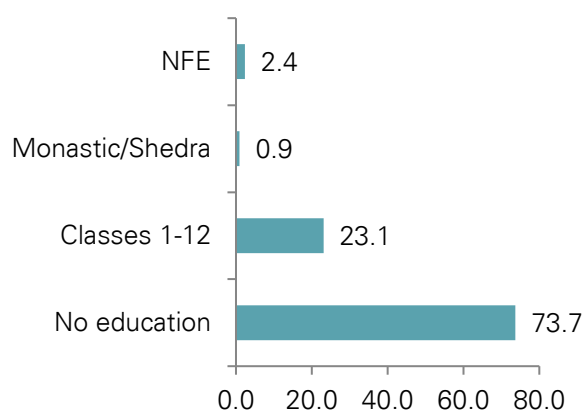


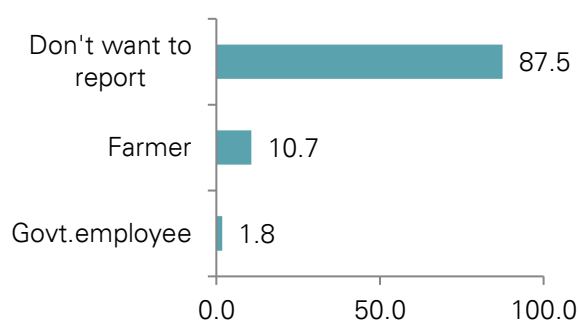
Figure 74: Mother's occupation



Similarly, most of the parents and guardians of the adolescent nuns are farmers. Figure 72 depicts the mother's education level. About three-quarters (75%) of fathers are farmers. On a similar situation, mothers and guardians have almost same proportions. Eight out of every ten (82.1%) of them are farmers.

The study revealed that most of the guardians are farmers as well. Figure 75 shows that almost nine out of every ten (87.5%) nuns did not want to report the occupation of their parents. Around 11 percent reported are farmers.

Figure 75: Guardian's Occupation





CHAPTER 6.1: KNOWLEDGE AND INFORMATION ON MENSTRUATION

This chapter extensively discusses the knowledge and information the nuns possess in regard to menstruation. The nuns were administered the same level of questionnaire used for the adolescent schoolgirls. The facts and figures generated from this chapter would be used to determine unmet needs of the adolescent nuns. In this chapter the sections spans from nuns' awareness on menarche to infections related to lack of improper menstrual hygiene management.

6.1.1 Awareness on menarche and its causes

This sub-section deals with the nuns' entire knowhow on menarche and its related issues. When nuns were asked to define menstruation, close to half (42.9%) reported and checked the category, 'Don't know,' which is quite detrimental in relation to the menstrual hygiene management. Figure 81 depicts the various forms of definitions on menstruation. Only around 43 percent of the nuns have reported correctly that the menstruation is a 'natural shedding of blood on a monthly basis.' About 7.1 percent of the nuns reported that menstruation is a curse followed by 5.4 percent of them considering it as a disease. The survey also explored to find out the nuns' knowhow on causes of menstruation. Figure 82 reveals that only about 41.1 percent of them reported that it is the hormones. A substantial share of percentage (37.5%) of nuns considered the cause as curse of God followed by about 7.1 percent who considered its cause as disease.

Figure 76: Definition of menstruation

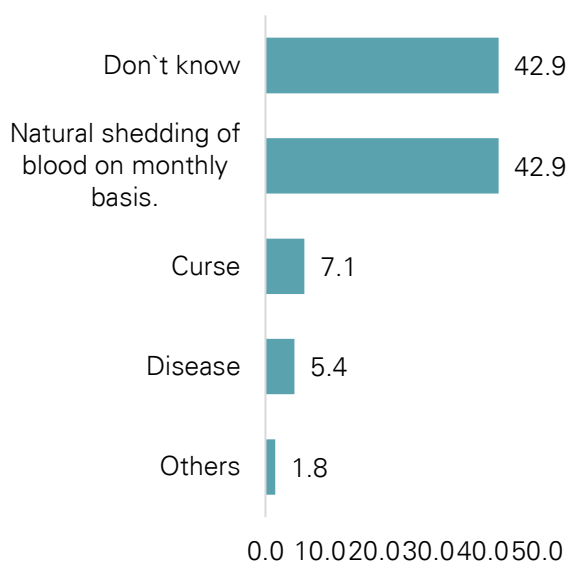
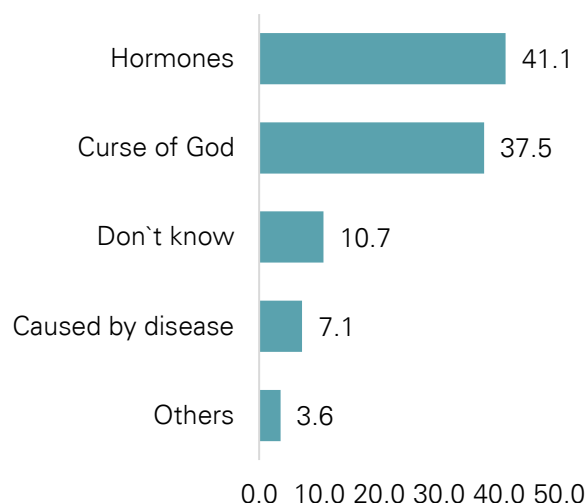


Figure 77: Cause of menstruation



When asked from which organ does menstruation come, a large majority (82.2%) of the nuns reported that it comes from the uterus. On the contrary, there are about 13.3 percent of them who reported that they don't know. About 2.2 percent of the nuns have reported that the menstruation comes from the birth canal. The adolescent nuns were also asked the age at which menarche begins. Figure 79 revealed that around 36 percent of them have reported that at the age of 12 the menarche begins. Close to one-quarter (21.4%) of them have reported that menarche begins between the age of 9 and 11. On the other extreme, more than one-quarter (26.9%) of the respondents reported that menarche begins from the age of 14-18.

Figure 78: The organ from which menstruation come

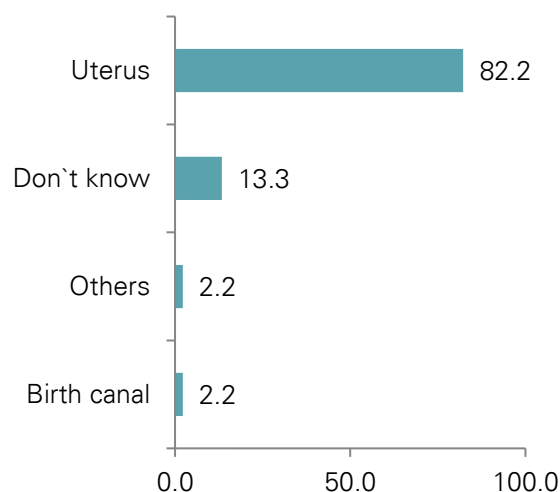
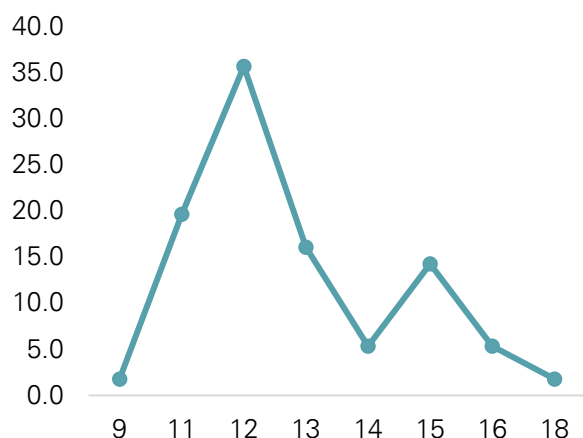




Figure 79: Age of menstruation for girls



The survey had revealed that nuns have reported duration of normal menstruation spans from 3-62 days. About one-quarter (25%) of the nuns reported that they don't know. Around 4 percent reported that it lasts for 62 days followed by around 2 percent of them who reported to have lasted for 32 days. Nonetheless, more than half (54.3%) of them have reported that it lasts between 3 to 6 days. Similarly, when asked the interval between two menstruations, figure 81 has revealed that more than half (57.1%) of the adolescent nuns have reported that 21 days of interval exists between two menstruations. Again there are two extreme reports, around 2 percent believes that it lasts from 14-20 days followed by the other extreme, where it is reported that it lasts from one to three months.

Figure 80: Duration of Normal Menstruation

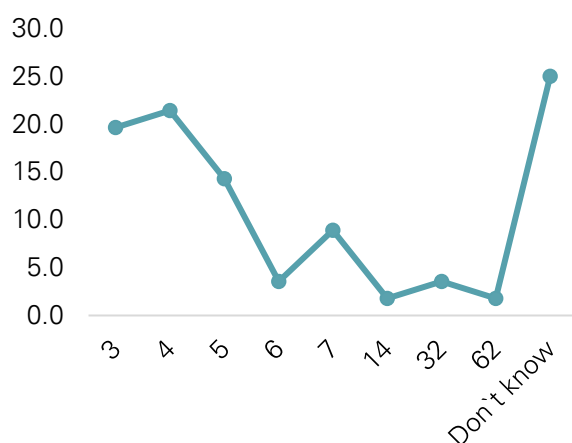
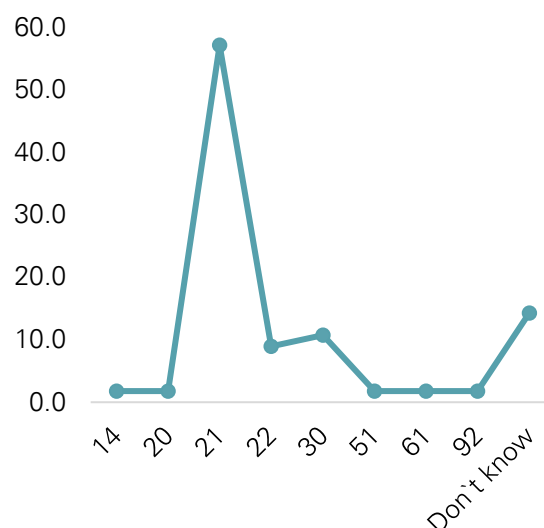


Figure 81: Interval between two menstruations



6.1.2 Sources of information on menarche

This sub-section deals with the sources of information on menarche for nuns. The survey revealed that more than two-thirds (83.9%) of the nuns have reported that someone in their life told them about menarche. Mothers are the first and main source of information for the nuns. Figure 83 revealed that more than half (54.9%) of the nuns received information on menstruation from their mothers. This is followed by about 35.3 percent reporting teachers as their source of information on menarche. About 7.8 percent of them have reported the source as their sisters followed by 2 percent of them who cited the source as their friends.



Figure 82: Did anyone tell you about the menstruation

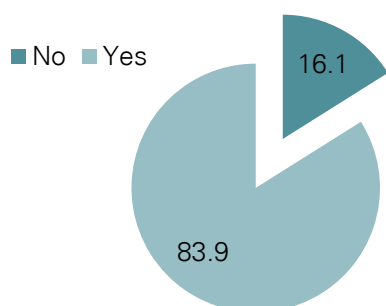


Figure 84: Do you know about menstruation hygiene

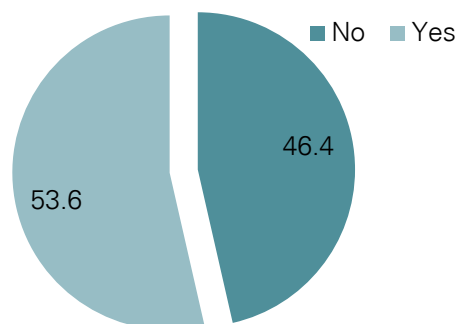


Figure 83: From whom you got information about menstruation

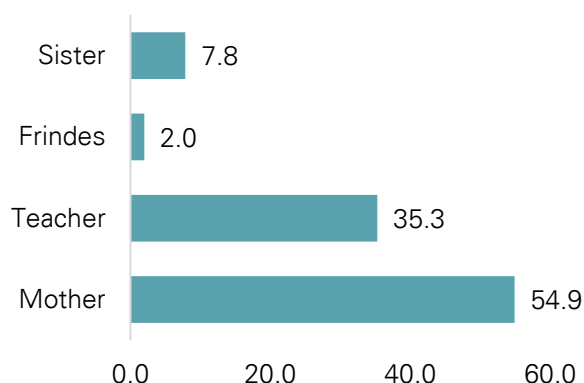
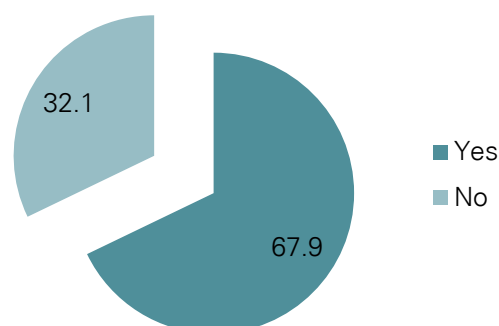


Figure 85: Menstrual blood perceived as unhygienic



The survey also revealed that more than half (53.6%) of the nuns are aware of the menstruation hygiene. Asked how nuns perceive menstruation blood as, figure 85 revealed that more than one-third (67.9%) of them perceived it as unhygienic. When questioning the nuns' knowhow on menstrual hygiene management, they reported the followings:

- We need to clean our genital area with hot water;
- We need to change our pad from time to time;
- We have to take bath regularly;
- We have to wash our hands with soap after changing the pad;
- We need to keep our body clean during period;
- We need to change underwear regularly; and
- Apply perfume to avoid bad smell.

6.1.3 Awareness on menstrual related infections

The survey also sought to learn the level of knowhow of nuns on menstrual related infections. Figure 86 revealed that equal proportion (28.6%) of the nuns were aware and unaware of the infections related to menstruation. Figure 86 as well revealed that close to half (42.9%) 'don't know at all' about the infections resulting from the poor menstrual hygiene. Similarly, to check awareness on other forms of infections, nuns were asked about RTI (Reproductive Tract Infection). Only around 36 percent of them are aware of the same and almost equal proportion of the remaining nuns reported as either 'don't know' or No awareness on infections related to menstruation.



