

## **Menstrual Hygiene Practices among Secondary School Girls in Owerri Municipal Council of Imo State, Nigeria**

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### **Abstract**

Poor menstrual hygiene practices remain a leading cause of infection in both girls and women. The study examined menstrual hygiene practices among secondary school girls in Owerri Municipal Council of Imo State, Nigeria. Three research questions and two null hypotheses guided the study. The study adopted descriptive survey research design. The population for the study consisted of 9,696 secondary school girls from the five government owned secondary schools attended by girls. The sample size was 420 secondary school girls drawn using two stage sampling procedure. A validated questionnaire titled “Menstrual Hygiene Practices Questionnaire (MHPQ) was used as instrument for data collection. Descriptive statistics of frequency, percentage and chi-square were used to answer and analyze the research questions and hypotheses respectively. Results showed that nearly half (45.5%) of secondary school girls indicated that they practice menstrual hygiene. Nearly half of secondary school girls in all age category: 10-14years (46.8%), 15-19years (45%) and 19years and above (45%) indicated that they practice menstrual hygiene with those 10-14years practicing more than their counterparts in other age brackets; nearly half of girls from mothers with different level of education; non-formal education (45%), primary education (46%), secondary education (45%) and tertiary education (45%) indicated that they practice menstrual hygiene with those whose mothers have non-formal education practicing more than their counterparts. Furthermore, the result revealed that there were significant differences in menstrual hygiene practices among secondary school girls in Owerri Municipal Council based on age and mothers’ level of education. The study recommended among others that parents and teachers should ensure that adolescent girls are well educated on the importance of good menstrual hygiene practices both in schools and at home.

**Keywords:** Menstruation, Menstrual hygiene, practices, Secondary school girls

### **Introduction**

Menstrual hygiene is vital to health, well-being, dignity and productivity of women and girls. Good menstrual hygiene enhances the confidentiality of females in many ways. Moreso, poor menstrual hygiene practices are major cause of infection in girls which may proceed later in life, thus resulting to infertility which may bring about broken homes. Prajapati, Shah, and Kedia (2015); Das et al. (2015) reported that poor menstrual hygiene practices increase a woman’s susceptibility to reproductive health related problems. It also increases vulnerability to

reproductive tract infections. Dasgupta and Sarkar (2008) reported that millions of women are sufferers of reproductive tract infections and its complications which often is transmitted to the offspring of that pregnancy woman.

Menstruation is a normal physiological process of females during their reproductive age. It is a natural phenomenon that occurs from puberty throughout the reproductive life of every female. Gharoro (2013) defined menstruation as the cyclical shedding of the inner lining of the uterus, the endometrium, under the control of hormones of the hypothalamo-pituitary axis. It is a natural process that occurs monthly on healthy adolescent girls and premenopausal adult women (Ilo, Nwimo, & Onwunaka, 2016). Menstruation is an important part of physiology and life experiences of women. Contextually, menstruation refers to the period of vaginal bleeding associated with shedding of uterine mucosa. The onset of menstruation takes place during adolescent period in which dominant physiological and emotional changes take place (Ayele & Berhan, 2013).

The period between the first day of menstrual period to the onset of the next menstrual period (Menstrual cycle) consists of 28 days, representing four biological weeks, which vary from one woman to another (Samuel, 2010). The first menstrual period (menarch) which occurs between 11 and 15 years, signals reproductive maturity. Menarch is one of the key events that occurs in the life of a girl because it marks the beginning of her reproductive life (Akinwaare, Akindele, & Oluwatasin, 2016). Menstruation is an issue which every woman must content with in life because it affects their reproductive health and productivity to a large extent. Ilo et al. (2016) pointed out that menstruation is linked with several misconceptions and practices, which sometimes result to adverse health outcomes. Good menstrual hygiene practices are essential during menstrual period.

