



Applicant Information

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Abstract Details

Title:

A Qualitative Analysis of Menstruation Perceptions: Exploring Socio-cultural Constructs Among Parents, Teachers and Adolescent Girls.

Category:

Health promotion with nutrition and hygiene

Authors:

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Objectives:

Menstruation, a natural process experienced by 1.8 billion females globally, occurs about 300 times in a woman's life. Despite signifying normal reproductive function and marking a transition to womanhood, it is surrounded by taboos and misconceptions in many low- and middle-income countries, including Ghana. Cultural practices and adolescent girls' experiences remain poorly documented. This study explored the cultural construction of menstruation in the Ghanaian context.

Method:

This study was qualitative and adopted an exploratory study design. We used purposive and convenience sampling to select five Senior High Schools in the Volta Region of Ghana. 15 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were conducted with 10-12 participants each: five for female students, five for teachers, and five for parents. Data were audio-recorded, transcribed, translated, and analysed thematically using MAXQDA 2022 software.

Results:

Our research revealed a distinct array of socio-cultural beliefs and practices surrounding menstruation in Ghana. These include beliefs of menstrual blood being unclean, rituals celebrating menarche, and adherence to various menstruation-related cultural and ethnic taboos. Such taboos comprise household restrictions, religious observances, and social restrictions. Our findings indicate that myths have long obscured the facts about menstruation in this context.

Conclusion:

Public health officials in Ghana should provide culturally sensitive education about menstruation to the general public, addressing how conventional socio-cultural practices can affect adolescents' menstrual health. This approach recognises that girls' education, attitudes, family environments, cultures, and beliefs all shape menstruation-related practices.

Submission Date: