

## Experiences and Challenges of Menstruation Among Rural Schoolgirls in Ghana: A Case of Nadowli-Kaleo District in the Upper West Region of Ghana

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**Abstract :** Menstruation is a critical topic. However normal menstruation is, it has become a determinant in the education of young women today. The research focuses on Breaking the silence and accessing menstrual hygiene management's challenges and experiences among rural schoolgirls in Ghana. The study's goal was to examine the menstrual hygiene practices of female students. Participants described their menstrual hygiene practices, their problems, and how they coped with their menstrual symptoms. The research used a qualitative technique through group interviews, personal interviews, and open-ended questionnaires since it is easier to understand a phenomenon from the subject's viewpoint. Sen's capacities approach and Feminist Political Ecology (FPE) were used to analyze the data. Menstruation was known to girls even before their menarche. A mother or grandmother, friends, and teachers were the primary sources of menstrual knowledge. The study also found that most girls use sanitary products made of fabrics, pads, and cotton during menstruation. Among the difficulties the girls faced, the study found were emotional upset, physical discomfort (cramps in the stomach, fatigue), embarrassment, and inadequate sanitation hygiene facilities. The girls wore many garments to avoid leaks; checked their skirts continuously, went to the bathroom with their friends to act as spics while they changed; sat differently on the chairs, and took medicine to reduce period discomfort. Introduction of a health care teacher who supplies sanitary products and medications to girls during school time. Euphemisms as a form of communication amongst girls were all coping mechanisms girls and the school developed. Another finding was that some girls continued to go to school even while having their periods, while others did not. Discomfort and menstruation cramps hampered class participation. In addition, the study revealed insufficient sanitation and hygiene for females to change sanitary products in private and manage menstrual hygiene comfortably.

**Keywords :** MHM (menstrual hygiene management), rural area, sanitation, menstruation, water, schoolgirl, rural area, sanitation, menstruation, water

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