

ABSTRACT

Background:

The Millennium Development Goal is significant to the Ministry of Education which says that by 2015 boys and girls should be able to finish a full course of primary schooling and gender inequalities will be eliminated at the primary level by 2005 and at all levels by 2015 (UPE, 1999). There are several parts of Uganda like Bududa that are still very far from achieving this goal. A preliminary observation from a sample of adolescent girls drawn from Bududa primary school of primary four to primary seven showed that out of 100% girls who started menstruation 23% were always missing three to five days of classes every month and yet only 5% of the boys miss school for. It's with this background that the study was carried and it was directed by the following objectives:

Objectives:

- i) To assess menstrual hygiene practices among adolescent girls of rural primary schools in Bududa District.
- ii) (ii) To assess the social-cultural factors on class attendance during the menstrual periods among adolescent girls of rural primary schools in Bududa District.
- iii) (iii) To assess the availability of information and facilities.

Methods:

The researcher employed a cross sectional study design which produced both qualitative and quantitative data to discover and understand the relationship between Menstrual Hygiene Management and school attendance among adolescent girls of rural primary schools in Bududa District. It was carried out in four schools which includes; Bududa primary school, Namakhuli primary school, Bukigai primary school and Bunamubi primary school.

Results:

The study revealed that menstrual though a normal process that proves the maturity of a girl child, it still has problems that should not be heard of in this century. Hygiene is far from satisfactory among

the schools studied in Bududa. Menstrual management among schools is a neglected issue because discussions are very secretive, sensitive and even stigmatizing to talk about within the school environment. This creates gender insensitivity especially among the school girls because their needs are not properly addressed but rather ignored with no one to confide in at school. All primary schools are mixed and teachers tend to hide some information which is helpful to girls and at the same time disturbing to girls. The absence of proper sanitary facilities and lack of health care at school worsens the situation for the girls hence drop out of the girls.

Conclusions:

The republic of Uganda should offer the sanitary pads to the girls or scrap VAT on those making or importing so as to make them affordable to the girl child. Parents especially mothers should be encouraged to talk to their daughters about menstruation period so as to help them overcome stigma that comes as a result of society isolation and taboos. Individually, a girl needs to be educated on how to maintain personal hygiene as well as proper disposal of her menstrual material. She also needs to be educated on how to track the menstruation cycle every month for proper preparation especially in the school environment so as to manage it well. The society should be taught to understand that taboos are things of the past and therefore girls should be given freedom to do what they wish without being constrained into one place. The media should take up the role of sensitizing the girl child and the community at large about menstruation.