



Research Paper

# Perception of women towards media credibility in creating Menstrual Hygiene awareness: A Case study in Vijayapura District

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## Abstract

Menstruation is a biological process occurs in every woman's body usually after 11 to 15 years of age. Particularly this age is beginning of a woman's reproductive life. It is very important to maintain the hygiene related practices during the time of menstruation. The media establishes trust in specific brand products, encourages the use of hygienic products during menstruation, and maintains hygiene in washrooms and pertinent health services in both urban and rural areas. Exploratory research design has been used to analyze the selected problem. A structured questionnaire was prepared to collect data from the rural and urban girls. The sample was selected using a multistage sampling method. Specifically, respondents were chosen from thirteen talukas within the district: Vijayapura, Basavan Bagewadi, Sindagi, Indi, Muddebihal, Nidagundi, Talikote, Bableswhar, Tikota, Chadchan, Devar Hipparagi, Kolhar, and Almel. In each taluka, 30 respondents were randomly selected, resulting in a total of 390 respondents. Suitable statistical techniques such as: percentage, chi-square was used to analyze the data. The results of the study show that whereas traditional media such as newspapers and television continue to play a role, social media has emerged as the most powerful and credible platform in disseminating menstrual hygiene information. A great majority of respondents depends on social media for information; it shows the shift towards digital platforms in modern communication.

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## I. Introduction:

Menstruation is a natural biological cycle that occurs monthly in healthy women of reproductive age. Menstrual hygiene is often overlooked and has not been given enough attention. Using sanitary napkins and maintaining genital area clean are crucial practices for good menstrual hygiene. Poor menstrual hygiene can lead higher risk of reproductivity track infection and other health complications. In developing areas women are still face challenges in accessing accurate information and resources for maintaining correct menstrual hygiene.

In urban area, women are more open minded compared to the rural areas and therefore marketers can spread a common message among the urban audiences. But at the same time, this message is not acceptable because the rural females are rather conservative and surrounded by many social taboos (Sabrina Rahman, et. al 2018).

Media today is exceeding our expectations, particularly in creating awareness with society, and fosters collaboration on various social issues. So, Mass media is considered as cost-effective public health promotion tool.

Media is the effective platform for raising awareness among women about menstrual hygiene, it's important for both men and women to learn about menstruation and related health issues. In the first step media can do is raising awareness, providing hygiene education, promoting affordable products and facilities, and managing waste. Media is a simpler and more effective way to spread messages across the world.

“Regarding sources of information on menstrual hygiene, the girls reported their main sources of information included radio, print media, television, and friends and peers. From the results, it is evident that the

vast majority of the girls received their information on menstrual hygiene from the mass media. Very little communication regarding menstruation occurred between the girls and their parents, teachers or health professionals like doctors and nurses (Cajetan, Nwimo and Onwunaka 2016).

The media establishes trust in specific brand products, encourages the use of hygienic products during menstruation, and maintains hygiene in washrooms and pertinent health services in both urban and rural areas. Media is not solely responsible for providing information; it also plays a significant role in the process of socialisation by progressively influencing public opinion, personal beliefs, and even individuals' self-perception. This influence also shapes ideology and deeper thought on the issue at hand.

## **II. Review Of Literature:**

Sherin Raj T.P and Bhawna Kathuria (2022) concludes that the usage of menstrual hygienic methods were three times higher among young women those who have access to media almost every day (watching television or reading newspaper or listening radio) compared to those who have never access to these medium management of Menstrual Hygiene, requires very good knowledge and awareness on menstrual hygiene, safe and secure sanitary products, good water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) facilities and menstrual management facilities, too.

Singh, A., Chakrabarty, M., Singh, S. et al (2022) in 'Menstrual hygiene practices among adolescent women in rural India' the results of multilevel model revealed that household wealth, education, and mass media exposure were the most important factors associated with the exclusive use of hygienic methods, therefore empowering adolescent women and promoting their education would yield greater results in increasing the level of exclusive use of hygienic methods in rural India.

Aditya S, Mahashweta C, Sourav C, Shivani S (2022) in exclusive use of hygienic menstrual absorbents among rural adolescent women in India they found that the sole usage of sanitary absorbents varies significantly by location among Indian adolescent women living in rural areas. Mass media campaigns, rural healthcare workers, and the free or subsidised supply of hygienic absorbents in the designated cold locations might all be used to promote the use of hygienic absorbents by adolescent women living in rural areas.

Dinani, B., Khatuja, R., Mehta, S., Chawla, D., & Mehta, S. (2019) in their research study on menstrual health management: Knowledge and practices among adolescent girls indicates that menstrual practices seem satisfactory for the majority; there is concern about the lack of knowledge regarding menarche and menstrual physiology. The study suggests that including information on menstrual hygiene in school curricula and increasing coverage in mass media could help address this knowledge gap.