Figure 86: Awareness on Fungal Infection

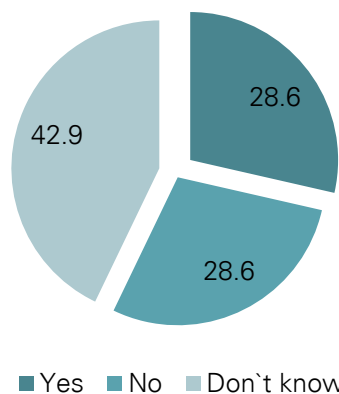


Figure 88: Awareness on Urinary Tract infection

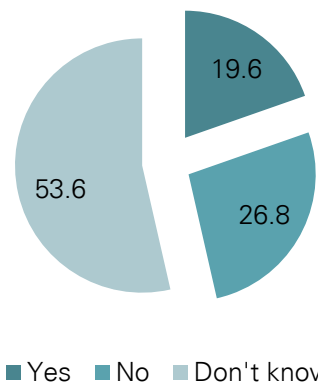


Figure 87: Awareness on Reproductive Tract Infaction

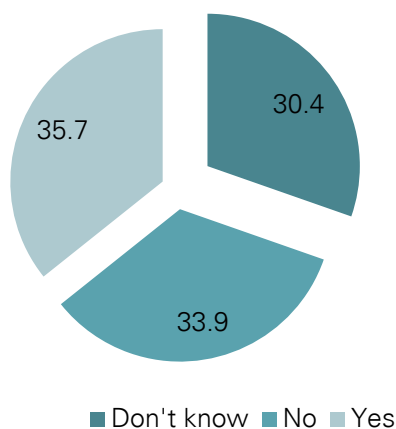
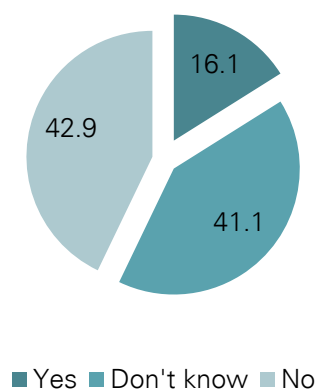


Figure 89: Awareness on Susceptible to infertility



When further asked about the awareness on the infections like UTI (Urinary Tract Infection), figure 93 reveals that more than half (53.6%) of the nuns are unaware about UTI.

When asked about the susceptibility of infertility as a result of poor menstrual hygiene management, only around two out of every ten (16.1%) are aware of the same. Remaining two-thirds (84%) are unaware of the infections related to menstruation.

Lastly, in this section, four phases of menstruation were asked to the respondents. Figure 90 reveals that one-quarter (25%) of them don't know and remaining three-quarters have defined in various ways.



Figure 90: Menstrual Phase

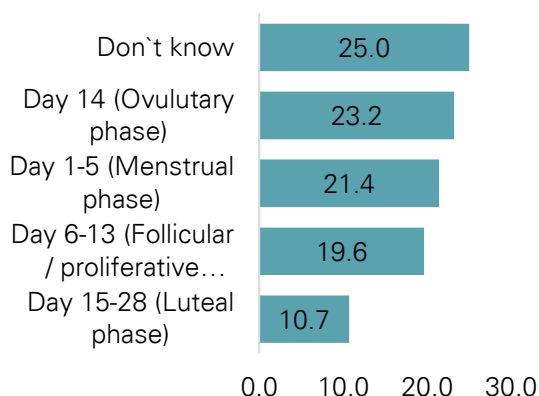
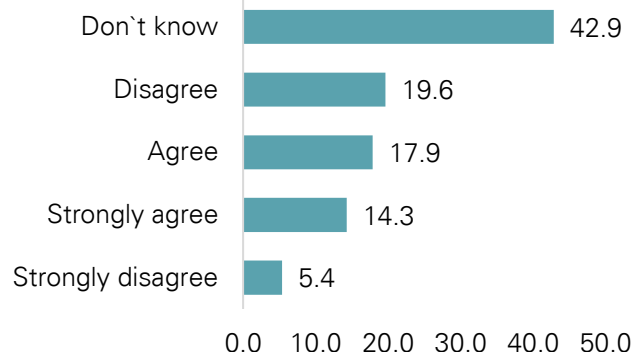


Figure 92: Women in menstruation are susceptible to get possessed by evil spirits



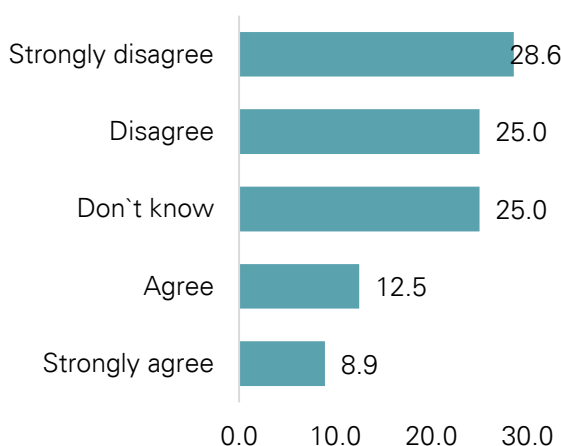
CHAPTER 6.2: ATTITUDE ON MENSTRUAL HYGIENE

This chapter focuses on the attitude towards menstrual hygiene and menstruation. Many studies have shown the taboos and the beliefs created around menstruation.

6.2.1 Misconceptions and taboos

This sub-section deliberates on the misconceptions and taboos that surround the psyche of nuns. This survey had revealed that there are many adolescent nuns who are not aware of menstruation and menstrual hygiene. Figure 91 revealed that one-quarter (25%) of the adolescent nuns don't know whether they must enter shrines/temples while having periods. About 21.5 percent of them agreed that they must not enter the shrine/temples during period. About 33.2 percent on a similar note have reported that women in menstruation are susceptible to get possessed by evil spirits.

Figure 91: Women must not enter shrines/temples while having periods



More than half (51.8%) of the adolescent nuns agreed that they should not sleep with a man during their periods since it will pass on the negative energy to man. And one-quarter (25%) of them unanimously believe that drinking tea will increase the menstrual flow.

Figure 93: Sleeping with a man during your periods will pass on the "drip" to man

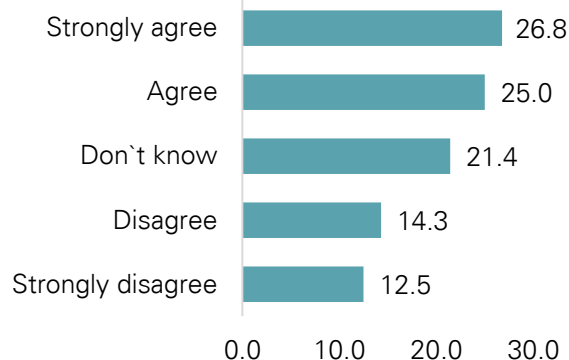
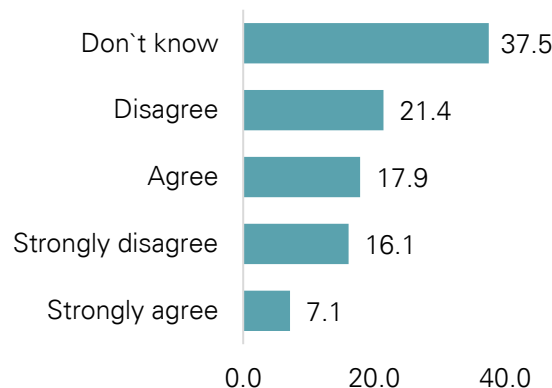


Figure 94: Drinking tea will increase the blood flow





6.2.2 Physical impacts of menstruation

Menstruation and varieties of concepts and beliefs surrounding it has impacted at various levels viz. physical, emotional and social. This sub-section discusses the physical impacts of menstruation. The survey revealed that close to half (48.2%) of the adolescent nuns have agreed that repeated changing of clothes or pads might aid the flow of blood. Figure 101 shows that more than half (53.6%) agreed that women are more tired than usual when they are menstruating.

Figure 95: Changing often/staying clean will increase the blood flow

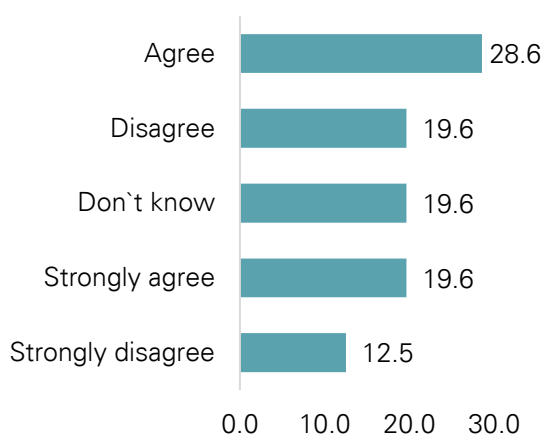
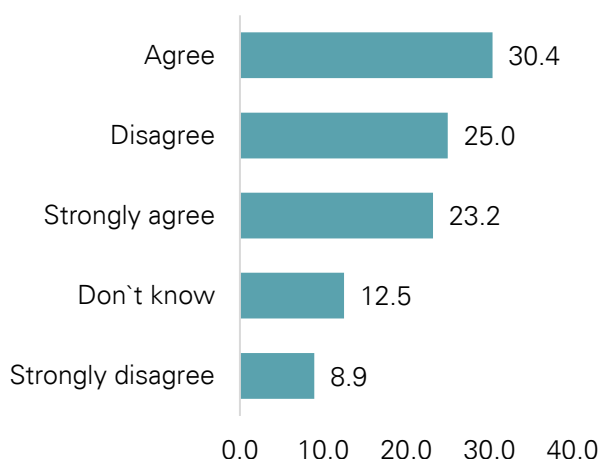
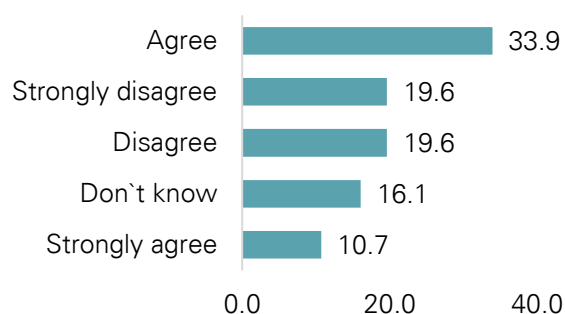


Figure 96: Women are more tired than usual when they are menstruating



Contrary to more than half of the adolescent nuns who reported that they feel more tired than usual during period, figure 97 unfolded that close to half (44.6%) of them have reported that menstruation does not affect their usual activities.

Figure 97: Menstruation doesnot affect my usual activities



6.2.3 Emotional impacts produced by menstruation

This sub-section deals with the emotional aspects of menstruation. More than two-thirds (69.8%) of the respondents agreed that they are more easily upset during pre-menstrual periods than at other times of the month. Figure 99 shows that more than two-thirds (82.2%) of the respondents have reported that they just have to tolerate with menstruation.

Figure 98: I am more easily upset during pre-menstrual periods than at other times of the month

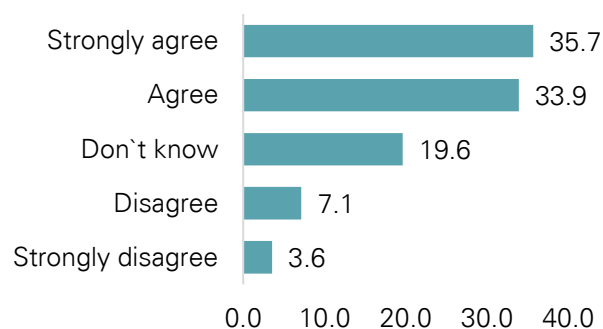
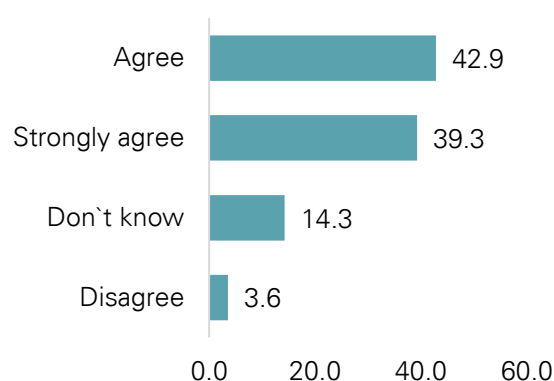


Figure 99: Menstruation is something that I just have to put up (tolerate) with





Many nuns have reported their disgruntlement for being female. Figure 100 reveals that close to half (44.7%) of them have reported that men have real advantage of not having monthly period. On the other hand, figure 101 has revealed that more than two-thirds (76.8%) of the adolescent nuns have reported that the only good thing with menstruation is that they come to know that they are not pregnant.

Figure 100: Men have real advantage of not having monthly period

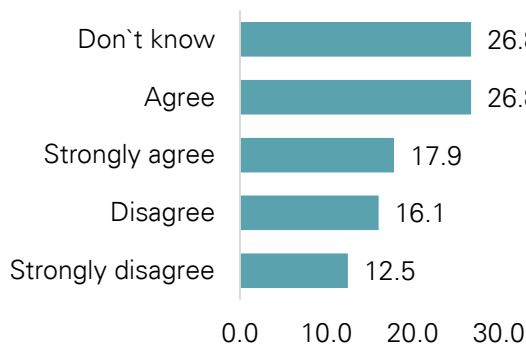
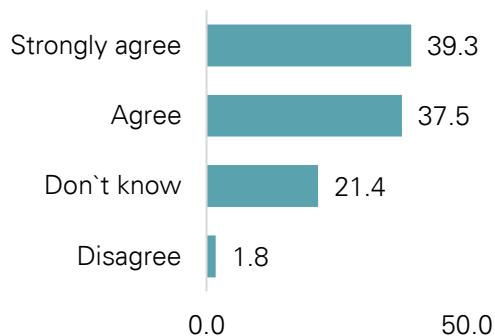


Figure 101: The only good thing with menstruation is that I come to know that am not pregnant



Contrary to earlier assertions by the adolescent nuns, close to half (48.2%) of them reported that menstruation allows them to be more aware of their body followed by 67.8 percent of them who reported that the recurrent monthly flow of menstruation is an external indications of women's general good health.

Figure 102: Menstruation allows women to be more aware of their body

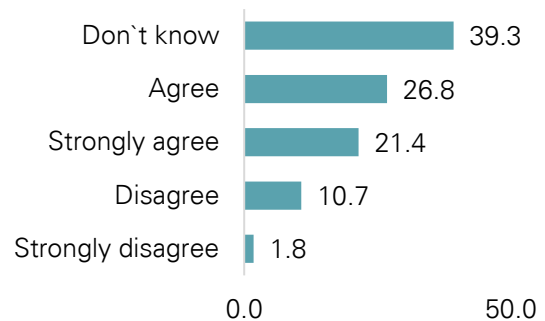
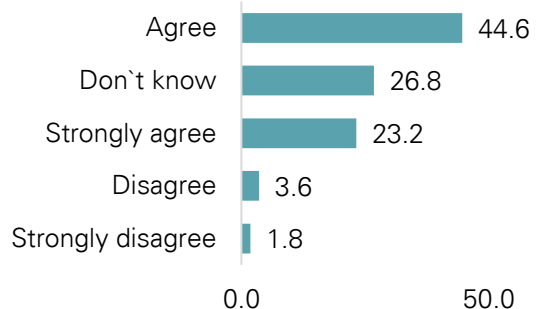


Figure 103: The recurrent monthly flow of menstruation is an external indications of women's general good health



Close to two-thirds (64.3%) of the nuns are aware of the pre-menstrual phenomena through physical symptoms like breast tenderness, backache, cramps or other physical signs. Figure 105 reveals some of the emotional aspects of menstruation. About 50 percent of the adolescent nuns agreed that a woman who attributes her irritability to her approaching menstrual period as neurotic.