Menstrual hygiene practice refers to the process of maintaining a high level of personal hygiene during menstruation. It includes the ways women keep their bodies clean and healthy during menstruation as well as how they acquire, use and dispose blood absorbing materials. Good menstrual hygienic practices such as use of sanitary pads and adequate washing of the genital areas are essential during menstruation (Halle, Zeleke, Olana, & Garoma, 2017). Furthermore, Akinwaare, Akindele, and Oluwatosin (2016) submitted that for women and girls to live healthy, productive and dignified lives, it is essential that they manage menstrual hygiene bleeding effectively. This requires access to appropriate water, sanitation and hygiene practices

including clean water for washing clothes used to absorb menstrual blood and having a place to dry them, having somewhere private to change clothes or disposal sanitary pads, facilities to dispose used cloths and pads, and having access to information to understand the menstrual cycle as well as how to manage menstruation hygienically (World Health Organization [WHO], 2009).

Menstrual hygiene practice is likely to be affected by many factors including female's knowledge about menstruation and access to places where girls can manage menstruation-related washing in privacy and comfort. These factors according to Adinma and Adinma (2008); and Aniebue, Aniebue, and Nwankwo (2009) are influenced by having access to water, hygiene and sanitation facilities at school or household. Females of reproductive age need to have access to clear and soft absorbent sanitary products which in the long run protect their health from various infections. Inadequate water and sanitation facilities make management of menstruation very difficult, and poor sanitary protection materials can result in blood stained clothes causing stress and embarrassment (Vidiya & Rekha, 2016). Poor menstrual hygiene practices can cause reproductive and genitor-urinary tract infections, cervical cancer, school absenteeism or drop-out, poor academic performance, lower self-esteem, and poor quality of life (Sumpter & Torondel, 2012; Tegenge & Sisay, 2014). Also, girls have often experienced feelings of fear, confusion and shame during menstruation period as a result of smell, leakage, staining of clothes and dropping of sanitary materials during their class schedules (Fakhin, Hamzehgardeshi, Golchin, & Komili, 2012). These can have negative impacts on their concentration, class participation and confidence of their status. Issues relating to the practical management of menstrual hygiene are very important because it has health implications in terms of vulnerability to infections. The absorbent materials and their mode of usage contribute to the health status of users. It is important to maintain high standards of hygiene during menstruation as any bacteria on the hand before changing pads can be transferred into the vagina and cause infection. The aforementioned problems can only be averted through good menstrual hygiene practices.

Practice refers to a way of doing something regularly, Wanda (2008) described practice as an act of rehearsing behaviour over and over or engaging in activity again and again for the purpose of improving or mastering it, as in the phrase "practice makes perfect. It means ones action towards something or somebody in the environment. Hornby (2015) defined practice as habitually carrying out an action using the same method. The author maintained further that it is a way of doing something that is usual or expected in a particular organization or situation.

Practice is the action taken by an individual to execute an idea. It is the actual performing, carrying out, exercising, applying or doing of something as opposed to the theory or idea. Contextually, practice refers to the way secondary school girls in Owerri Municipal Council carry out their menstrual hygiene. Secondary school girls are young female adolescents between the ages 11 -18years. They are characterized by rapid change in physical growth, development of secondary sexual characteristics and reproductive capacity, psychology development of autonomy, independent identity and value systems etc. These groups of people are vulnerable to reproductive health infections These among others necessitated the need to examine their menstrual hygiene practices which if not properly done can expose them to reproductive health problems. This therefore necessitated the study.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study was to examine menstrual hygiene practices among secondary school girls in Owerri Municipal Council of Imo State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study determined:

1. menstrual hygiene practices among secondary school girls in Owerri Municipal Council.
2. menstrual hygiene practices among secondary school girls in Owerri Municipal Council based on age.
3. menstrual hygiene practices among secondary school students in Owerri Municipal Council based on mother's level of education.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions were posed to guide the study:

1. What are menstrual hygiene practices among secondary school girls in Owerri Municipal Council?
2. What are menstrual hygiene practices among secondary school girls based on age?
3. What are menstrual hygiene practices among secondary school students based on mother's level of education?

