



**A STUDY TO ASSESS THE ASSESS THE KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDE, AND
PRACTICES REGARDING MENSTRUAL CUPS USE AND THE FACTORS
ASSOCIATED WITH IT AMONG FEMALES OF THE REPRODUCTIVE AGE
GROUP IN AN URBAN SETTING OF DEWAS, MADHYA PRADESH**

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INTRODUCTION:

Menstrual hygiene and its management is a much discussed topic today and it plays an indispensable part in the well-being of women worldwide. But lack of information about menstruation and menstrual hygiene practices creates a culture of taboos leading to a big barrier in the field of menstrual hygiene management.

Approximately 70% of the reproductive infections in Indian women are due to poor menstrual hygiene. Three main issues for menstrual hygiene crisis include lack of awareness, lack of materials, and lack of facilities; thereby leading to poor reproductive health, and environmental sustainability. The lack of information about menstrual hygiene practices and products itself creates potential health risks such as vaginal infections, cervical cancer, Reproductive Tract Infections (RTI), Urinary Tract Infection (UTI), Hepatitis B, and different types of Yeast infections. In many instances, RTI infection is transmitted to the offspring of the pregnant mother. Other problems associated with poor menstrual hygiene practices are itching or rashes in the perineal region, bad odor, and also major complications such as pelvic inflammatory disease and toxic shock syndrome.

An alternative to sanitary pads or tampons is the menstrual cup, which has received attention in small-scale studies in high income, and low/middle-income countries,

including primary school girls. The menstrual cup is a nonabsorbent reusable bell-shaped device with a stem, which can be inserted into the vagina to collect and hold menstrual blood during periods.

The stem of the cup helps for easy insertion and removal. The cup can be removed, emptied, rinsed in tap water, and reinserted depending on the amount of flow, with a need to boil the cup only at the end of a cycle. Menstrual cups are an alternative to disposable menstrual products, even where water and sanitation facilities are poor. Information on leakage, acceptability and safety of menstrual cups is essential in order to make informed decisions and provide more comprehensive menstrual health education for women and girls. Further research could provide more information on the acceptability, cost effectiveness, environmental impacts of this product.

OBJECTIVES:

This study aims to assess the knowledge, attitude, and practices regarding menstrual cups use and the factors associated with it among females of the reproductive age group in an urban setting of Dewas, Madhya Pradesh.

MATERIALS AND METHODS:

A cross sectional study was conducted in F.F.G.S.H, Dewas from March 2022 to May 2022 among females of the reproductive age group. Data was entered in MS Excel and was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 26.0. The significance of the association was tested using the Chi-square test. Binary logistic regression was done to predict the factors associated with knowledge levels regarding menstrual cup.

RESULTS:

The mean age of study participants was 25.68(SD 6.64) years (Fig.1). Lack of knowledge (22.6%) and fear of insertion (56.2%) were the major reasons for not trying a menstrual cup. Out of the 350 study participants, 258(73.7%) had good knowledge scores and 92(26.3%) had poor knowledge scores. Discomfort and leakage were the most important problems reported by participants. A statistically significant association was found between younger age, educational status, socioeconomic status, marital status of females in the reproductive age group, and knowledge about the menstrual cup.

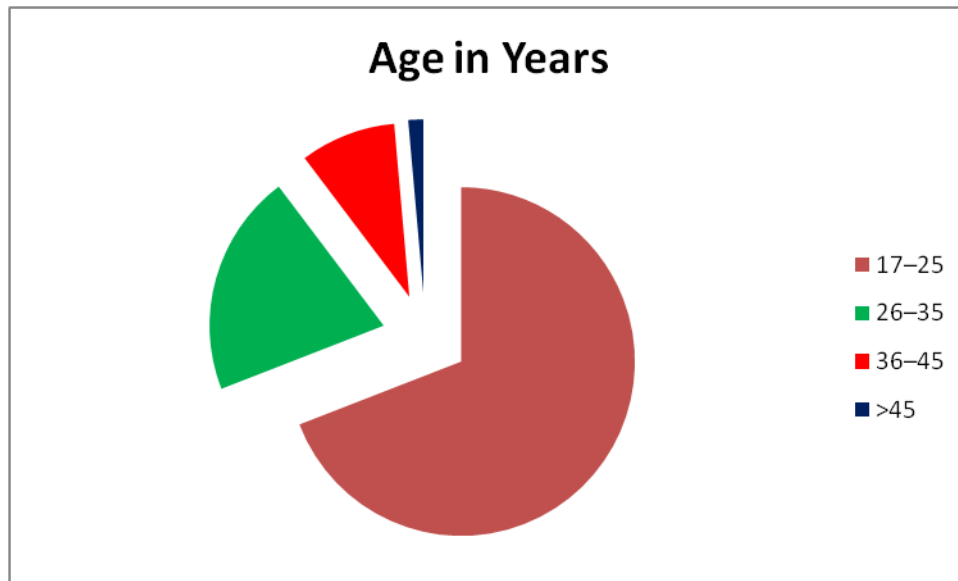


Figure 1: Percentage distribution of participant according to their age

CONCLUSION:

Most of the participants (93.4%) were aware of menstrual cups. Even though two third of the participants had good knowledge regarding menstrual cups, only 15.1% have tried to use a menstrual cup. Fear of insertion was the most common concern for not trying a menstrual cup. Discomfort and leakage were the most important problems reported by participants. Younger age and higher educational qualifications were found to be independently associated with knowledge levels regarding menstrual cups.

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