Figure 104: I can tell my period is approaching because of the breast tenderness, backache, cramps or other physical signs

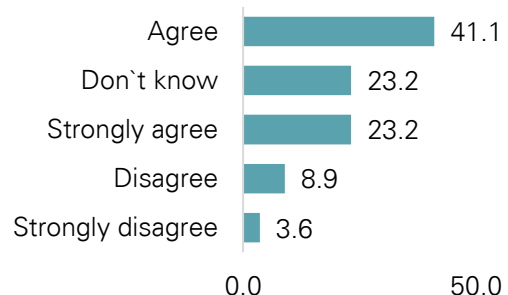
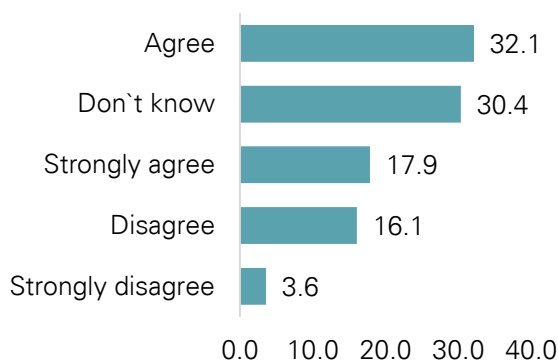




Figure 105: A women who attributes her irritability to her approaching menstrual period is neurotic



6.2.4 Social impacts produced by menstruation

This sub-section deals with the social impacts produced by menstruation. Around 38 percent of the adolescent nuns disagreed with the statement that 'I barely notice minor physiological effect out of my menstrual periods.' Figure 107 has revealed that close to half (46.4%) of the adolescent nuns reported that women complaining of menstrual distress are just using that as an excuse.

Figure 106: I barely notice the minor physiological effect out of my menstrual periods

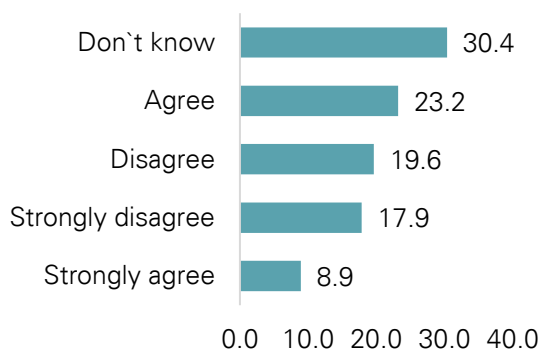


Figure 107: Women complaining of menstrual distress are just using that as an excuse

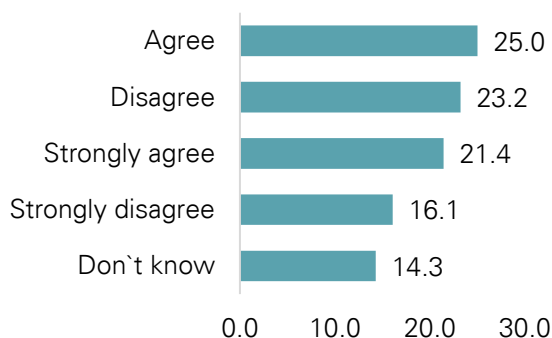


Figure 108 has revealed that about 60.7 percent of the adolescent nuns have perceived period dirty and annoying. About 39.2 percent of them wished that a period would last for a few minutes.

Figure 108: The period is dirty and annoying

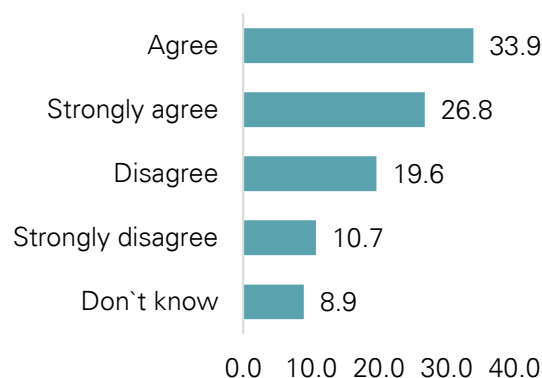
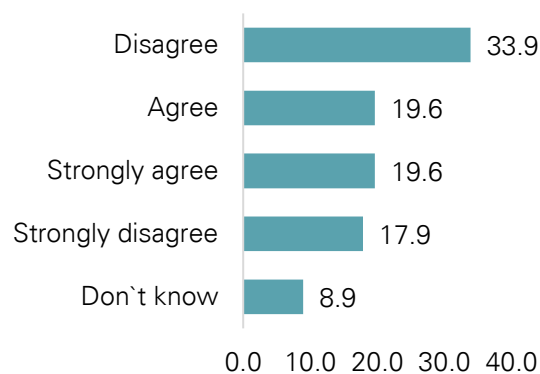


Figure 109: We women wish that the period would last for a few minutes



Most of the activities related to menstrual hygiene are taboos to nuns. Figure 110 has revealed that more than two-thirds (76.8%) of the adolescent nuns reported that it is important to buy sanitary pad without being seen. On the other hand, around 60 percent of them wished they did not have to menstruate.



Figure 110: It is important to buy sanitary pad without being seen

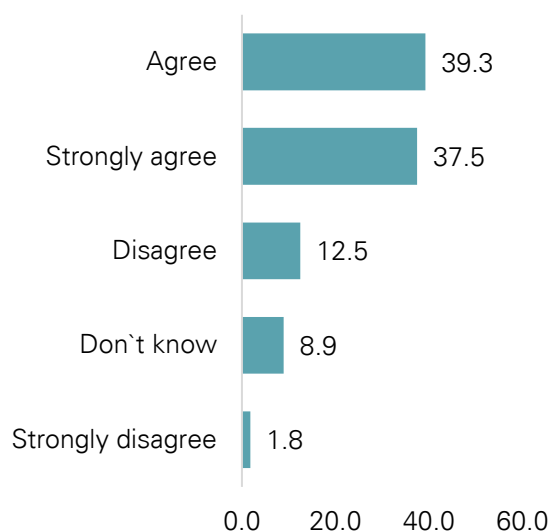


Figure 112: It is uncomfortable for us women to talk about our periods

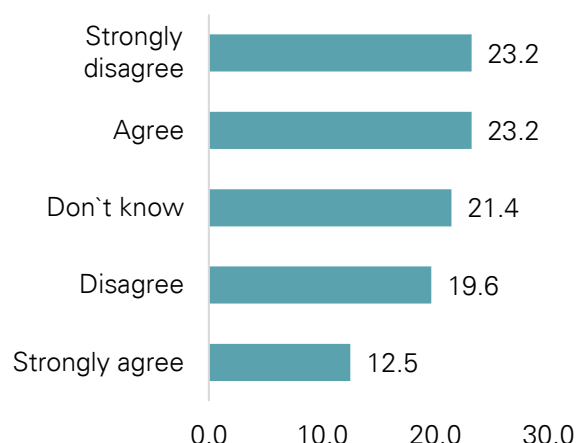


Figure 111: Women wish that we do not have our period

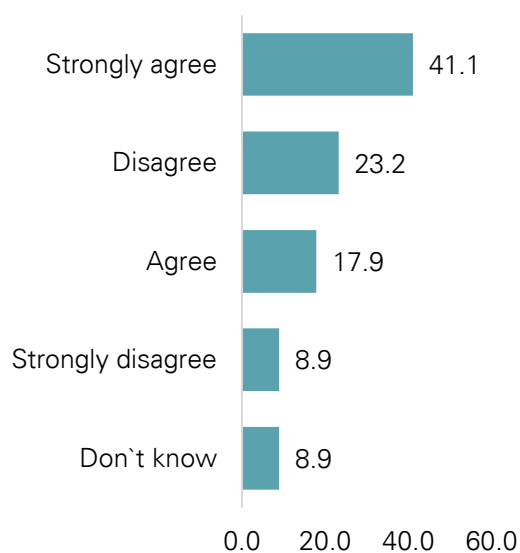
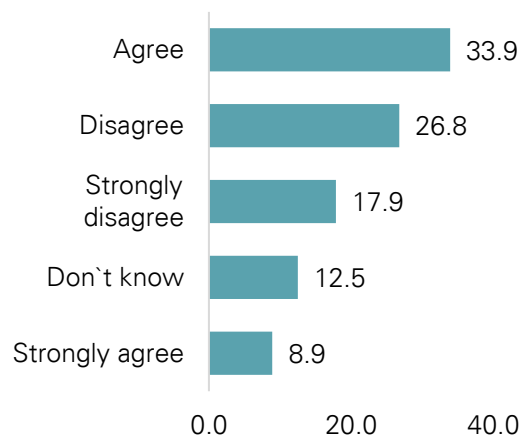


Figure 113: I miss classes/activities during my period because am afraid of staining my clothes



Around 35.7 percent of the respondents reported that it is uncomfortable for them to talk about their periods. Close to half (42.8%) of the respondents reported that they miss classes or other activities for fear of staining their clothes during period.

About half (50%) of the adolescent nuns reported that they miss classes or other activities for the fear of being ridiculed by others during period. About 41.1 percent of them missed classes or other forms of activities at nunnery for fear of pain during menstruation.



Figure 114: I miss classes/activities during period because am afraid of others making fun of me

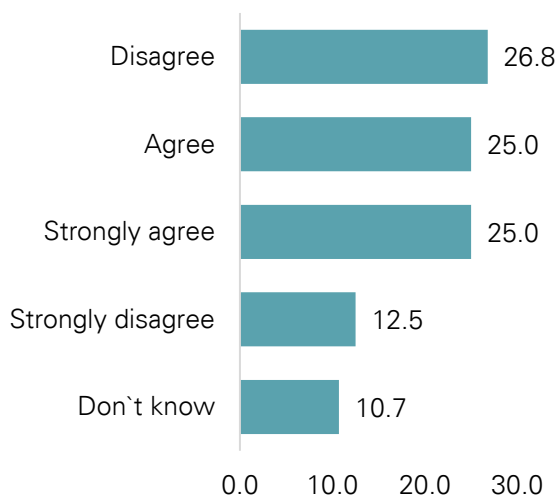


Figure 116: I miss classes/activities during my period because there isn't privacy anywhere for girls to wash and change at nunnery

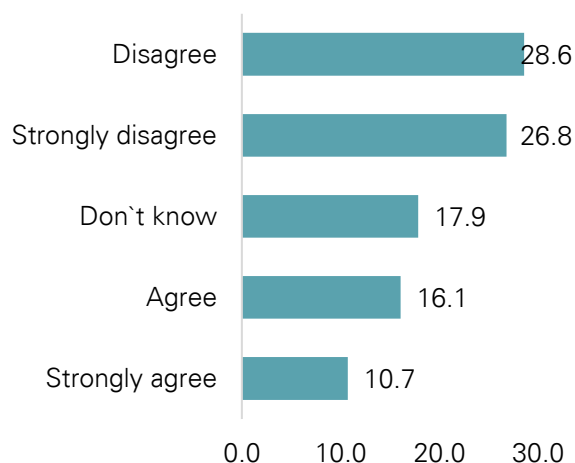


Figure 115: I miss classes/activities during period because it can cause pain

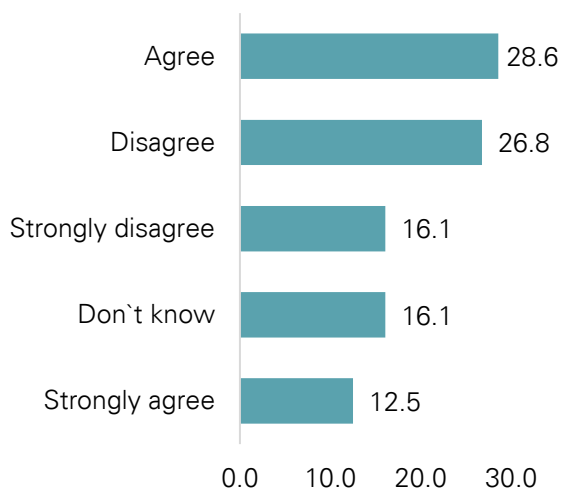
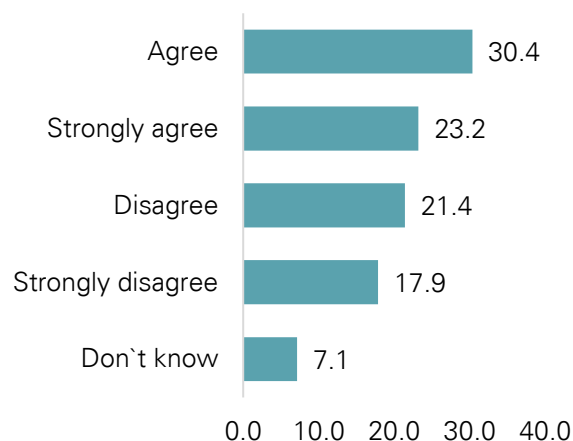


Figure 117: I miss classes/activities during my period because there is no where to dispose off sanitary pad



6.2.5 WASH facilities to counter menstruation hygiene management

This sub-section deals with the WASH facilities available at nunneries to combat MHM. More than a quarter (26.8%) of the adolescent nuns reported that they missed classes or activities because of lack of privacy for girls to wash and change. More than half (53.6%) of the respondents again reported that they missed classes or activities during menstruation since there is no place to dispose-off sanitary pad.

Around close to one-quarter (21.5%) of the adolescent nuns reported that they missed classes or activities since they don't have sanitary pad. Figure 119 has revealed that more than two-thirds (78.6%) of the respondents agreed that they missed classes or activities during period since the toilets are too dirty and don't feel like to change.