### **Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses were postulated and tested at .05 level of significance.

1. There is no significant difference in menstrual hygiene practices among secondary school girls in Owerri Municipal Council based on age.

2. There is no significant difference in menstrual hygiene practices among secondary school girls in Owerri Municipal Council based on mother's level of education.

## **Methods**

**Research Design:** The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. Descriptive survey research design aims at collecting data and describing in systematic manner the characteristics of a population.

**Area of the Study:** The study was conducted in Owerri Municipal Council. There are five government owned secondary schools in Owerri Municipal Council that are attended by girls namely City College, Owerri, Ikenegbu Girls Secondary School Ikenegbu, Comprehensive Development Secondary Schools, Douglas, Imo Girls Secondary School, Okigwe Road and Urban Development Secondary School. The researchers observed that most secondary school girls in the council do not know what it means to practice good menstrual hygiene. Some of them use tissue as menstrual pad, they even go as far as littering the premises with used pads. Thus, the researchers deemed the area appropriate for the study.

**Population for the Study:** The population for the study comprised girls in all the government owned secondary schools in Owerri Municipal Council. There are five government owned secondary schools in the council that are attended by girls. The estimated population of girls attending government secondary schools in the five communities is 9,896 (Secondary Education Management Board, 2020).

**Sample for the Study:** The sample for the study consisted of 420 girls attending the five government owned secondary schools in Owerri Municipal Council that girls attend. The sample was selected by the aid of Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) standardized table for sample size, confidence levels and confidence intervals for random sampling. A two stage sampling procedure was used to draw the sample for the study. In the first stage, three (3) out of the five (5) schools were drawn using purposive sampling technique. This was done to help us draw schools where girls are in majority especially girls from senior classes. In the second stage, simple random sampling techniques of balloting without replacement was used to select 140 girls in the senior classes from each of the three (3) selected secondary schools. This gave a total of 420 secondary school girls selected for the sample.

**Instrument for Data Collection:** Researchers' designed Menstrual Hygiene Practices Questionnaire (MHPQ) was used for data collection. The MHPQ consisted of two sections; A and B. Section A consisted of two (2) items on the respondent's demographic variables of age and mother's level of education. Section B consisted of 16 items on menstrual hygiene practices. Three (3) experts from the Department of Health Education, Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education, Owerri validated the instrument. The experts' suggestions were used in producing the final draft of the questionnaire. A split half method using Cronbach Alpha Correlation Coefficients was used to analyze the data generated. A reliability index of 0.75 was obtained, and adjudged reliable for the study. In the questionnaire, respondents were asked to respond to each item in terms of Yes and No. Practice of menstrual hygiene was interpreted thus 0 – 39% = Just the number, 40 -49= Nearly half, 50% = half, 51 -69% = More than half, 70% = two third, 71 – 79 = more than two third and 80 – 100% = majority.

## Results

**Table 1: Menstrual Hygiene Practices among Secondary Girls (n = 400)**

S/n	Menstrual Hygiene Practices	Yes f %	No f (%)
1.	I use sanitary pads to absorb menstrual flow	343(95.3%)	17(4.7)
2.	I use tissue paper to absorb blood during menstruation	47(13.1)	313(86.9)
3.	I use towel to absorb menstrual flow	32(8.9)	328(91.1)
4.	I use napkin to absorb blood during menstruation	31(8.6)	329(91.4)
5.	I use piece of cloths to manage menstrual flow.	52(14.4)	308(85.6)
6.	I dispose soiled pads in a dustbin	181(50.3)	179(49.7)
7.	I dispose soiled pads by burying them	85(23.6)	275(76.4)
8.	I dispose soiled pads in a pit latrine	128(35.6)	232(64.4)
9.	I dispose soiled pads in any available corner	24(6.7)	336(93.3)
10.	I flush used pads in the water closet	91(25.3)	269(74.7)
11.	I take my bath once a day during menstruation	31(8.6)	329(94.4)
12.	I take my bath 2 – 3 times a day during menstruation.	321(89.2)	39(10.8)
13.	I wash my hands before and after changing my pads.	332(92.2)	28(7.8)
14.	I change soiled pads 3 -4 times a day	284(78.9)	76(21.1)
15.	I wash used cloths with clean water and re-use.	299(83.1)	61(16.9)
16.	I wash my under wears regularly during menstruation	338(93.9)	22(6.1)
<b>Overall Percentage</b>		<b>45.5%</b>	<b>54.5%</b>