### **Research design:**

Exploratory research design has been used to analyze the selected problem. A structured questionnaire was prepared to collect data from the rural and urban girls. The questionnaire was framed based on the objective of the study. The study population consists of girls from the Vijayapura district. The sample was selected using a multistage sampling method. Specifically, respondents were chosen from thirteen talukas within the district: Vijayapura, Basavan Bagewadi, Sindagi, Indi, Muddebihal, Nidagundi, Talikote, Bableshwar, Tikota, Chadchan, Devar Hipparagi, Kolhar, and Almel. In each taluka, 30 respondents were randomly selected, resulting in a total of 390 respondents. Interviews were conducted with all 390 respondents, and the collected data was analyzed. Suitable statistical techniques such as: percentage, chi-square was used to analyze the data.

### **Statement of the problem:**

The right information must be given to the girls through various mediums. Campaigns, the media, etc., can do it. The most important thing to remember is that the girls must be able to access the informational medium chosen. In country like India media is the only tool to know about health and hygiene practices, maternal health, reproductive health and different steps which should be taken at emergency situations along with medical health services. Therefore it was felt necessary to have a study on '**Perception of women towards media credibility in creating Menstrual Hygiene awareness**'.

### **Objectives of the study:**

1. To know the media habits of rural and urban girls.
2. To analyze the role of media in promoting menstrual hygiene awareness among girls.

- To identify the level of credibility of media among girls.

**Data analysis:**

**Table 1: Age wise distribution of study population**

Age	Frequency	Percentage
13-18 years	74	18.97
19-23 years	172	44.10
24-30 years	144	36.93
Total	<b>390</b>	<b>100</b>

The information depicted in table 1 reflects that majority of respondents (44.10%, N=172) belong to 19 to 23 years age group, followed by 36.93% (N=144) belonging to the age group of 24-30 years and only 18.97 percent (N=74) belongs to 13 to 18 years of age group. This distribution suggests that young adults are heavily influenced by the research, especially those in their twenties to early twenties.

**Table 2: Family Income wise distribution of study population**

Income	Frequency	Percentage
Below 50,000	252	64.62
51,000 to 1 Lakh	48	12.31
Above 1 Lakh	90	23.07
Total	<b>390</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 2 shows that more than half of the respondents (64.62%) reported family income of less than Rs.50 thousand. In contrast, 23.07 percent have income above Rs 1 lakh, while 12.31 percent fall in the income bracket of Rs 51 thousand to Rs 1 lakh. This income distribution means that most participants are from low-income families, which may affect both their access to resources and quality of life.

**Table 3: Area of residence wise distribution of study population**

Area of residence	Frequency	Percentage
Rural	192	49.23
Semi urban	78	20.00
Urban	120	30.77
Total	<b>390</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 3 shows that almost half of the respondents (49.23%, N=192) live in rural areas, indicating a high rural representation in the survey. Urban residents made up 30.77 percent of the participants (N=120), indicating a large but small urban population. Meanwhile, 20 percent of the respondents (N=78) live in semi-urban areas, reflecting the moderate presence of this group in the survey population.

**Table 4: Media Exposure of study population**

Media	Regularly	Occasionally	Never
Newspaper	170 (43.59%)	162 (41.53%)	58 (14.88%)
Television	204 (52.30%)	171 (43.85%)	15 (3.85%)
Radio	48 (12.30%)	132 (33.84%)	210 (53.84%)
Social Media	310 (79.48%)	52 (13.33%)	28 (7.17%)

Table 4 showed that social media was the most frequently used media platform among the respondents, with 79.48 percent (N=310) indicating regular use. This is followed by television with 52.30 percent (N=204) of the respondents and newspapers, with 43.59 percent (N=170) of the participants used most frequently while radio was the least used media, with only 12.30 percent (N=48) reporting use. These statistics show a significant shift in the use of digital media, and demonstrate the impact of social media in modern life. The extensive use of social media may reflect its role as a primary source of information, entertainment, and social interaction among participants.

**Table 5: Usage of different menstrual products of study population**

Menstrual products	Frequency	Percentage
Disposable pads	320	82.05
Tampons	24	6.15
Menstrual cup	34	8.72
Cloth pads	12	3.08
Total	<b>390</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 5 examines that the substantial majority of respondents (82.05%, N=320) use disposable pads, indicating their extensive choice a number of the participants. In contrast, a smaller percentage opts for tampons (6.15%, N=24), menstrual cups (8.72%, N=34), and cloth pads (3.08%, N=12). This distribution highlights disposal pads because the dominant preference, possibly because of their convenience, availability, and familiarity. This fact underscores the diversity in menstrual product choices, encouraged with the aid of factors such as consolation, convenience, cultural norms, environmental recognition and private health concerns the various surveyed population.