Figure 118: I miss classes/activities during my period because I don't have sanitary pad

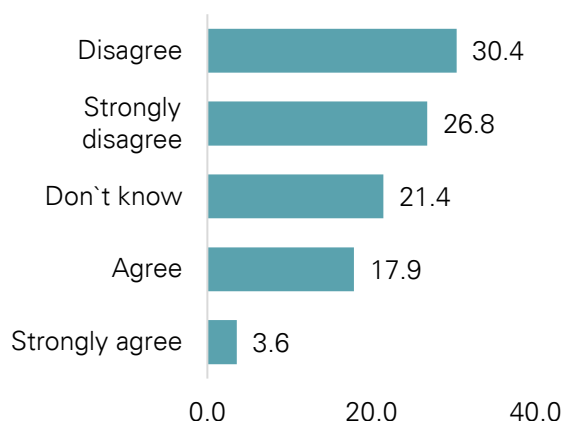


Figure 120: Main absorbent material do you use during period

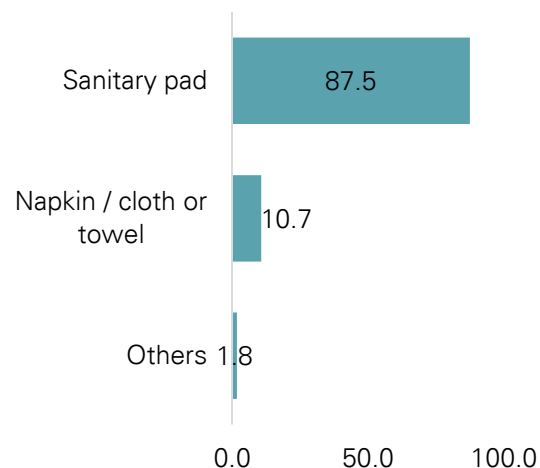


Figure 119: I miss classes/activities during my period since toilets are too dirty and don't feel like to change

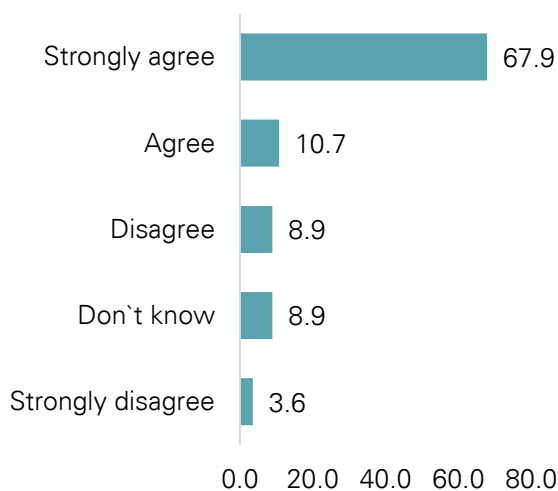
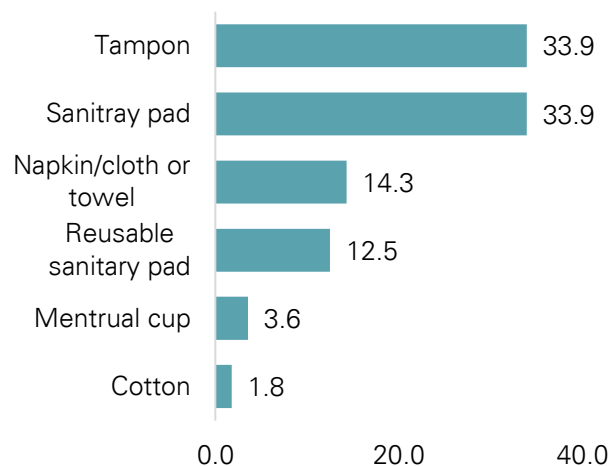


Figure 121: Which one of the above do you preferred most



CHAPTER 6.3: PRACTICES ON MENSTRUAL HYGIENE

This chapter deals with the practices prevailing in nunneries on menstrual hygiene. When adolescent nuns were asked what type of absorbent materials they used, almost nine out of every ten (87.5%) use sanitary pad followed by around 11 percent who used napkin/cloth or towel. When asked which one of the absorbent materials they preferred, on an equal proportion (33.9%) of them preferred tampon and sanitary pad. Around 14 percent of them preferred napkin/cloth or towel and about 3.6 percent of them preferred menstrual cup. Figure 121 also has revealed that around 13 percent of the adolescent nuns had preferred reusable sanitary pad.

Asked why adolescent nuns preferred various types of absorbent materials, more than two-thirds (71.4%) of them said that they are affordable (figure 122). Around one in every ten (10.7%) of them reported that absorbent materials are easy to use. About 7.1 percent of the adolescent nuns reported that it is easily available. Figure 123 shows the method of cleaning cloth pad. It is revealed that more than half (55.4%) of the adolescent nuns reported that they use water alone to clean the cloth pad followed by one-quarter (25%) of them who used both water and soap. It has been repeatedly displayed in the entire study that menstrual hygiene practices is also perceived as something shameful (taboo). Figure 123 revealed beyond doubt that around 18 percent of the adolescent nuns hide and dry the cloth pad beneath other clothes.



Figure 122: Why do you prefer

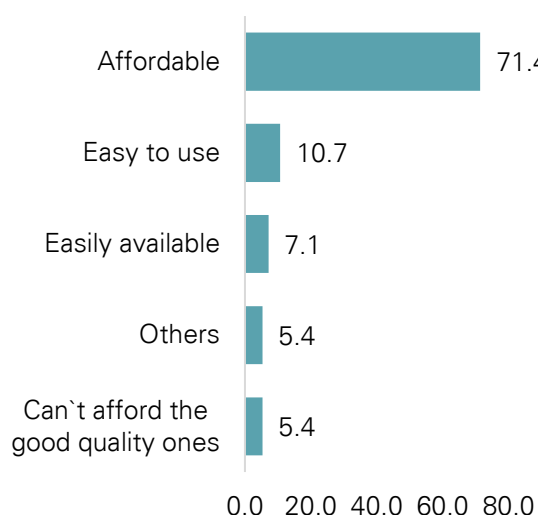


Figure 124: Method of drying the cloth pad

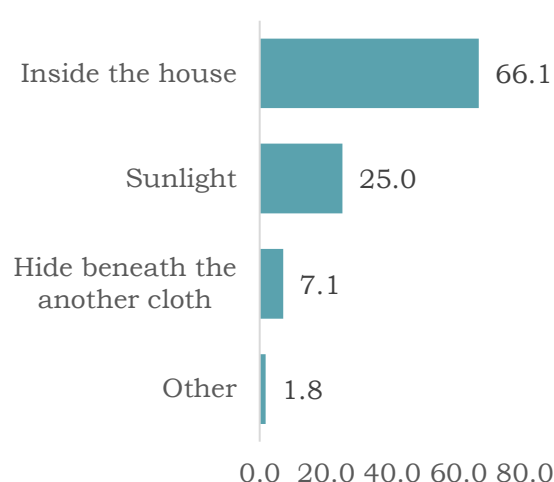


Figure 123: Method of cleaning cloth pad

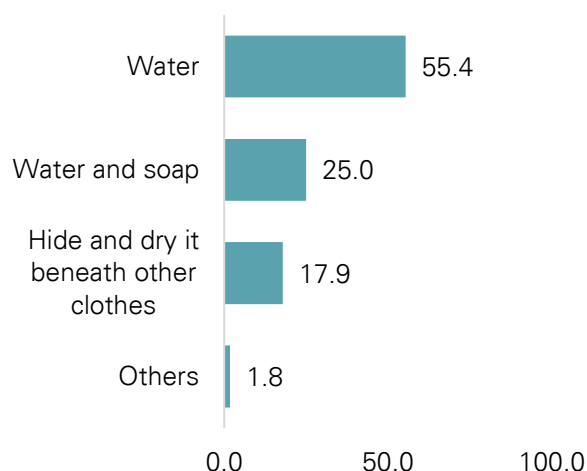
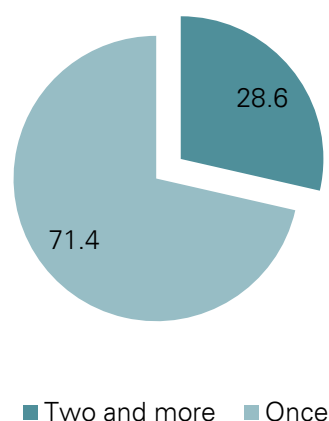


Figure 125: Number of times changing pad in a day



On the method followed in drying the cloth pad besides washing, about two-thirds (66.1%) of the respondents reported that they dry it inside the house followed by one-quarter (25%) of them who dried them in sunlight. Again, quite a sizable proportion of adolescent nuns have dried the cloth pad by hiding beneath another cloth (7.1%). The study also sought to learn how frequently adolescent nuns changed their absorbent material. Figure 125 revealed that more than two-thirds (71.4%) of them changed only once a day. The remaining 28.6 percent of them changed twice a day.

6.3.1 Sanitary facilities at nunneries

This sub-section deals with sanitary facilities at nunneries. When asked about the place of disposal of pad, close to half (46.4%) of them reported that they dispose into pad disposal bin followed by equal proportions (23.2%) of them who reported that they dispose it into toilet and drain. Around 2 percent of them reported that they disposed the absorbent material into routine waste and an equal proportion of them said they threw in open field.



Figure 126: Place of disposal of pad

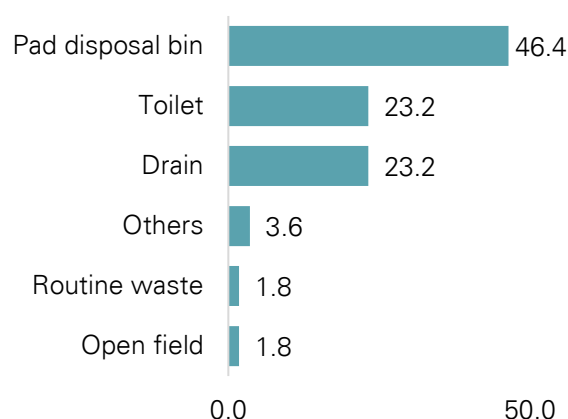


Figure 128: Number of times changing underwear

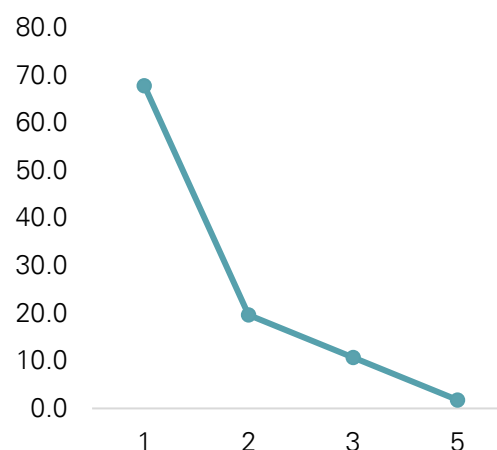


Figure 127: Type of pad wraps used for disposing it

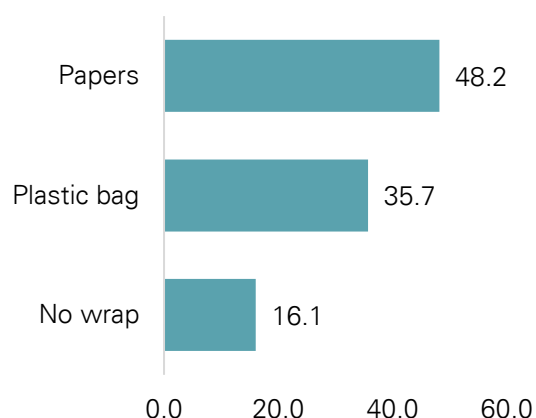


Figure 129: Do you come to nunnery during menstruation

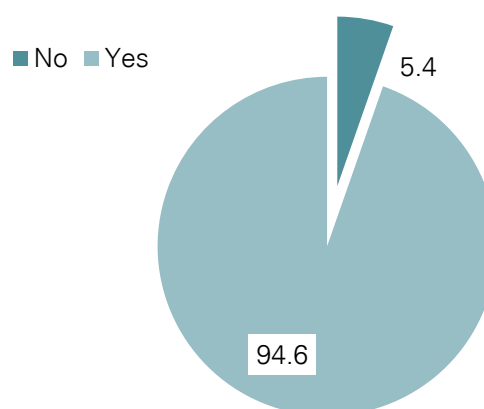


Figure 127 revealed that close to half (48.2%) of the respondents reported that they used papers as pad wraps followed by 35.7 percent of them who used plastic bag. About 16.1 percent of them have not used pad wrap at all.

Asked how many times the adolescent nuns changed their underwear during menstruation, more than two-thirds (67.9%) reported to have changed only once a day. However, figure 128 had revealed that around 20 percent changed twice a day followed by around 11 percent of them who reported to have changed thrice a day. About 1.8 percent of them reported that they changed even five times a day. When asked their attendance at nunnery during menstruation, about 94.6 percent of them reported 'Yes.' So, only around less than one out of every ten (5.4%) missed the session.



Figure130: Menstrual problem interferes with attendances

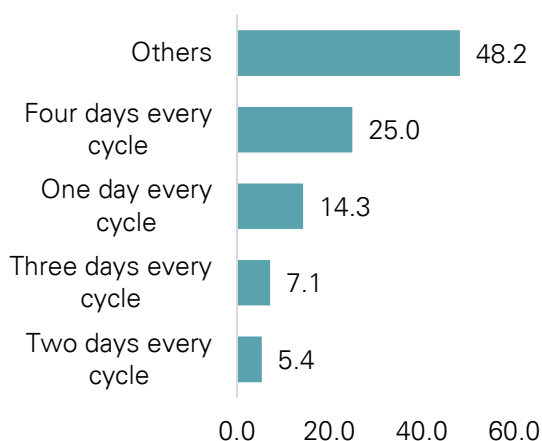


Figure 132: How often do you take bath during period

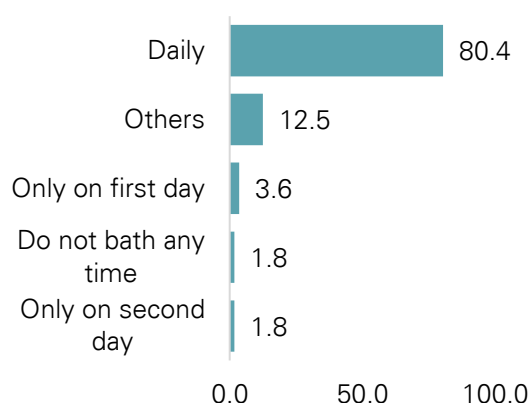


Figure131: Remedies di you take during menstruation

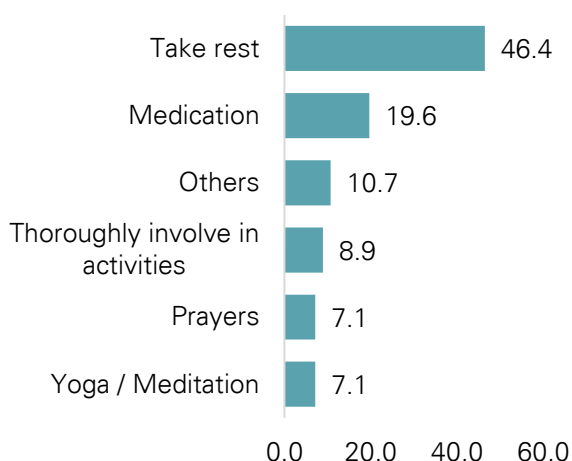
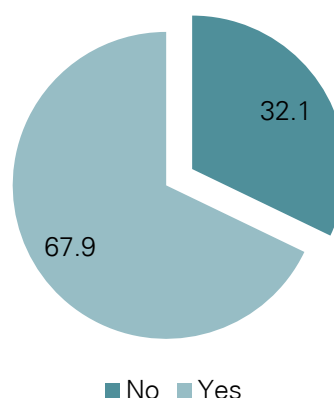


Figure 133: Do you clean genital area during menstruation



6.3.2 Practice of Menstrual Hygiene at nunneries

This study has revealed that eight out of every ten (80.4%) take bath on a daily basis during menstruation. Figure 132 shows that around 4 percent of the adolescent nuns took bath only on the first day. About 1.8 percent of them have reported that they do not bath at all. The survey had also revealed that more than two-thirds (67.9%) of the adolescent nuns clean their genital area during menstruation.