Results in Table 1 showed that overall, nearly half (45.5%) of secondary school girls indicated that they practice menstrual hygiene while more than half (54.5%) indicated that they do not practice menstrual hygiene. The table also showed that majority: (95.3%, 89.2%, 92.2%, 83.1% and 93.9%) indicated that they use sanitary pads to absorb menstrual flow, take their bath 2 -3 times daily during menstruation, wash their hands before and after changing their pads, wash used cloths with clean water and re-use and wash their underwear's regularly during menstruation respectively.

The table further showed that more than half (78.9%) of the girls indicated that they change soiled pads 3 -4 times a day. The table finally showed that half (50.3%) of the girls indicated that they dispose soiled pads in a dustbin.

**Table 2: Menstrual Hygiene Practices among Secondary School Girls Based on Age (n = 400)**

S/n	Menstrual Hygiene Practices	(n = 86)	(n = 248)	(n =26)
		10 – 14yrs	15 -19yrs	19yrs & above
		f %	f (%)	f (%)
1.	I use sanitary pads to absorb menstrual flow	84(97.7)	236(95.2)	23(88.5)
2.	I use tissue paper to absorb blood during menstruation	20(23.3)	23(9.3)	4(15.4)
3.	I use towel to absorb menstrual flow.	10(11.6)	20(8.1)	2(7.7)
4.	I use napkin to absorb blood during menstruation	7(8.1)	21(8.5)	3(11.5)
5.	I use piece of cloths to manage menstrual flow.	17(19.8)	28(11.3)	7(26.9)
6.	I dispose soiled pads in a dustbin	36(41.9)	133(53.6)	12(46.2)
7.	I dispose soiled pads by burying them	21(24.4)	56(22.6)	8(30.8)
8.	I dispose soiled pads in a pit latrine	31(36.0)	88(35.5)	9(34.6)
9.	I dispose soiled pads in any available corner	10(11.6)	10(4.0)	4(15.4)
10.	I flush used pads in the water closet	30(34.9)	53(21.4)	8(30.8)
11.	I take my bath once a day during menstruation	11(12.8)	16(6.5)	4(15.4)
12.	I take my bath 2 – 3 times a day during menstruation.	74(86.0)	228(91.9)	19(73.1)
13.	I wash my hands before and after changing my pads.	80(93.0)	229(92.3)	23(88.5)
14.	I change soiled pads 3 -4 times a day	69(80.2)	195(78.6)	20(76.9)
15.	I wash used cloths with clean water and re-use.	68(79.1)	210(84.7)	21(80.8)
16.	I wash my under wears regularly during menstruation.	78(88.4)	238(96.0)	24(92.3)
	<b>Overall percentage</b>	<b>46.8</b>	<b>45.0</b>	<b>45.0</b>

Results in table 2 showed that overall, nearly half of secondary school girls in all age category: 10 -14 years (46.8%), 15 -19years (45%) and 19 years above (45%) indicated that they practice menstrual hygiene. The table showed that girls aged 10-14 years practiced menstrual



hygiene more than their counterparts in other age brackets. The table further showed that majority of secondary school girls in all age category indicated that they use sanitary pad to absorb menstrual flow, wash their hands before and after changing pads and wash their under wears regularly during menstruation. The table further showed that majority (86.0%, 91.9%) of girls within the age bracket 10-14 years and 15-19years indicated that they take their bath 2-3 times a day during menstruation while more than two third (73.1%) of those within the age bracket 19 years and above indicated yes in same issue. The table also showed that majority (80.2%) of girls within the age bracket 10–14years indicated that they change soiled pads 3-4 times daily while more than half (78.6% and 76.9%) of girls within the age bracket 15-19 years and 19 years and above indicted yes in the same issue respectively.

