

Background

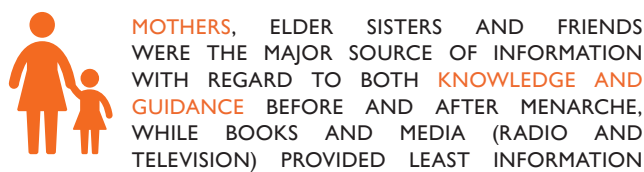
World Vision International (WVI) Nepal and the Nepal Health Research Council (NHRC) conducted a national survey to assess knowledge, attitude and practice on menstrual health and hygiene management and psychosocial scores due to menstruation. The survey reached adolescent girls (10-19 years) in all seven provinces in Nepal. The study also explored the experiences of adolescent girls with disability during menstruation. Field work and data collection was conducted in October-December 2019.

Methods

The study adopted a mixed method design, two staged cluster sampling that included a population-based national representative survey of 3,495 adolescent girls aged 10-19 years who had experienced menarche. Total sample size was calculated using an estimation of 30% adolescents (P) with allowable error of 5% (L) and Z value of 1.96. Adopted version of MR-SSS (Menstrual Related-School Participation, Stress and Self-efficacy) tool was used to assess the knowledge, attitude and practice and psychosocial well-being of adolescent girls. Ethical approval for this study was obtained from the Nepal Health Research Council.

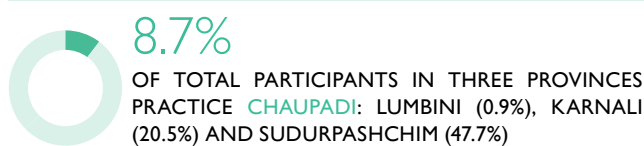
Key Findings

KNOWLEDGE AND PERCEPTION



PRACTICE

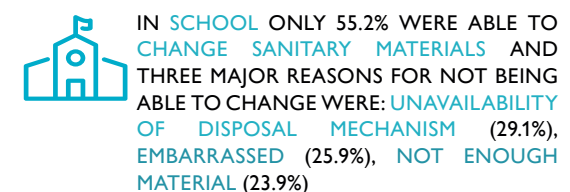
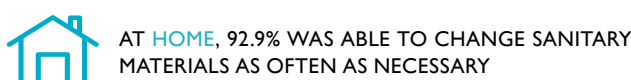
PRACTICE OF CHAUPADI



RESTRICTIONS INCLUDE **RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES** (79.1%), **HOUSEHOLD CHORES** (51.9%), **SOCIAL ACTIVITIES** (46.1%) AND **PERSONAL ACTIVITIES** (36.95 %)

MOTHERS IMPOSE THESE RESTRICTIONS FOLLOWED BY **GRANDPARENTS** AND **FATHERS**

MENSTRUAL HYGIENE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES



WASH PRACTICES



46.6%

HAD ACCESS TO TOILETS FOR **CLEANING PURPOSE**, 37.7% WENT TO WELL/TAPS AND 15.6% WENT TO RIVER/PONDS



60.5%

60.5% GIRLS COULD EASILY **ACCESS WASHING PLACE** (LESS THAN 15 MINUTES' WALK) WHILE 1.8% HAD TO WALK MORE THAN ONE HOUR



93.7%

HAD ACCESS TO **SOAP** FOR WASHING



DISPOSAL MECHANISM OF USED SANITARY MATERIALS WAS MOSTLY BURYING AND BURNING



PLACE FOR CHANGING SANITARY MATERIALS WERE TOILETS FOLLOWED BY BED ROOM

PSYCHOSOCIAL IMPACT

PSYCHOSOCIAL ATTRIBUTES OF **SECRECY AND SHAME, ANNOYANCE, STRESS AND SELF-EFFICACY** WERE MEASURED ON ADAPTED VERSION OF MR-SSS SCALE. IN ALL FOUR ATTRIBUTES, 42-45% OF ALL GIRLS RELATED TO HIGH SECRECY AND SHAME, HIGH LEVEL OF ANNOYANCE, HIGH MENSTRUAL STRESS AND LOW SELF-EFFICACY.

Experience of Adolescent Girls with Disability

Experience of adolescent girls with disability varied with the nature of their impairment. Major challenges were not having access to disposable sanitary materials, difficulties in disposal mechanisms, reliance on immediate female family members for changing sanitary material, reliance on female family member to oblige *Chaupadi* and absence of disabled-friendly WASH facilities outside home resulting in them staying home during menstruation.

Conclusion

Menstrual health and hygiene management is an important issue for adolescent girls. Findings reveal some areas of knowledge, perception and practice are quite encouraging, at the same time, much needs to be done to address the shortcomings. Adolescent girls continue to face challenges in form of cultural and religious restrictions. The psychosocial scales on secrecy and shame, annoyance, menstrual stress and self-efficacy requires attention and is an area for further research. The menstrual need of girls with disability are largely unmet. Targeted programmes in on menstrual hygiene management are relatively scattered and few.

Recommendations

- Government at all levels, should continue to make menstrual health and hygiene management a priority and allocate resources as part of reproductive health
- School as focal point for adolescent girls, should have comprehensive plan to address menstrual health and hygiene management
- Community should be responsive toward menstrual health and hygiene and management and adolescent health
- Family should create conducive environment for adolescent girls to thrive during menstruation
- Unmet needs of adolescent girls with disability should be addressed at all level



“When I first started menstruating, it was a very difficult situation for me. I was scared, nervous and unaware about how to manage it.

-An adolescent girl with disability, Tanahun Gandaki Province

We have to dwell at Chaupadi hut for four days. Because I am visually impaired, my sister accompanies me in the hut during night. But it is difficult during summer as the space is too small. There are lots of mosquitoes, hence we light fire for emitting smoke to chase mosquitoes and sleep. It gets very hot inside.

- An adolescent girl, Sankhuwasabha, Province 1