Figure 134 shows that close to two-third (63.6%) cleaned the genital area with only water followed by about 18.2 percent who used water and soap. Around 13 percent used towel. About 67.9 percent of the adolescent nuns reported that they have burning place for sanitary pad followed by pit (23.2%) and pad disposal bins (8.9%).



Figure 134: Method of cleaning genital

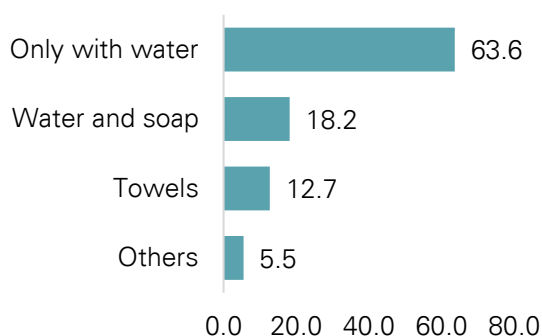
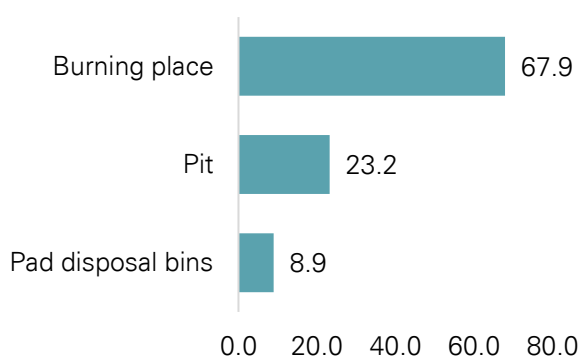


Figure 135: Which one of the following sanitary pad facilities does your nunnery have



About 85.7 percent of the adolescent nuns reported that they have place for drying clothes. Similarly, about 78.6 percent of them reported that they have toilet/bathing facilities for addressing issues related to menstruation.

Figure136: Does your nunnery have place for drying clothes

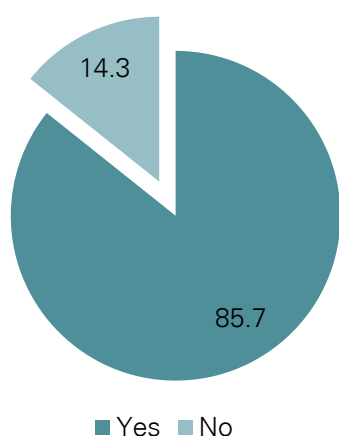


Figure 137: Does your nunnery have Toilet/ bathing facilities for addressing issues related to menstruation

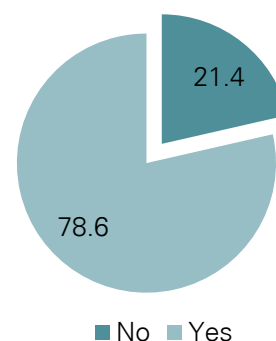


Figure 138 shows the bathing habits during period. More than half (51.8%) of the respondents have reported that they take half body bath during period due to lack of hot water. When asked whether they could afford to buy sanitary pad, about 33.3 percent of them reported that they do followed by equal proportions of them (20%) who reported that they couldn't or its unavailability.

Figure138: I have a half body bath during period due to lack of hot water

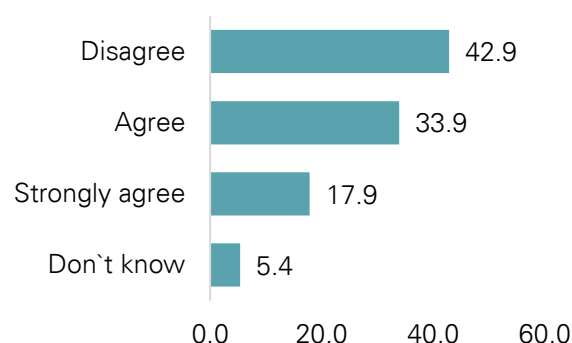
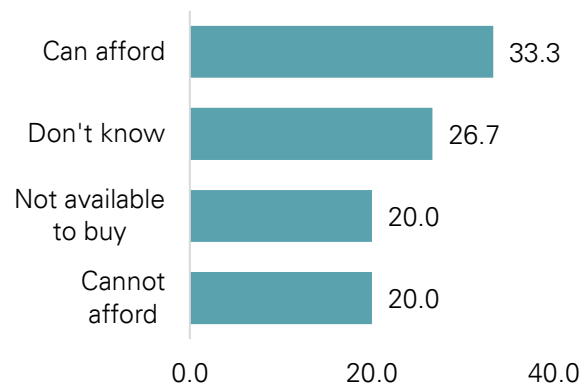


Figure 139: Do you Afford to buy sanitary pad





6.3.3 Empirical Analysis: To assess the relative contribution of educational status of respondents and their mother's on the likelihood of using unhygienic practices during menstruation.

One of the core objectives of this study is to assess whether the educational status of

respondents and their mothers have positive effect on the menstrual hygienic practices. To establish this causal effect, a probit regression is employed as follows:

Table 3: Results of Probit regression	Probit	dprobit
VARIABLES	Menstrualhygiene	Menstrualhygiene
age	0.521** (0.239)	0.188** (0.0862)
Age ²	-0.0143* (0.00825)	-0.00515* (0.00298)
grade	0.00822 (0.00844)	0.00296 (0.00304)
total female teachers	0.00629 (0.00488)	0.00227 (0.00176)
father's education	0.0141 (0.0362)	0.00509 (0.0131)
Mother's education	0.0288 (0.0405)	0.0104 (0.0146)
Guardian's education	-0.109 (0.0853)	-0.0391 (0.0308)
boarding	-0.645*** (0.203)	-0.250*** (0.0796)
urban	-0.0639 (0.107)	-0.0230 (0.0384)
Buddhist	-0.780 (0.666)	-0.244 (0.171)
Christian	-0.203 (0.700)	-0.0758 (0.269)
Hindu	-0.211 (0.679)	-0.0783 (0.258)
yearly pocket money	8.68e-05*** (2.47e-05)	3.13e-05*** (8.85e-06)
Constant	-3.671** (1.816)	
Observations	891	891
	Standard errors in parentheses *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1	

Table 3 depicts the probit regression results. The probit model is nonlinear model and, therefore, we differentiate it and generated the results of dprobit. The dependent variable is the adolescent girls' knowledge on menstrual hygiene management. The independent variables taken under consideration were age and grade of adolescent girls and their religious backgrounds. The main line of inquiry is the relationship between girls' knowhow on menstrual hygiene management as a result of their own and the parental educational status. The yearly pocket money received from the parents is also considered as one of the

explanatory variables. The result of probit regression revealed that age is one of the highly significant factors up to 95% level of confidence. On an average, if an adolescent girl grows older by one more year, there is a probability that her knowledge on menstrual hygiene would be enhanced by 18.8 percent, holding other factors constant. However, it also revealed that as the age keeps increasing there is a probability that the knowhow on menstrual hygiene amongst adolescent girls would keep growing till the tangency (point of no change) point and then starts declining by 0.52 percent on an average, holding



other factors constant. Similarly, if an adolescent girl lives in a boarding school, on an average, there is a probability of not learning menstrual hygiene management declining by 25 percent, holding other factors constant. The main factors like an adolescent girl's own education and her parental education have no effect at all in menstrual hygiene management. On the other hand, the yearly pocket money received by adolescent girls has tremendous effect on the menstrual hygiene management by the girls. The regression result has revealed that, on an average, if an adolescent girl receives pocket money from their parents, there is a probability enhancing the menstrual hygiene management knowledge by 0.8 percent.

6.4 Comparative Statics of Schools intervened by SHND on MHM and the control group (not intervened by SHND with MHM)

Tables 4 and 5 illustrate the comparative statics of schools intervened by SHND with MHM program and their outcomes on the knowledge on menstruation and superstition associated with it. Five schools intervened by MHM programs were selected by chance in this study for which we took five others who were not intervened by the same program.

Table 4: Awareness about the phenomenon of menstruation by schools intervened by SHND

Schools	Natural shedding of blood on monthly basis.	Disease	Curse	Don't know	Total
Dechencholing HSS	181	15	-	5	201
Gedu HSS	998	26	-	-	1,024
Lungtenphu LSS	197	-	-	5	202
Nubding LSS	1,173	107	-	142	1,422
Yangchengatshel LSS	186	-	-	15	201
Total	2,735	148	-	167	3,050
% share	80.6	4.4	-	4.9	89.9

Awareness about the phenomenon of menstruation by schools not intervened by SHND

Schools	Natural shedding of blood on monthly basis.	Disease	Curse	Don't know	Total
Chumey C.S (MSS)	1,024	35	247	1,341	2,647
Gasa PS	380	15	409	804	1,608
Sarpang LSS	804	24	47	899	1,774
Wanakha CS (MSS)	1,677	44	44	1,765	3,530
Lingmethang PS	909	165	455	1,570	3,099
Total	4,794	283	1,202	6,379	12,658
% share	37.9	2.2	9.5	50.4	100.0



Table 4 revealed that more than three quarters (80.6%) of the adolescent girls in those schools intervened by the MHM program of SHND had correct knowledge on menstruation. Interestingly, after the intervention of the program, none of them believed that menstruation is a curse. However, there are still about 4.4 percent of them who still considers that menstruation is a disease. Around 5 percent of them reported that they don't know what menstruation is all about. On the contrary,

table 5 revealed that only around 38 percent of the adolescent girls in those schools which did not receive MHM program from the SHND knew what menstruation is all about. About 9.5 percent of them still consider menstruation as curse followed by 2.2 percent of them considering menstruation as disease. About half (50.4%) of them don't know what menstruation is all about. This clearly indicates the efficacy of the SHND's MHM awareness programs in the schools



CHAPTER 7: KEY FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

This chapter deals with the key findings and discussions. The study has covered 39 schools in 20 Dzongkhags. There are two sub-sections under this chapter that deals with the key findings of: i) adolescent schoolgirls; and ii) adolescent nuns.

i) Key findings for adolescent schoolgirls:

7.1 Socio-demographic, Economic and Educational Characteristics

- Most of the respondents covered in this study were from the Central Schools (35.6%) followed by Primary Schools (20%) and Lower Secondary Schools (14.9%). Going by the areas of residence, around half of the respondents were from rural schools and close to half (49.7%) from urban schools.
- The respondents comprised of diverse level of education spanning from class 3 to class 12. Almost half of the respondents fell between classes 8 to 10. Hardly one percent of the respondents comprised of grade 3 students.
- A vast majority (71.2%) of the respondents lived with mother and father followed by around 12 percent of them living with stepfather and mother. About 9.6 percent of them live with single parent (mother). The lowest is the 2.2 percent of them who live with lone parents (fathers). Amongst those adolescent respondent girls, maximum were Buddhist (81.5%) followed by Hindu (13.3%) and Christian (4.7%). Less than one percent belongs to other faiths.
- Around eight in every ten (77.6%) of the respondents' mothers have no education. Similarly, almost six out of every ten (65.5%) fathers lack education and about nine in every ten (90.7%) of the guardians lack education as well.
- The survey revealed that only about 65 percent of the respondents received yearly pocket money. The supply of pocket money ranges from Nu. 50 to 9,000 year. Less than half of the respondents received the yearly pocket money between Nu. 100 and 1,156 followed by around 20 percent who received even less than Nu. 100 a year.
- The parents and guardians of the respondents are mostly farmers. There are almost equal proportions of fathers (58.5%) and mothers (55.6%) whose occupation is also farmer. Less than half of the respondents have reported that their guardian's occupation is farmer and on the contrary close to half (45.4%) did not know the occupation of their guardians.

7.2 Girls' current knowledge and information on menstruation

- A vast majority (83%) of the girls recognized menstruation as physiological process. On the contrary, there are about 14.1 percent of them who are unaware of this.
- Around 2 percent of them defined menstruation as a disease followed by around 1 percent who defined menstruation as a curse.
- About five in every ten (51.9%) reported that it is caused by hormones. However, four in every ten (37.2%) reported not knowing the causes.
- About 5.2 percent of the respondents were of the opinion that menstruation is a 'Curse of God' followed by around 2 percent of them who were of the notion that menstruation is caused by disease.
- Close to two-third (65.3%) of Buddhist adolescent girls believe that menstruation is a disease followed by Hindu (23.1%) and Christian adolescent girls (11.6%).
- Eight out of ten (80.4%) of the Buddhist adolescent girls have rightly perceived menstruation as the natural shedding of blood on a monthly basis. Only 14.2 percent of the Hindu adolescent girls have perceived menstruation as the normal physiological process followed by about 5 percent of Christian adolescent girls.
- About 87 percent of the Buddhist adolescent girls have reported that menstruation is a curse followed by 13 percent of Hindu adolescent girls.

7.3 Menarche—knowledge and information

- More than half (59.4%) of the adolescent girls reported that menstruation comes from uterus. However, there are around 24 percent of them who are oblivious about the flow of menstruation. This could be due to the fact that around 11 percent of the adolescent girls who participated in this survey are in the age bracket of 10-11.
- About 8.2 percent of the respondents reported that menstruation comes from the birth canal. Adding further to this shock, about 5.4 percent of them have reported that menstruation comes from the bladder.
- Asked at which age most girls usually get their first period, around 51 percent of the respondents reported 12 as the age. Around 13 percent of them don't know the age at which menstruation begins.