**Table 3: Menstrual Hygiene Practices among Secondary School Girls Based on Mother's Level of Education (n = 400)**

S/n	Menstrual Hygiene Practices	Non-formal education (n = 35) f %	Primary education (n = 18) f (%)	Secondary education (n =107) f (%)	Tertiary education (n = 200) f (%)
1.	I use sanitary pads to absorb menstrual flow	32(91.4)	15(83.3)	103(96.3)	193(96.5)
2.	I use tissue paper to absorb blood during menstruation	16(45.7)	2(11.1)	12(11.2)	17(8.5)
3.	I use towel to absorb menstrual flow.	8(22.9)	2(11.1)	11(10.3)	11(5.5)
4.	I use napkin to absorb blood during menstruation	6(17.1)	0(0.0)	8(7.5)	17(8.5)
5.	I use piece of cloths to manage menstrual flow.	13(37.1)	4(22.2)	12(11.2)	23(11.5)
6.	I dispose soiled pads in a dustbin	18(51.4)	7(38.9)	50(46.7)	106(53.0)
7.	I dispose soiled pads by burying them	10(28.5)	4(22.2)	24(22.4)	47(23.5)
8.	I dispose soiled pads in a pit latrine	17(48.6)	7(38.9)	38(35.5)	66(33.0)
9.	I dispose soiled pads in any available corner	6(17.1)	3(16.7)	10(9.3)	5(2.5)
10.	I flush used pads in the water closet	13(37.1)	5(27.8)	25(23.4)	48(24.0)
11.	I take my bath once a day during menstruation	6(17.1)	4(22.2)	10(9.3)	11(5.5)
12.	I take my bath 2 – 3 times a day during menstruation.	23(65.7)	15(83.3)	98(91.6)	185(92.5)
13.	I wash my hands before and after changing my pads.	31(88.6)	16(88.9)	99(92.5)	186(93.0)
14.	I change soiled pads 3 -4 times a day	26(74.3)	15(83.3)	87(81.3)	156(78.0)
15.	I wash used cloths with clean water and re-use.	21(60.0)	16(88.9)	89(83.2)	173(86.9)
16	I wash my under wears regularly during menstruation.	29(82.9)	17(94.4)	100(93.5)	192(96.0)
	<b>Overall percentage</b>	<b>49.0</b>	<b>46.0</b>	<b>45.0</b>	<b>45.0</b>

Results in table 3 showed that overall; nearly half of secondary school girls from mothers in all level of education: non-formal education (49%), primary education (46%), secondary education (45%), tertiary education (45%) indicated that they practice menstrual hygiene. The table showed that girls whose mothers had non-formal education practiced menstrual hygiene more than their counterparts whose mothers have higher level of education. The table also showed that girls aged 10-14 years practiced menstrual hygiene more than their counterparts in other age brackets. The table further showed that majority of secondary school girls from mothers in all level of education indicated that they use sanitary pads to absorb menstrual flow, wash their hands before and after changing pads and wash their under wears regularly during menstruations. The table further showed that more than half (60.0%) of girls from mothers with non-formal education indicated that they wash used cloths with clean water and re-use while majority (88.9%, 83.2% and 86.5%) indicated yes on the same issue respectively.

The table finally showed that nearly half: (45.7%) and 48.6%) of secondary school girls from mothers with non-formal education indicated that they use tissue paper to absorb blood during menstruation and also disposes solid pads in a pit latrine respectively.

**Table 4: Chi-square Analysis of No Significant Difference in Menstrual Hygiene Practices among secondary School Girls Based on Age (n = 400)**

Age	N	Yes O(E)	No O(E)	$\chi^2$	df	P-value
10 -14years	86	34(30.8)	52(55.2)			
15 – 19 years	248	85(88.9)	163(159.1)	.853	2	.653*
19years and above	26	10(9.3)	16(16.7)			

**Key: O = observed frequency; E = Expected Frequency; df = Degree of Freedom; D\* = Not significant; D\*\* = Significant**

Results in Table 4 showed the Pearson Chi-square value with the corresponding P –value for hypothesis of no significant difference on menstrual hygiene practices among secondary school girls based on age ( $\chi^2 = .853$ ,  $df = 2$ ,  $p = .653 > .05$ ). Since the p-value was greater than .05 level of significance, the null hypotheses were therefore accepted. This implies that there was

no significant difference in menstrual hygiene practices among secondary school girls from different age categories.

**Table 5: Chi-square Analysis of No Significant Difference in Menstrual Hygiene Practices among secondary School Girls Based on their Mother's Level of Education (n = 400)**

Level of Education	N	Yes O(E)	No O(E)	$\chi^2$	Df	P-value
Non-formal Education	35	19(12.5)	16(22.5)			
Primary Education	18	5(6.5)	13(11.6)	7.256)	3	.064*
Secondary Education	107	41(38.3)	66(68.7)			
Tertiary Education	200	64(71.7)	136(128.3)			

Results in Table 5 showed the Pearson chi-square value with corresponding P- value for hypothesis of no significant difference on menstrual hygiene practices among secondary school girls based on mother's level of education ( $\chi^2 = 7.256$ ,  $df = 3$ ,  $P = .064 > .05$ ). Since the p-value was greater than .05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was therefore accepted. This implies that no significant difference existed in menstrual hygiene practices among secondary school girls from mother's different levels of education.

## Discussion

The study established that nearly half (45.5%) of secondary school girls indicated that they practice menstrual hygiene, while more than half (54.5%) indicated non practice of menstrual hygiene. This result was however not expected because these girls living and schooling in the urban city of Imo State are expected to be conversant with the dangers of poor menstrual hygiene practice as topics on this issue are being discussed on radio, television, internet etc. Also there is a lot of enlightenment campaign programme and advertisement on the dangers of poor menstrual hygiene practices. The finding of this study were in conformity with the findings of Ilo et al. (2016) who reported that menstrual hygiene practices among girls in

Abakaliki Education zone of Ebonyi State were not encouraging. The findings were in consonance with the findings of Zelalem and Birhanie (2019) who reported that 60.3 percent of the respondents had poor menstrual hygiene practice. The findings agree with the assertion of Dasgupta and Sankar (2008) who reported that millions of women are sufferers of reproductive tract infections which might have resulted due to poor menstrual hygiene practiced in their earlier years.

The findings also revealed that majority of the girl use sanitary pads to absorb menstrual flow, take their baths 2 – 3 times a day during menstruation, wash their hands before and after changing pads, wash used cloths with clean water and re-use and wash their undies regularly during menstruation. The finding is in line with the findings of Ghaoro (2013) who reported that majority (83.4%) of the student used sanitary pads, more than half (52.1%) change their pads twice daily and majority (83.9%) bath two or more times a day. The reason for this might be due to the fact that most of the respondent's mothers were educated in this study. The findings were not in line with the finding of Funmito et al. (2017) who reported that about 57 percent of the respondents had good level of menstrual hygiene practice. Poor menstrual hygiene practices increase a woman's susceptibility to reproductive health-related problems. The reason for poor menstrual practice hygiene among the girls may be due to ignorance on the part of both the girls and their parents. This finding suggests poor menstrual hygiene practice among secondary school girls. The findings may assist both teachers and parents to put more efforts to ensure that our adolescent girls are well educated on the importance of good hygiene practices both in school and at home.

