

Perception of Men regarding Menstruation: A Study on Awareness and Attitudes

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Abstract

Menstruation is a natural biological process experienced by woman. It remains socially sensitive and often stigmatise the topic in many parts of India. Men's perception plays an important role in shaping societal attitudes towards menstruation, influencing women's experience at home, workplace, and in the community. Chauhan (2025) investigates the determination of men's attitude, impact and awareness towards menstruation. Mason (2017) explores the understanding of boys about menstruation and their attitudes towards the same. This study focuses on the perception of men in Mangalore regarding menstruation with particular on their awareness and attitude towards menstrual health. The primary objective of the study is to assess the level of knowledge men have about menstruation and to explore their attitudes. A Descriptive Research design was adopted for the study. Data were collected from male respondents in Mangalore using a semi structured questionnaire by non-probability, specifically Convenient Sampling Method. The study shows that many respondents reported limited exposure to formal menstrual knowledge because of lack of education in schools and lack of communication in families regarding the topic. Additional differences were observed based on age, education level, although some men expressed supportive and empathetic attitudes, others perceive menstruation as a private or taboo topic that should not be discussed openly. The study highlights the need for inclusive awareness programmes that actively involve men in menstrual health education that will help men in understanding women and problems faced by women which helps encourage open communication and also to reduce stigma.

Keywords: Attitude, Awareness, Mangalore City, Men, Menstruation, Perception

1. Introduction

Menstruation is a natural biological process which is also known as periods, menses, or monthly cycle. It is a regular discharge of blood or mucosal tissue from the inner lining of the uterus through vagina. In simple words, a normal vaginal bleeding that occurs every month. The reason women bleed every month or get periods is when their body prepares for pregnancy, and if they don't get pregnant, the body releases the extra blood and tissue from the uterus. During this time, women may feel stomach cramps, back pain, tiredness, mood swings, bloating and more. It is natural process, yet it is often treated as a secret or

something shameful. Many everyday examples such as shopkeepers sometimes cover sanitary pads with newspapers while selling it, people change the tv channels quickly when an advertisement about menstrual products comes on, and women often feel uncomfortable talking about their periods when men are around is observed. In many cases men even refuse to buy menstrual products, and women feel uncomfortable asking their fathers, brothers, or husbands to purchase them.

However, despite being a normal bodily function or process, it continues to be surrounded by stigma, misconceptions, and social taboos in our society. These taboos often arise from a lack of awareness and understanding. Since men plays a key role, such as father, brother, husband, teacher, and decision makers, their perception and attitude towards menstruation can significantly influence how the topic is treated within family and communities.

Helping men understand menstruation is important, not just for knowledge, but for fostering care and support for women and girls around them. When men are informed, they can be more empathetic, offer practical help and challenge outdated believes that cause shame or discomfort. Sadly, many men are left out of conversations about periods, which keeps misunderstandings alive and allows Smith and taboo to continue.

Removing taboos around menstruation begins with simple and straight conversations. It starts when family stop whispering about periods and begin treating them like any other normal part of life. When mothers and fathers both talk openly to their children about menstruation with both girl, child and boy child, it can help remove the sense of shame that many girls silently have. Along with educating both boys and girls about menstrual health, we can help the next generation see it as normal and healthy part of life, not as something dirty or embarrassing.

Communities and workplace can also help by creating supportive spaces for women and girls. When people see men buying sanitary pads without hesitation or schools holding awareness programs for all students, it senses, a strong message to administration that it is not a secret to hide but natural sign of life and strength of womanhood. Media also can shape this change by showing realistic and respectful portrayal of women during their periods, instead of always avoiding the topic together.

2. Review of literature

JayaMohan et.al. (2024) in their study, “menstruation and masculinity: exploring the relationship between boys and menstruation” explore the knowledge and attitudes of school going, adolescent boys in urban Jabalpur regarding menstruation. The main purpose of the study was to understand the ability of adolescent boys to support their sisters during the period. The study says that men feel uneasy to discuss about menstruation is because it is seen as a sensitive topic. The journal also says that some of the men responded based on their personal experience. Most people showed positive behaviour that shows empathy and understanding towards the subject.