- Around six in ten (58.8%) are of the view that duration (days) of menstruation for a normal person lasts between 1-4 days. There are about 1.3 percent of them who believe that menstruation lasts for about 13-31 days in a normal person.
- About 20.3 percent of the respondents reported that menstruation lasts between 6-12 days. Only around 21 percent reported that menstruation lasts for about 5 days in a normal person.
- About 18.2 percent of the adolescent girls reported that the interval between two menstrual cycles comprised of 28 days. There are more than half (52.6%) of them who said that the interval between two menstrual cycles is less than 10 days. On the other extreme, less than 1 percent reported that the interval lasts between 54 days and above.

7.4 Source of information regarding menstruation and menstrual hygiene

- Mothers (42%) often provided the information regarding menstruation followed by teachers (27.1%) and sisters (15.6%). Around 14 percent of the respondents reported that they received information on menarche from their friends. About 1.8 percent of them availed from other sources viz. books, TV, Radio, online and etc.
- Close to half (42.2%) reported that they are aware of the fungal infection due to poor menstrual hygiene. On the contrary, about 57.1 percent of them reported that they are not aware about reproductive tract infection. More than half (58.9%) are not aware. Only around 25 percent of them have reported that they are aware of UTI.
- More than half (52.3%) of them don't know the menstrual phases.

7.5 Attitude towards menstruation

The Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was applied to factor out the sub-factors contributing to the attitude of adolescent schoolgirls on menstruation. Following are the sub-factors identified by the EFA:

1. I can tell my period is approaching because of the breast tenderness, backache, cramps or other physical signs;
2. It is important to talk about menstrual period with men;
3. It is important to discuss the topic of period at school with boys and girls;
4. We women wish that the period would last for a few minutes;

5. It is important to buy sanitary pad without being seen;
6. Women wish that we do not have our period;
7. I miss school during my period because am afraid of staining my clothes;
8. I miss school during my period because am afraid of others making fun of me;
9. I miss school during period because it can cause pain;
10. I miss school during my period since it can make me feel uncomfortable or tired;
11. I miss school during my period because there isn't anywhere for girls to wash and change at school; and
12. I miss school during my period because there is nowhere to dispose-off sanitary pad.

7.6 Social Impacts produced by menstruation

- Close to one-third (63.5%) of the adolescent school girls have reported that during menstruation, a woman must not enter the shrine or temple. Further augmenting this superstition, about 21 percent of the respondents have agreed that women in menstruation are susceptible to get possessed by an evil spirit.
- Close to two-third (65%) of the adolescent school girls have agreed the approaching of period signals with varieties of pains viz. breast tenderness, backache, cramps or other physical signs. Around two-third (63.7%) of them again agreed that the only good thing about menstruation is that they know they are free from pregnancy.
- About 37.2 percent of them have reported that they miss school during menstruation since they are afraid of staining the clothes. Similarly, about 32.5 percent of the adolescent schoolgirls reported that they miss school during period since they fear others making fun of them.

7.7 Physical Impacts of menstruation

- Close to half (48.1%) of the respondents agreed that they miss school during period since it causes pain. About 43 percent of the adolescent schoolgirls reported that they miss school during period because it makes them feel uncomfortable.
- Around one quarter (24.9%) of the adolescent schoolgirls reported that they miss school during period as there are no places for girls to wash and change at school. Similarly, close to one quarter (21.3%) of the respondents reported that they missing school during period because of lack of sanitary pad disposal.



7.8 Emotional Impacts

- More than half (57%) of the respondents agreed that they get easily upset during pre-menstrual and menstrual periods than at other times. Close to two-third (63.4%) of the respondents agreed that menstruation is something that they just have to tolerate with.
- Little more than two-third (69.8%) of the adolescent schoolgirls agreed to the statement, 'men have real advantage of not having monthly period.' However, on the contrary, around 13 percent of them contradicted the statement. It is also revealed that one out of every ten (10.1%) of the adolescent schoolgirls disagreed that a woman who attributed her irritability to her approaching menstrual period as neurotic.
- Surprisingly, more than two-third (69.8%) of the adolescent schoolgirls have agreed that women complaining of menstrual distress are just using it as an excuse. Almost equal proportion (78.3%) of the respondents agreed that women are more tired than usual when they are menstruating (figure 48).

7.9 Menstruation as taboo to adolescent school girls

- One out of every ten (10.4%) still disagrees the statement that 'it is important to talk about menstrual period with men.' There are still around 19 percent of the adolescent schoolgirls who do not yield to the statement, 'it is important to discuss the topic of period at school with boys and girls.'

8.0 Type of menstrual absorbents used

- The use of sanitary pad is commonly reported both in urban and rural areas with a percentage share of 52.1 percent and 47.9 percent respectively. It is revealed that every nine out of ten (91.9%) uses sanitary pad. Around 3 percent of the adolescent schoolgirls do not use any kind of absorbent material.
- Almost four in every ten (38.1%) reported that they use sanitary pad as an absorbent material since it is easy to use. Almost by the same proportion (32.1%), the respondents reported that they use sanitary pad since it is easily available. Around 11 percent of them reported that sanitary pad could be used for longer duration.
- About 5.4 percent of the respondents reported that they prefer sanitary pad to others since it is affordable. However, about 4.4 percent of the respondents are of the take that they can't afford other good quality pads and use sanitary pad as an absorbent.

8.1 Menstrual hygiene management prevailing

- Around three-quarters (75.2%) of them reported that they dry their cloth pads in sunlight. Around one out of every ten (9.6%) dry their cloth pads inside the house. Around 8 percent hide beneath another cloth and dry them together.
- Close to two-third (62.9%) of the adolescent schoolgirls used papers as pad wraps for disposing the kind of sanitary pads they used. It is also revealed that more than one-quarter (26.8%) of the adolescent girls reported that they use plastic bag or polythene bag to wrap the sanitary pads and dispose it.
- Quite interestingly, the survey revealed that more than half (52.4%) of the adolescent schoolgirls changed their underwear twice a day during menstruation.
- It has been also revealed that around 15 percent changed the underwear thrice a day during menstruation. Around 20 percent changed only once a day. The survey has revealed the two extreme situations whereby about 2.1 percent of them changed the underwear during the period between 5 to 7 times in a day. On the other extreme, about 7.2 percent did not change their underwear at all during menstruation.

8.2 Adolescents' response to menstruation and practices developed as a result

- Nine out of every ten (90.7%) of the respondents reported that they come to school despite menstruation. More than half (55.3%) of the adolescent schoolgirls reported other categories of attendance counts. However, about 44.7 percent of them reported that they missed school ranging from one day to four days during every cycle.
- More than half (52.5%) reported that they take rest. It has been also revealed that close to one-quarter (21.1%) of them thoroughly involve in activities to forget the pangs and discomforts while 6.4 percent of others resort to medication followed by Yoga meditation (3.1%) and prayers (1.7%).
- Similarly, when asked whether they take bath during period, more than half (58.1%) reported that they do so. Around 13 percent of them have reported taking bath only on the second day followed by 10 percent of them who bathed on the very first day. Around 4 percent of them do not bath any time.



- Nine out of every ten (91.3%) of the adolescent schoolgirls clean their genital area during menstruation. Close to half (45.9%) of the respondents agreed that they take half body bath during period due to lack of hot water.
- More than two-thirds (73.8%) of the respondents reported that they could afford the sanitary pad during menstruation. On the contrary, there are around 8 percent who cannot afford and similarly, about 4.2 percent of them said that the sanitary pads are not available.
- More than two-thirds (68.6%) of the respondents reported using water and soap for cleaning genital area during menstruation followed by only water (27.6%). Less than one percent have reported that they use towels.

8.3 WASH facilities available at schools to combat menstruation

- More than half (55.1%) of the adolescent school girls reported that they dispose the pad into pad disposal bins followed by around 8 percent of them who dispose into pit. About 14.2 percent of the respondents reported that they dispose off the pads in burning place.
- However, around 9 percent of them reported that there is no disposal facilities at their disposal at schools. About 43.2 percent of the respondents reported that there are no place for drying clothes.
- The study revealed that only about 64 percent of the respondents reported having adequate toilet/bathing facilities enough for addressing issues related to menstruation. The survey also revealed that close to half (45.9%) of the respondents agreed that they take half body bath during period due to lack of hot water.

ii) Key findings of adolescent nuns:

8.4 Awareness on menarche and its causes

- Only around 43 percent of the nuns reported correctly that the menstruation is a 'natural shedding of blood on a monthly basis.'
- About 7.1 percent of the nuns said that menstruation is a curse followed by 5.4 percent of them considering it as a disease.
- Only about 41.1 percent of them reported that it is the hormones that cause menstruation. A substantial share of percentage (37.5%) of nuns considered the cause as curse of God followed by about 7.1 percent who considered it as a disease.
- A large majority (82.2%) of the nuns reported that menstruation comes from the uterus. On

the contrary, there are about 13.3 percent who said 'don't know'.

- About 2.2 percent of the nuns reported that menstruation comes from the birth canal. Around 36 percent of them also reported that menarche begins at the age of 12 .
- Close to one-quarter (21.4%) of adolescent nuns reported that menarche ranges from age 9 to 11. On the other extreme, more than one-quarter (26.9%) of the respondents reported that menarche begins from the age of 14-18.

Sources of information on menarche

- Mothers are the first and main source of information for the nuns. More than half (54.9%) of the nuns received information on menstruation from their mothers. This is followed by about 35.3 percent who said teachers as their source of information on menarche. About 7.8 percent reported the source as their sisters followed by 2 percent of them who cited friends as their source.

8.6 Adolescent nuns' knowledge on menstrual hygiene

- More than half (53.6%) of the nuns are aware of the menstruation hygiene. Similarly, more than one-third (67.9%) of them perceived it as unhygienic. Checked against the nuns' knowhow on menstrual hygiene management, they reported the followings:
 - ✓ We need to clean our genital area with hot water;
 - ✓ We need to change our pad time to time;
 - ✓ We have to take bath regularly;
 - ✓ We have to wash our hands with soap after changing the pad;
 - ✓ We need to keep our body clean during period;
 - ✓ We need to change underwear regularly; and
 - ✓ Apply perfume to avoid bad smell.

Awareness on menstrual related infections

- Only around 36 percent of them are aware of the infections related to poor menstrual hygiene management.
- Close to half (42.9%) don't know at all about infections resulting from poor menstrual hygiene.
- More than half (53.6%) of the nuns are unaware about UTI. Only around two out of every ten (16.1%) are aware of the same.

Misconceptions and taboos

- One-quarter (25%) of the adolescent nuns don't know whether they must enter shrines/temples while having periods. However, about 21.5 percent of them agreed



that they must not enter the shrine/temples during period.

- About 33.2 percent on a similar note reported that women in menstruation are susceptible to possession by evil spirits.
- More than half (51.8%) of the adolescent nuns agreed that they should not sleep with a man during their periods since it will pass on the negative energy to man.
- And one-quarter (25%) of them unanimously believe that drinking tea will increase the menstrual flow.

8.9 Physical impacts of menstruation

- Close to half (48.2%) of the adolescent nuns agreed that repeated changing of clothes or pads might aid the flow of blood.
- More than half (53.6%) agreed that women are more tired than usual when they are menstruating.
- Close to half (44.6%) of the adolescent nuns reported that menstruation does not affect their usual activities.

9. Emotional impacts produced by menstruation

- More than two-thirds (69.8%) of the respondents agreed that they are more easily upset during pre-menstrual periods than at other times of the month.
- More than two-thirds (82.2%) of the respondents reported that they just have to tolerate menstruation.
- Close to half (44.7%) of them reported that men have real advantage of not having monthly period. On the other hand, more than two-thirds (76.8%) of the adolescent nuns reported that the only good thing with menstruation is that they come to know that they are not pregnant.
- Contrary to earlier assertions by the adolescent nuns, close to half (47.2%) of them reported that menstruation allows them to be more aware of their body followed by 67.8 percent of them who said that the recurrent monthly flow of menstruation is an external indications of women's general good health.
- Close to two-third (64.3%) of the nuns are aware of the pre-menstrual phenomena through physical symptoms like breast tenderness, backache, cramps or other physical signs.

10. Social impacts produced by menstruation

- Close to half (46.4%) of the adolescent nuns reported that women complaining of menstrual distress are just using that as an excuse.

- About 60.7 percent of the adolescent nuns have perceived menstruation as dirty and annoying.
- About 39.2 percent of them have wished that period would last for a few minutes in women.
- More than two-thirds (76.8%) of the adolescent nuns reported that it is important to buy sanitary pad without being seen. On the other hand, around 60 percent wished that they did not have to menstruate.
- Around 35.7 percent of the respondents reported that it is uncomfortable for them to talk about their periods. Close to half (42.8%) of the respondents reported that they miss classes or other activities at nunneries for fear that they would stain their clothes during period.
- About half (50%) of the adolescent nuns reported that they miss classes or other activities lest they would be ridiculed by others during period. About 41.1 percent of them missed classes or other forms of activities at nunnery for fear of pain during menstruation.

11. Sanitary facilities to counter menstruation hygiene management

- More than a quarter (26.8%) of the adolescent nuns reported that they missed classes or activities since there isn't privacy anywhere for girls to wash and change at nunnery.
- More than half (53.6%) of the respondents again reported that they missed classes or activities during menstruation since there is no place to dispose-off sanitary pad.
- Around close to one-quarter (21.5%) of the adolescent nuns reported that they missed classes or activities because of lack of sanitary pad. More than two-thirds (78.6%) of the respondents agreed that they missed classes or activities during period since the toilets are too dirty and discourages them to change.

Practices on menstrual hygiene by adolescent nuns

- Almost nine out of every ten (87.5%) use sanitary pad followed by around 11 percent who used napkin/cloth or towel.
- On an equal proportion, about 33.9% of them preferred tampon and sanitary pad. Around 14 percent of them preferred napkin/cloth or towel and about 3.6 percent preferred menstrual cup. Around 13 percent preferred reusable sanitary pad.
- More than two-thirds (71.4%) cited that they are affordable.
- Around one in every ten (10.7%) of them reported that those absorbent materials they preferred are easy to use.