The findings also showed that nearly half of secondary schools girls in all age category indicated that they practice menstrual hygiene, with those aged 10-14 years practicing menstrual hygiene more than their counterparts in other age brackets. It may be that they received assistance from their older siblings who might have gone through this stage and understand the consequence of poor menstrual hygiene practices. Also, there was no significant difference in menstrual hygiene practices among secondary schools girls from different age groups. The findings were not expected and therefore were surprising because it is assumed that knowledge

increase with age. It is therefore expected of the older adolescent girls to practice good menstrual hygiene more than their younger counterparts. The findings contradicts the findings of Ilo et al. (2016) who reported that age was significantly associated with menstrual hygiene practices of secondary school girls. The findings was not in agreement with the findings of Funmito et al. (2017) who reported that age was significantly associated with knowledge of menstrual hygiene practices. The findings was not in line with the findings of Zelalem and Birhanie (2019) who reported that age was significant associated with poor menstrual hygiene. The findings may be due to ignorance on the part of both the students and their parents as it is a taboo in this part of the world for parents to discuss issues relating to sex with their children. The findings may help government and curriculum planners in ensuring that personal hygiene practice is made a vital aspect of the school curriculum.

The findings of the study showed that overall, nearly half of secondary school girls from mothers in all level of education indicated that they practice menstrual hygiene, with those whose mothers had non-formal education practicing it more than others. This might have occurred by chance or because their siblings who are older than them had ugly experiences and does not want their younger ones to experience it too. The findings also showed that there was no significant difference in menstrual hygiene practices among secondary school girls from mothers with different level of education. The finding was not expected and therefore was surprising because it is expected that students of mothers who were more educated to practice menstrual hygiene than their counterparts whose mothers were not educated. This is because education exposes women to new ideas, and information which in turn may be helpful to their adolescent girls. The findings was in line with the findings Funmito et al. (2017) who reported that mother's education was not significantly associated with good menstrual hygiene practices. The findings contradict with the findings of Haile, Zeleke, Olana, and Garoma (2017) who reported mother's educational status was significantly associated with level of knowledge about menstrual hygiene practice. The findings will help to sensitize mothers especially the educated one on the role they have to play in educating their adolescents girls on issues pertaining to personal hygiene. The findings of this study can be linked to Health Belief Model which explains why

individuals may accept or reject healthy behaviours. This implies that if secondary school girls understand the implications of poor menstrual hygiene practices, they will take health related actions such as changing soiled pads at least 3-4 times daily, taking their baths 2-3 times a day during menstruation.

## **Conclusion**

Based on the findings, the following conclusions were drawn: Overall, nearly half (45.5%) of secondary school girls indicated that they practice menstrual hygiene while more than half (54.5%) indicated that they do not practice menstrual hygiene; Nearly half of secondary school girls in all age categories: 10 -14 years (46.8%), 15-19 years (45%) and 19 years and above (45%) indicated that they practice menstrual hygiene with those aged 10-14years practicing it more than others; Nearly half of secondary school girls from mothers in all level of education: non-formal education (49%), primary education (46%), secondary education (45%), and tertiary education (45%) indicated that they practice menstrual hygiene with those whose mothers had non-formal education practicing more than others; There was no significant differences in menstrual hygiene practices among secondary school girls from different age categories and mother's level of education.

## **Recommendations**

Based on the findings and conclusions, the following recommendations were made:

1. Parents and teachers should ensure that adolescent girls are well educated on the importance of good menstrual hygiene practices both in schools and at home.
2. There is need to design acceptable awareness creation programmes to promote safe hygienic practices of adolescent school girls during menstruation.
3. There is need to link menstrual hygiene with hygiene education programme in schools.
4. It is important that mothers be well equipped to give their girl child appropriate information about menstrual hygiene practices, in order to promote the health of the adolescent.

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