**Table 6: Sources to get information about menstrual hygiene**

Sources	Frequency	Percentage
Mother/Family and friends	256	65.64
School or educational institutions	56	14.36
Health care professionals	52	13.33
Peer group	8	2.05
Mass Media	76	19.49
Others	18	4.62

Table 6 reveals that the mother, other family members and friends are the primary sources of information about menstrual hygiene to 65.64 percent (N=256) respondents. Instead, mass media is relied on by a few percent of the people (19.49%, N=76), some others depend on school while still some rely on healthcare providers for information (14.36%, N=56 and 13.33%, N=52). These results highlight key aspects regarding where the information about menstruation comes from and how much reliance there is on different channels of knowledge acquisition among participants.

**Table 7: Media platforms to access information about menstrual hygiene**

Media	Regularly	Occasionally	Never
Newspaper	132 (33.84%)	164 (42.06%)	94 (24.10%)
Television	162 (41.53%)	166 (42.57%)	62 (15.90%)
Radio	76 (19.48%)	128 (32.82%)	186 (47.69%)
Social Media	276 (70.78%)	96 (24.61%)	18 (4.61%)

According to table 7, the most commonly used media for obtaining menstrual hygiene information is social media, with 70.78 percent (N=276) of respondents said that they use it regularly. The subsequent percentage of respondents who regularly use TV is 41.53 percent (N=162). Among other things, radio had the lowest number of participants who never accessed information on menstrual hygiene through it (47.69%, N=186). These findings give insight into the preferred media channels for educating girls about menstrual health.

The above table reveals the changing patterns in media consumption among respondents; a considerable choice for social networks and considerable access to television for menstrual hygiene information. These findings therefore suggest that in order to achieve widespread and efficient communication, health education should be distributed through a variety of channels that include both traditional and digital platforms.

**Table 8: Opinion of the respondents regarding effectiveness of media in creating awareness about menstrual hygiene**

Opinion	Frequency	Percentage
Highly effective	204	52.31
Somewhat effective	112	28.72
Moderately effective	40	10.26

Not effective at all	16	4.10
Unsure	18	4.61
Total	<b>390</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 8 found that more than half (52.31%, N=204) of the respondents opined that media is highly effective in creating awareness about menstrual hygiene, followed by somewhat effective 28.72 percent (N=112) this rises to an impressive 81.03 percent (N=316). It is found from the above table that a broad consensus on the significant role of media in educating the people about menstrual hygiene.

**Table 9: Most credible media in delivering messages about menstrual hygiene**

Media	Frequency	Percentage
Newspapers	64	16.41
Television	76	19.49
Radio	12	3.08
Social media	246	63.08
Online articles and blogs	34	8.72
Menstrual hygiene apps	42	10.77
Folk media	6	1.54

Table 9 represents the credibility of media in delivering menstrual hygiene messages, shows that more than half of the respondents (63.08%, N=246) opined that social media is the most credible medium for delivering messages about menstrual hygiene, significantly surpassing other forms of media. This reveals that social media plays very significant role in shaping behaviours regarding menstrual hygiene.

**Table 10: Credibility of different media by area of residence**

Media	Rural	Semi Urban	Urban
Newspapers	31.60	12.67	19.73
Television	37.53	15.04	23.43
Radio	5.93	2.38	3.70
Social media	121.46	48.69	75.85
Online articles and blogs	16.79	6.73	10.48
Menstrual hygiene apps	20.74	8.31	12.95
Folk media	2.96	1.19	1.85

**H<sub>0</sub>:** There is no significant association between the credibility of media and the type of locality.

**H<sub>1</sub>:** There is significant association between the credibility of media and the type of locality.

The Chi-Square test results for the given table are:

- **Chi-Square Statistic ( $\chi^2$ ):** 0.302
- **p-value:** 1.00
- **Degrees of Freedom (dof):** 12

Table 10 examines the credibility of different media by the type of locality. Since the p-value is significantly higher than 0.05, we fail to reject the null hypothesis. This suggests that there is no significant association between the credibility of media and the type of locality.

### III. Conclusion:

Girls from rural and urban India are getting lack of appropriate facilities and support from the society to manage their female hygiene practices especially during menstruation. They lack the information and readiness to handle their periods hygienically, and they are unprepared for their first menstrual cycle. This study examines the significant role of media in promoting menstrual hygiene awareness among rural and urban girls of Vijayapura district. The findings show that whereas traditional media such as newspapers and television continue to play a role, social media has emerged as the most powerful and credible platform in disseminating menstrual hygiene information. A great majority of respondents depends on social media for information; it shows the shift towards digital platforms in modern communication. However, there remains a noteworthy trust on familial sources, particularly mothers and friends, for menstrual hygiene information. The study found the necessity of integrated communication strategies that influence both digital and traditional media to ensure widespread and effective dissemination of menstrual hygiene knowledge and information, particularly in rural areas where access to an array of media platforms may be limited. Despite these advancements, the study also

recognises the heightened involvement of healthcare professionals and educational institutions in providing truthful and reliable information on menstrual hygiene.

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