- About 7.1 percent of the adolescent nuns reported that it is easily available and hence they preferred it.
- More than half (55.4%) of the adolescent nuns reported that they use water alone to clean the cloth pad followed by one-quarter (25%) of them who used both water and soap.
- Around 18 percent of the adolescent nuns hide and dry the cloth pad beneath other clothes.
- About two-thirds (66.1%) of the respondents reported that they dry it inside the house followed by one-quarter (25%) of them who dried them in the sun.
- Again, quite a sizable proportion of adolescent nuns have dried the cloth pad by hiding beneath another cloth (7.1%).
- More than two-thirds (71.4%) of them changed their pads only once a day. The remaining 28.6 percent of them changed twice a day.

WASH facilities at nunneries

- Close to half (46.4%) of them reported that they dispose pads into pad disposal bin followed by equal proportions (23.2%) of them who reported that they dispose it into toilet and drain.
- Around 2 percent of them reported that they disposed the absorbent material into routine waste and an equal proportion of them reported to have thrown in the open.
- Close to half (48.2%) of the respondents reported that they used papers as pad wraps followed by 35.7 percent of them who used plastic bag.
- About 16.1 percent of them have not used pad wrap at all.

Practice of Menstrual Hygiene at nunneries

- Eight out of every ten (80.4%) took bath on a daily basis during menstruation.
- Around 4 percent of the adolescent nuns took bath only on the first day. About 1.8 percent reported that they do not bath at all.
- More than two-thirds (67.9%) of the adolescent nuns clean their genital area during menstruation.
- Close to two-third (63.6%) cleaned the genital area with only water followed by about 18.2 percent who used water and soap.
- Around 13 percent used towel. About 67.9 percent of the adolescent nuns reported of having burning place for sanitary pad followed by pit (23.2%) and pad disposal bins (8.9%).
- About 85.7 percent of the adolescent nuns reported that they have place for drying clothes. Similarly, about 78.6 percent of them

reported that they have toilet/bathing facilities for addressing issues related to menstruation.

- More than half (50.8%) of the respondents reported that they take half body bath during period due to lack of hot water.
- About 33.3 percent of them reported that they can afford pads followed by equal proportions of them (20%) who reported that they cannot afford and at the same time not available to buy.

Empirical Findings

- On an average, if an adolescent girl grows older by one more year, there is a probability that her knowledge on menstrual hygiene would be enhanced by 18.8 percent, holding other factors constant. However, it has been also revealed that as the age keeps increasing, there is a probability that the knowhow on menstrual hygiene amongst adolescent girls would keep growing till the tangency (point of no change) point and then starts declining by 0.52 percent on an average, holding other factors constant. Similarly, if an adolescent girl lives in a boarding school, on an average, there is a probability of declining, by 25 percent, of not learning menstrual hygiene management holding other factors constant. The main factors like an adolescent girl's own education and her parental education have no effect at all in menstrual hygiene management. The regression result also revealed that, on an average, if an adolescent girl receives pocket money from their parents, there is a probability enhancing the menstrual hygiene management knowledge by 0.8 percent.



Regional situation of MHM

Nepal (n=150 adolescent girls)¹

- 6.0% of girls knew that menstruation is a physiologic process.
- 14.7% of girls think menstruation is caused by curse.
- 36.7% knew that it is caused by hormones.
- 94% of them use pads during the period but only 11.3% dispose it.
- Overall knowledge and practice were 40.6% and 12.9% respectively.
- 24.0% of girls were taught about menstruation by their guardian's friends and teachers.
- 98.0% of girls have a view that they are not taught properly on ???.
- Only 18.0% of girls clean their genitalia area.
- 72.0% does not clean genitalia area.
- Only 11.3% use soap and water to clean.
- 88.7% clean with water.

Bangladesh (n=2,332 adolescent school going girls)¹

- 6.5% were aware of menstruation
- 37.5% first received information from mother, 28.75% girls received from others like friend relatives and teachers.
- 86.25% believed menstruation as physiological process.
- 48.75% use sanitary pads, 6.25% use cloth pieces, 40% use both cloth and pad.
- 73.5% reuse cloth pieces and 57.5% dispose cloth and pad properly.
- 97.5% clean genital area with soap and water.

India (n=387 adolescent school going girls)³

- 36.95% are aware of menstruation.
- The sanitary pads were used by 49.35%
- 45.74% practice the used of old clothes.
- Satisfactory cleaning of the external genitalia was practiced by 33.85% of the girls

Qualitative Findings

A Focused Group Discussion (FGD) had been conducted in Changangkha Middle Secondary School, Thimphu. The discussions comprised of two phases: first with regard to the special students; and second regarding general adolescent school girls. The following were the key findings of the discussion:

- ✓ One of the teacher participants said that they advise concerned parents of special children to keep them at home and take care till the menstruation is over. This was augmented by

other participants that they do so since the school does not have capabilities to render help to special children;

- ✓ The teacher participants also asserted that there is no emotional and social impact for the special children since they are oblivious of the menstrual process;
- ✓ Upon moderated and probed on the prevailing knowledge on menstruation amongst those adolescent girls, participants unanimously asserted that they carry out practical teaching on menstruation with demonstration on use of pad, how to dump it into the pad disposal bin with the help of bamboo clip. Later the collected pad is disposed into the waste collector vehicle by one of the girls' captains on a rotational basis. However, practical teaching is dented since some of the participants have no hands-on experience regarding menstruation;
- ✓ The participants also revealed that girls who experience period at school and without sanitary pads are issued absorbent materials procured by the school through collection of Ngultrum 100 from each student annually as a health contribution and make them replace the material later;
- ✓ The participants also revealed that they have even extra uniforms (school dress) for the girls in case they stain theirs with unexpected or forgotten onset of the next cycle of menstruation;
- ✓ One of the participants suggested the Ministry of Education to come up with standard manual on menstruation to be taught uniformly across all the schools to the adolescent girls;
- ✓ Participants quantified the packets of menstrual pads required per each cycle. On an average, three packets containing eight pieces of menstrual pads are usually used by the girls, which amount to Ngultrum 105 per each cycle;
- ✓ All the participants have unanimously agreed that they don't have enough WASH facilities to manage menstruation in their schools;
- ✓ The discussion also revealed that the girls to toilet ratio stands at 66:1 and it has been discovered that the special children do not have separate toilet;
- ✓ Participants asserted that there is no social taboo related to menstruation health and hygiene;
- ✓ The participants anticipated from this survey to get good toilet in schools with constant water supply, facilities for managing MHM and etc; and
- ✓ The participants agreed together to support the installation of an incinerator to burn the pads.



CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter deals with the conclusion drawn out of the findings of this survey and presents the list of recommendation and way forwards for future research. The Knowledge, Attitude and Practices (KAP) of the adolescent schoolgirls and nuns had been quite glaring that they need various interventions from both the Ministry of Education and parents and as well society at large. To augment the quantitative findings, a Focused Group Discussion (FGD) amongst teachers especially who are taking care of children with special needs were conducted.

8.1 Conclusion

The phenomenal increased in the budget support by the government to the education sector has made us witness tremendous improvement in students' wellbeing both in terms of educational resources and school facilities over the past decade, according to the annual education statistics. This by and large had contributed to the tremendous growth of human capital. However, there is more to well-being and development of students, especially adolescent student girls. This study also included adolescent nuns in the nunneries. To this effect, this study excavated fact that despite the overall improvements realized by the Ministry of Education, there still lacks adequate WASH facilities in the schools for managing menstrual health and hygiene in many schools and nunneries.

Also, besides catering various forms of sexuality education as part of Life Skills Education to students, there still remains a huge vacuum in terms of knowhow on menstrual health and hygiene and its management both amongst adolescent schoolgirls and nuns. This study has also revealed a daunting fact, which is closely related to poverty of the students' parents. The yearly pocket money received by the individual student is so minimal to afford all those sanitary facilities. This study has as well revealed that most of the school-going girls and nuns' parents have no education and their livelihoods depend on subsistence farming.

On the attitude towards menstruation, the study revealed that menstruation is still a taboo amongst adolescent school-going girls and nuns. This survey has also found the negative health, social and emotional effects experienced by adolescent schoolgirls and nuns.

8.2 Recommendations & way forwards

The study recommends the following:

- ✓ Every school and nunnery need to enhance their WASH facilities;
- ✓ Every school and nunnery need to enhance their sanitary facilities viz. sanitary pad disposal bin, facility to dry improvised sanitary pad, renewable materials to wrap disposable pads and etc;
- ✓ Enhance sexuality education programs in every school and nunneries;
- ✓ Some portion of School Development Fund (SDF) to sponsor buying sanitary pads and distribute to adolescent school girls on a monthly basis;
- ✓ Enhance parenting education on Life Skills and Sexuality Education;
- ✓ Student boys too need to be educated through Life Skills Education on the empathy they need to show to girls regarding menstrual health and hygiene and social, emotional and physiological impacts related to the same faced by girls;
- ✓ Education Ministry to bring the adolescent nuns into mainstream in terms of sexuality education and any other forms of education imparted to the mainstream adolescent girls for their overall development;
- ✓ The School Health and Nutrition Division needs to spearhead the development of spot-check and Observation checklist to account the existing WASH facilities for each school (inclusive of nunneries) and compute ratio of users to WASH facilities;
- ✓ Ministry of Education to closely liaise with Ministry of Health on their public health development facilities and endeavor to realize WASH facilities in schools and nunneries;
- ✓ Schools need to enhance the capacity of MHM service providers in their schools ;
- ✓ Ministry of Education to establish disable-friendly WASH facilities in each school and duplicate this process in nunneries as well;
- ✓ Ministry of Education to support the installation of incinerator to burn sanitary pads in each school;
- ✓ School Health and Nutrition Division in collaboration with UNICEF to enhance the MHM programs in schools and nunneries; and
- ✓ Ministry of Education to liaise with the Ministry of Health to reach out MHM programs to each household of Bhutan apart from schools and nunneries.



8.3 Future Research

The future studies like Rapid Assessment of WASH Facilities in schools, Process Impact of WASH and LSE related to Menstrual Hygiene Management needs to be carried out. A household-based MHM survey needs to be carried out across all 20 districts of Bhutan.



REFERENCES

1. Sommer M, Sahin M. Overcoming the taboo: advancing the global agenda for menstrual hygiene management for schoolgirls. Am J Public Health 2013;103:1556–9.
2. <http://www.wsup.com/2014/06/05/menstrual-hygiene-day-lets-start-the-conversation-in-bangladesh/>
3. http://jcdr.net/article_fulltext.asp?issn=0973-709x&year=2011&month=October&volume=5&issue=5&page=1027-1033&id=1522
4. <https://www.google.com/search?q=menstrual+hygiene&ie=utf-8&oe=utf-8&client=firefox-b#q=Nepal+menstrual+hygiene+management+study>



Annexure I: Questionnaires

KAP Survey on Menstrual Hygiene Management in Schools of Bhutan 2016

Dear Respondents,

The School Health and Nutrition Division of Ministry of Education would like to request for your kind cooperation to smoothly execute this survey assigned to M/S Bhutan A2Z Statistics, Economics and Environmental Consultancy to collect information from you to assess the level of knowledge, attitude and practices related to menstrual hygienic management amongst the girls in your school.

Chief Program Officer
School Health and Nutrition Division
Ministry of Education: Thimphu.

Questionnaire Form: Circle the responses or write the corresponding code

A: GEOGRAPHICAL IDENTIFICATION:

Q1. Dzongkhag:.....

Q2. Name of the school:

Q3. Level of the school:

1. PS

2. LSS

3. MSS

4. HSS

5. Central School (specify Level).....

Q4. Area: 1. Rural

2. Urban

Q4.1. Type of school:

1. Govt.

2. Private

Q5. Status of school:

1. Boarding

2. Day school

3. Both

Q10. Religion:

1. Buddhist

2. Christian

3. Hindu

4. Others (Specify):.....

Q11. Whom do you live with back at home?

1. With mother and father

2. With mother only

3. With father only

4. With stepmother and father

5. With relatives

6. Others (Specify):.....

Q12. What is your parents'/Guardian Highest Educational level?:

Father Mother Guardine

00. No education

Classes 1-12

13. Diploma

14. College & above

15. Monastic/shedra

16. NFE



Q6. Total female teachers:

B. SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS:

Q7. Age (in completed years):

Q8. Grade:

Q9. Mother Tongue

1. Ngalo

2. Sharchop

3. Lhotsam

4. Khengpa

5. Others (Specify):

C. KNOWLEDGE

Q16. What is menstruation?

1. Natural shedding of blood on monthly basis.

2. Disease

3. Curse

4. Others (specify):

5. Don't know

Q17. What is the cause of menstruation?

1. Hormones

2. Curse of God

3. Caused by disease

4. Others (Specify):

5. Don't know

Q18. From which organ does menstrual blood come from?

1. Uterus

2. Birth canal

3. Bladder

4. Abdomen

5. Others (specify):

6. Don't know

Q19. At what age do you think most girls usually get their first period?

1..... (years)

2. Don't know

Q20. What is the duration of normal menstruation for normal person?

1.....(days)

2. Don't know

Q27. There are four phases of menstrual cycle namely menstrual phase, Proliferative/ follicular phase, ovulatory phase and luteal phase. Of which phase the chances of getting pregnancy is high?

1. Menstrual phase (day 1-5)

2. Follicular/proliferative phase (day 6-13)

3. Ovulatory phase (day 14)

4. Luteal phase (day 15-28)

5. Don't know

Q13. Occupation of your parents:

Father Mother Guardine

1. Farmer

2. Govt. employee

3. Corp. employee

4. Pvt. Employee

5. Business/trade

6. Others (Specify):

Q14. Do you get pocket money regularly from your parents?

1. Yes

2. No (>> Q16)

Q15. Yearly pocket money received (Nu.):

Q21. What is the interval between two menstrual cycles?

1.....(days)

2. Don't know

Q22. Did anyone tell you about menstruation before your onset of menstruation?

1. Yes 2. No

Q23. From whom you got information regarding menstruation?

1. Mother

2. Teacher

3. Friends

4. Books

5. Media (TV, Radio etc)

6. Others (Specify):

Q24. Do you know about menstrual hygiene?

1. Yes

2.No

Q25. If 'Yes' in Q24, what do you know about menstrual hygiene?

Q26.1. Do you think menstrual blood is unhygienic?