Aashika Chauhan et.al. (2025) This study investigates the determination of men's attitude, impact and awareness towards menstruation. The studies objectives where to review the men's awareness and

knowledge regarding menstruation and its products and the author explore the cultural and societal influences and men's attitude and beliefs on the same topic. The author also says that good attitudes can be greatly influenced by personal interactions. It also states that this discomfort from men is very evident in their use of vocabulary and language. While talking about menstruation. This represents the power of cultural taboo and the normalisation of the topic.

Mason, I. (2017), explores, how Indian adolescent boys understand about menstruation, showing that most boys had only bits of information and often felt shy when the topic came up. Their study found that boys rarely received any explanation from home or school, which left many of them, confused and unsure about what menstruation is. Most of their knowledge was from Peers, or from casual conversations, which often led to wrong information and cost negative attitudes

3. Methodology

Objectives

1. To understand the demographic profile of the respondents.
2. To understand the level of knowledge that men have about menstruation.
3. To examine men's attitudes towards women during menstruation.

This study uses a descriptive research design, which aim to describe the current knowledge and attitude about menstruation among men in Mangalore. Data is collected using a semi structured questionnaires to measure the respondent's awareness on menstrual hygiene practices and related behaviours. The result is analysed using percentages, frequencies to present the findings in an organised and understandable way.

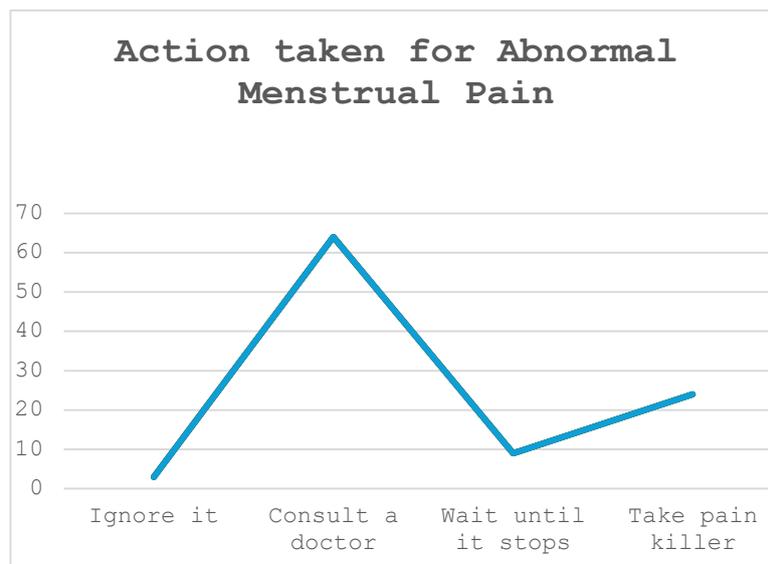
The universe includes all male individuals who are currently living in Mangalore city. Mangalore city comes under the Mangalore Metropolitan region, which has a total population of 6,23,841, with 3,09,380 male population, as per census 2011.co.in. From this universe, a sample of 100 respondents will be selected for the data collection. These respondents will be selected based on the inclusion criteria of the study and their willingness to participate.

4. Discussions

Demographic profile

Variables	Classification	Frequency	Percentage
Age	Below 18 years	2	2%
	18 – 25 years	42	42%
	26 – 35 years	33	33%
	36 – 45 years	14	14%

	46 – 55 years	9	9%
Educational Qualification	High School	20	20%
	PUC	20	20%
	Undergraduate	33	33%
	Postgraduate	20	20%
	Others	7	7%
Marital Status	Single	75	75%
	Married	25	25%



5. Menstrual Health Education in Schools

When respondents were asked about whether Menstrual health education was taught in their schools, most of the responses were “no” which indicates how early education and awareness plays a vital role in developing positive mindset and awareness which can reduce myths and encourage respectful and supportive attitude towards menstruation. 60% of respondents stated that they did not receive any kind of awareness or education about menstruation. They also mentioned that menstrual health education were conducted but excluding boys, it was only conducted for girls. 17% were not sure whether they received any education during schooling and 22% told that they have received Menstrual health education in schools.