1. Yes

2.No

Q26.2 Are you aware of the following infection due to poor menstrual

Hygiene: [1=Yes, 2=No, 3=Don't know]

1.Fungal Infection

2. Reproductive Track Infection (RTI)

3. Urinary Track Infection (UTI)

4.Susceptible to infertility



D. ATTITUDE

Sl#	Item	Strongly agree (1)	Agree (2)	Don't Know (3)	Disagree (4)	Strongly disagree (5)
28	Women must not enter shrines/temples while having periods					
29	Women in menstruation are susceptible to get possessed by evil spirits					
30	Women are more tired than usual when they are menstruating					
31	Menstruation does not affect my usual activities					
32	I am more easily upset during pre-menstrual and menstrual periods than at other times of the month					
33	Menstruation is something that I just have to put up (tolerate) with					
34	Men have real advantage of not having monthly period					
35	The only thing good with menstruation is that I come to know that am not pregnant					
36	Menstruation allows women to be more aware of their body					
37	The recurrent monthly flow of menstruation is an extranal indication of women's general good health					
38	I can tell my period is approaching because of the breast tenderness, backache, cramps or other physical signs					
39	A woman who attributes her irritability to her approaching menstrual period is neurotic					
40	I barely notice the minor physiological effect outof my menstrual periods					
41	Women complaining of menstrual distress are just using that as an excuse					
42	It is important to talk about menstrual period with men					
43	It is important to discuss the topic of period at school with boys and girls					
44	The period is dirty and annoying					
Sl#	Item	Strongly agree (1)	Agree (2)	Don't Know (3)	Disagree (4)	Strongly disagree (5)
45	We women wish that the period would last for a few minutes					
46	It is important to buy sanitary pad without being seen					
47	Women wish that we do not have our period					
48	It is uncomfortable for us women to talk about our periods					
49	I miss school during my period because am afraid of staining my clothes					
50	I miss school during my period because am afraid of others making fun of me					
51	I miss school during period because it can cause pain					
52	I miss school during my period can make me feel uncomfortable or tired					
53	I miss school during my period because there isn't anywhere for girls to wash and change at school					
54	I miss school during my period because there inowhere to dispose off sanitary pad					
55	I miss school during my period because I don't have sanitary pad					
Q56 Are there any other reasons your period makes you miss school?						



E: PRACTICES

Q57. What is the **main** absorbent material do you use during period/menstruation?

1. Sanitary pad
2. Napkin/cloth or towel
3. Reusable sanitary pad
4. Tampon
5. Menstrual cup
6. Cotton
7. Tissue paper
8. Others (Specify):
9. None of the above

Q57.1 Which one of the above do you preferred most?
(Enter Corresponding SL#)

Q57.2 Why do you prefer?

1. Easiy available
2. Affordable
3. Can't afford the good quality ones
4. Easy to use
5. Can be used longer
6. others(specity):

Q58. If you are using cloth as pad, how do you clean it?

1. Water
2. Water and soap
3. Others (Specify):

Q65. If 'No' in Q64, cite at least three reasons:

Q59. If you are using cloth, how do you dry the cloth?

1. Sunlight
2. Inside the house
3. Others (Specify):

Q66. If your menstrual problem interferes with attendance, how often does it so?

1. One day every cycle
2. Two days every cycle
3. Three days every cycle
4. Four days every cycle
5. Others (Specify):

Q60. How many times do you change cloth or pad in a day?

1. Once
2. Two and more

Q67. What remedies do you take during menstruation?

1. Medication
2. Yoga/Meditation
3. Prayers
4. Thoroughly involve in activities
5. Take rest
6. Others (Specify):

Q61. Where do you dispose your pads?

1. Pad disposal bin
2. Drain
3. Toilet
4. Open field
5. Routine waste
6. Others (Specify):

Q62. Types of pad wraps used for disposing it:

1. Papers
2. Plastic bag
3. No wrap
4. Others (Specify):

Q68. How often do you bath during period?

1. Daily
2. Only on first day
3. Only on second day
4. Do not bath any time
5. Others (Specify):

Q63. Number of times you change your underwear during menstruation in a day:

Q69. Do you clean genital area during menstruation?

1. Yes
2. No (> Q70)

Q64. Do you come to school during menstruation?

1. Yes
2. No

Q70. If 'Yes' in Q70, by what?

1. Water and soap
2. Only with water
4. Towels
5. Others (Specify):

Q73.1. I have a half body bath during my period due to lack of hot water facilities at school?

1. Strongly agree
2. Agree
3. Don't know
4. Disagree
5. Strong disagree

Q71. Which one of the following sanitary pad disposal facilities does your school have?

1. Burning place
2. Pit
3. Pad disposal bins
4. Others (Specify):

Q74. Do you afford to buy sanitary pad or any other substitutes to be used as sanitary pad during menstruation?

1. Can afford
2. Cannot afford
3. Not available to buy
4. Don't know

Q72. Does your school have place for drying clothes?

1. yes
2. No

Q75. Any other comments:

Q73. Does your school have toilet/bathing facilities enough for addressing issues related to menstruation?

1. Yes
2. No

Thank you for your cooperation and time!



Questionnaire Form: Circle the responses or write the corresponding code

A: GEOGRAPHICAL IDENTIFICATION:

Q1. Dzongkhag:.....

Q2. Name of the Nunnary:

Q3. Region:

1. Eastern

2. Central

3. Western

B. SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS:

Q4. Age (in completed years):

Q5. Grade:

Q6. Mother Tongue

1. Ngalo

2. Sharchop

3. Lhotsam

4. Khengpa

5. Others (Specify):

Q7. Highest Education level completed, if any

[Mention classes or Degree]

Q8. What is your parents'/Guardian Highest Educational level?

00. No education

Classes 1-12

13. Diploma

14. College & above

15. Monastic/shedra

16. NFE

Q9. Occupation of your parents:

1. Farmer

2. Govt. employee

3. Corp. employee

4. Pvt. Employee

5. Business/trade

6. Others (Specify):.....

Father Mother

Guardine

Q10. Do you get pocket money regularly from your parents?

1. Yes

2. No (> Q11)

Q11. Yearly pocket money received (Nu.):.....

C. KNOWLEDGE

Q12. What is menstruation?

1. Natural shedding of blood on monthly basis.

2. Disease

3. Curse

4. Others (specify):.....

5. Don't know

Q13. What is the cause of menstruation?

1. Hormones

2. Curse of God

3. Caused by disease

4. Others (Specify):

5. Don't know

Q14. From which organ does menstrual blood come from?

1. Uterus

2. Birth canal

3. Bladder

4. Abdomen

5. Others (specify):.....

6. Don't know

Q20. Do you know about menstrual hygiene?

1. Yes

2.No

Q21. If 'Yes' in Q20, what do you know about menstrual hygiene?

Q15. At what age do you think most girls usually get their first period?

1..... (years)

2. Don't know

Q21.1. Do you think menstrual blood is unhygienic?

1. Yes

2.No

Q216. What is the duration of normal menstruation for normal person?

1.....(days)

2. Don't know

Q21.2 Are you aware of the following infection due to poor menstrual Hygiene: [1=Yes, 2=No, 3=Don't know]

1.Fungal Infection

2. Reproductive Track Infection (RTI)

3. Urinary Track Infection (UTI)

4.Susceptible to infertility

Q17. What is the interval between two menstrual cycles?

1.....(days)

2. Don't know

Q22. There are four phase of menstrual cycle nsmely menstrual phase, Proliferative/follicular phase, ovuluyary phase and leutral phaes. Of which phase the chances of getting pregnancy is high?

1. Menstrual phase (day 1-5)

2. Follicular/proliferative phase (day 6-13)

3. Ovulatory phase (day 14)

4. Leutral phase (day 15-28)

5. Don't know

Q18. Did anyone tell you about menstruation before your onset of menstruation? 1. Yes 2. No

Q19. From whom you got information regarding menstruation?

1. Mother

2. Teacher

3. Friends

4. Books

5. Media (TV, Radio etc)

6. Others (Specify):.....



D. ATTITUDE

Sl#	Item	Strongly agree (1)	Agree (2)	Don't Know (3)	Disagree (4)	Strongly disagree (5)
23	Women must not enter shrines/temples while having periods					
24	Women in menstruation are susceptible to get possessed by evil spirits					
25	Sleeping with a man during your periods will pass on the "drip" to man					
26	Drinking tea will increase the blood flow					
27	Changing often/ staying clean will increase the blood flow					
28	Women are more tired than usual when they are menstruating					
29	Menstruation does not affect my usual activities					
30	I am more easily upset during pre-menstrual and menstrual periods than at other times of the month					
31	Menstruation is something that I just have to put up (tolerate) with					
32	Men have real advantage of not having monthly period					
33	The only thing good with menstruation is that I come to know that am not pregnant					
34	Menstruation allows women to be more aware of their body					
35	The recurrent monthly flow of menstruation is an extranal indication of women's general good health					
36	I can tell my period is approaching because of the breast tenderness, backache, cramps or other physical signs					
37	A woman who attributes her irritability to her approaching menstrual period is neurotic					
38	I barely notice the minor physiological effect outof my menstrual periods					
39	Women complaining of menstrual distress are just using that as an excuse					
40	The period is dirty and annoying					
41	We women wish that the period would last for a few minutes					
42	It is important to buy sanitary pad without being seen					
43	Women wish that we do not have our period					
44	It is uncomfortable for us women to talk about our periods					
45	I miss classes/activities during my period because am afraid of staining my clothes					
Sl#	Item	Strongly agree (1)	Agree (2)	Don't Know (3)	Disagree (4)	Strongly disagree (5)
46	I miss classes/activities during my period because am afraid of others making fun of me					
47	I miss classses/activities during period because it can cause pain					
45	I miss classes/activities during my period can make me feel uncomfortable or tired					
46	I miss classes/activities during my period because there isn't privacy anywhere for girls to wash and change at school					
47	I miss classes/activities during my period because there inowhere to dispose off sanitary pad					
48	I missclasses/activities during my period because I don't have sanitary pad					
49	I miss classes during my period since toilets are too dirty and don't feel like to change					
Q49 Are there any other reasons your period makes you miss classes or activities of nunnary?						



E: PRACTICES

Q50. What is the **main** absorbent material do you use during period/menstruation?

1. Sanitary pad
2. Napkin/cloth or towel
3. Reusable sanitary pad
4. Tampon
5. Menstrual cup
6. Cotton
7. Tissue paper
8. Others (Specify):
9. None of the above

Q51. If you are using cloth as pad, how do you clean it?

1. Water
2. Water and soap
3. Others (Specify):

Q52. If you are using cloth, how do you dry the cloth?

1. Sunlight
2. Inside the house
3. Hide and dry it beneath other clothes
4. Others (Specify):

Q53. How many times do you change cloth or pad in a day?

1. Once
2. Two and more

Q54. Where do you dispose your pads?

1. Pad disposal bin
2. Drain
3. Toilet
4. Open field
5. Routine waste
6. Others (Specify):

Q55. Types of pad wraps used for disposing it:

1. Papers
2. Plastic bag
3. No wrap
4. Others (Specify):

Q56. Number of times you change your underwear during menstruation in a day:

Q58. Do you come to school during menstruation?

1. Yes
2. No

Q62. If 'Yes' in Q70, by what?

1. Water and soap
2. Only with water
4. Towels
5. Others (Specify):

Q.63 Which one of the following sanitary pad disposal facilities does your nunnery have?

1. Burning place
2. Pit
3. Pad disposal bins
4. Others (Specify):

Q64. Does your nunnery have place for drying clothes?

1. yes
2. No

Q65. Does your nunnery have toilet/ bathing facilities enough for addressing issues related to menstruation?

1. yes
2. No

Q50.1 Which one of the above do you preferred most?

[Enter corresponding Sl#]

Q50.2 Why do you prefer?

1. Easiy available
2. Affordable
3. Can't afford the good quality ones
4. Easy to use
5. Can be used longer
6. others(specity)

Q57. If 'No' in Q8, cite at least three reasons:

Q58. If your menstrual problem interferes with attendance, how often does it so?

1. One day every cycle
2. Two days every cycle
3. Three days every cycle
4. Four days every cycle
5. Others (Specify):

Q59. What remedies do you take duriong menstruation?

1. Medication
2. Yoga/Meditation
3. Prayers
4. Thoroughly involve in activities
5. Take rest
6. Others (Specify)

Q60. How often do you bath during period?

1. Daily
2. Only on first day
3. Only on second day
4. Do not bath any time
5. Half-body bath everyday
6. Others (Specify):

Q61 Do you clean genital area during menstruation?

1. Yes
2. No (> Q64)

Q66. Do you afforf to buy sanitary pad or any other substitutes to be used as sanitary pad during menstruation?

1. Can afford
2. Cannot afford
3. Not available to buy
4. Don't know

Q67. I have a half body bath during my period due to lack of hot water facilities at nunneries?

1. Strongly agree
2. Agree
3. Don't know
4. Disagree
5. Strongly disagree

Q68. Any other comments:



Annexure II: REBH Approval Letter



རྒྱལ་ཤར་འབྲུག་གཞི་རྒྱུ
མཉེན་སྲུང་ལྟུང་
ཁོང་གི་ རྒྱལ་ཁོང་ལྟུང་ རྒྱལ་ཁོང་ལྟུང་
མཉེན་སྲུང་
མཉེན་སྲུང་

ROYAL GOVERNMENT OF BHUTAN
MINISTRY OF HEALTH
RESEARCH ETHICS BOARD OF HEALTH
THIMPHU : BHUTAN
P.O. BOX : 726



REBH/Approval/2017/026

29th March, 2017

REBH Approval Letter

PI: Mr. Karma Lhendup Institute: M/S Bhutan A2Z Statistics, Economics and Environmental Consultancy	Study Title: Need Assessment of Menstrual Hygiene Management: Adolescent girls in schools and nunneries of Bhutan, 2017
Co-PI: -	
Mode of Review: ✓ Full board review for version 1 (meeting no.1/2017-32 nd) Expedited review for version 2	
Decision: Approved (Note: Abide by the conditions of approval)	
Conditions for Approval 1. This approval is granted for the scientific and ethical soundness of the study. The PI shall be responsible to seek all other clearances/approvals required by law/policy including permission from the study sites before conducting the study. 2. Report serious adverse events to REBH within 10 working days after the incident and unexpected events should be included in the continuing review report or the final report. 3. Any changes to the proposal or to the attachments (informed consent and research tools such as forms) should be approved by REBH before implementation. 4. Final report of the study should be submitted to REBH at the end of the study for protocol file closure. 5. This approval is valid through 28/03/2018. If the study has to continue beyond the approved period the PI has to apply for the continuing review two months before the validity of the approval expires.	

(Dr. Tashi Tobgay)
Chairperson

For further information please contact: REBH Member Secretary,
msqurung@health.gov.bt/tashidema@health.gov.bt Tel: +975-2-322602 ext 333

PABX: + 975-2-322602, 322351, 328091, 328092, 328093 (Extension 333) Fax: 324649

X



United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
Bhutan Country Office, UN House
Peling Lam, Kawajangsa
Thimphu, Bhutan
Tel: +975 2 322424
www.unicefbhutan.org.bt

Designed and Printed by Bhutan Printing Solutions (www.prints.bt)