Embarrassment when Menstrual products are visible

The findings clearly states that a majority of respondent which is 63% strongly disagree with the feeling embarrassed, it shows generally positive attitude towards menstrual products being visible in public. Only

a small proportion which is 9% agreed and expressed embarrassment while seeing the products. The 15% neutral responses shows that the mixed feelings regarding the statement. This shows that the negative attitude of men towards menstruation and embarrassment when menstrual products are visible. It also indicates that the stigma still exist, and the uncertainty or discomfort in openly expressing their views. Also highlights the negative perception have not eliminated.

Menstruation is a private topic that should not be discussed openly cross tabulated with Education Qualification

Education Qualification	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Below High School	1	0	0	0	0	1
High School	0	0	7	1	11	19
PUC	2	2	1	1	14	20
Undergraduate	2	1	5	6	19	33
Postgraduate	1	2	5	3	9	20
Others	0	2	1	2	2	7
Total	6	7	19	13	55	100

Men’s Perception about menstruation as private topic and should not be discussed openly is supported by 13% of respondents and 19% of respondents were neither supporting nor rejecting the statement which clearly shows the negative perception and attitude.

Findings

- Findings shows that 64% of the respondents said that consulting a doctor is the best option if a girl experience abnormal menstrual pain and 24% were suggesting to take pain killer and 3 % said to ignore the pain which actually shows the lack of proper awareness about the condition.
- Study states that 60% have not received menstrual health education during schooling and they also expressed that education were only given to girls.
- It also states that 95 of respondents feel embarrassed when menstrual products are visible in public which proves the existing negative attitude towards menstruation.
- When it comes to the perception about the topic being a private or girls only subject, 19% were neither supporting nor rejecting the statement which says the negative attitude and taboo still exists.

Suggestions

Based on the overall study, it is suggested that a structured and gender inclusive menstrual health awareness program should be implemented or started at school, college, and community communities. Since many respondents did not receive proper menstrual health education and showed neutral or uncomfortable attitude towards discussing menstruation, awareness initiative should focus on educating boys and men about the biological, emotional, and social aspect of menstruation. School should incorporate compulsory reproductive health education for both genders, especially in rural areas. In

addition to that, community, workshops, family, counselling sessions, and media campaigns can be conducted to normalise menstruation and reduce stigma and embarrassment associated with menstrual products and discussions. Not only for men, women also should be educated and well empowered to discuss about their issues and problems faced during menstruation openly to everyone, regardless the gender by promoting open dialogue and early education, misconceptions can be reduced and supportive and environment for women can be made. And also, it can reduce stigma and taboos that still exist between genders regarding the topic. In colleges or schools, interactive teaching methods, such as, such as seminars, workshops, peer education, programs, and expert sessions by healthcare professionals. For both the genders can help improve knowledge and correct misconceptions. Along with that, community based awareness, campaigns and programmes that should be organised to encourage open discussion at home and reduce embarrassment associated with menstrual products. Media platforms and social media can also be used to normalise menstruation and challenge Taboo. Educational institution and workplace can introduce sensitisation programmes to promote empathy and supportive behaviour among men. Moreover, collaboration with NGOs and public health departments can strengthen to reach out to people who still did not receive any information or education regarding menstruation and ensure that awareness programmes are culturally, sensitive and sustainable. By promoting continues education, open communication, and positive male involvement, stigma, or taboos can be reduced and healthier, more supportive, social environment for women can be created.

6. Conclusion

This study explored men's perception regarding menstruation, awareness and attitudes. It's revealed the mixed feelings and mixed perception of men regarding the topic. While a majority of respondents showed basic awareness about the subject when it comes to the duration of menstruation or importance of consulting a doctor for abnormal menstrual pain or importance of comprehensive knowledge or education regarding administration for men and so on. A significant proportion of respondents reported not receiving menstrual health education in schools, especially in rural areas, indicating a lack of structured awareness programmes.

This study also highlights that the social stigma still remains, the finding suggest that although awareness exist at the surface level, additional awareness programs are very much required to normalise the topic. The study emphasises the need for gender, inclusive, menstrual health education, open family discussions to normalise menstruation as a natural biological process. It can also strengthen the empathy towards women during their menstruation. Overall, finding says that there are basic awareness regarding menstruation and also positive attitudes along with that, the stigma and negative attitudes still remains.

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