

**EFFECTS OF MENSTRATION ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF GIRLS AT  
IRISE INSTITUTE JINJA**

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**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES IN PARTIAL  
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UNIVERSITY**

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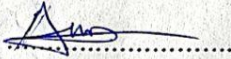
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**DECLARATION**

I, **ARIGANYIRA PHIONAH**, hereby declare that this research proposal is my own work and has not been submitted to any institution.

Signature

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'A. Phionah', is written over a horizontal dotted line.

**ARIGANYIRA PHIONAH**

**APPROVAL**

This research proposal has been reviewed and approved by my research supervisor

Signed by:

.....*Halima Lemis Carl*.....

Date: .....*19 May 2025*.....

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## ABSTRACT

The study examined the “Effects of menstruation on academic performance of girls at Irise institute Jinja.” The general objective was to examine both experiences of managing menstrual cycle and academic experiences among girls during menstrual cycle at Irise Institute Jinja and the specific objectives were to describe the experiences of girls in managing the menstrual cycle at Irise Institute Jinja and to find out the academic experiences among girls during menstrual cycle at Irise Institute Jinja. The research study was carried out in a non-government organization by the name of Irise Institute East Africa.

The purpose of the study was to acquire more knowledge on the effects of menstruation on academic performance of girls and to also understand more on the strategies employed in mitigating menstrual related challenges.

This research employed the empowerment theory in the finding of the answers to the research questions as well as achieving the research objectives. Empowerment theory (Dauglas, 2016) suggests that it is a process and a collective effort which involved individual participation in the activities and decision making.

The exploratory research design was used for this research study together with qualitative approach for data collection. The research design helped the researcher to describe the experiences of girls in managing menstrual cycle and to find out the academic experiences among girls during menstrual cycle. The researcher concluded that menstruation period requires monthly education since it’s a monthly cycle preparing the girls, boys and teachers how to handle any of such a case, in some schools, NGOs take sex education programs to all students which prepares the girls both mentally and physically. It is true that sometimes the experiences are negative however, according to the research, there is hope that these negative experiences can be transformed to positives when these girls are given all ears and guidance in case they start the process.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY**

#### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In this chapter the research concentrated on expanding the details of the research study, background of the study, the problem statement, objectives of the study, scope of the study, purpose of the study, justification of the study, significance of the study, theoretical framework and the last concept was the conceptual framework as shown below in details.

#### **1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY**

##### **1.1.0 Historical background**

EP Renne, 2021 urged that historically the educators believed that menstrual blood was used to purify menstruating women as a sign of preparing women's wombs for pregnancy so as to bear a baby in the clean womb and this belief was so much in the African Traditional Society (ATS). The other people in African tradition society especially in the early and late 1600s and 1800s had different names for the menstruation namely in Africa "the curse", Asia especially Taiwan "regular monthly occurrences" and last name was to "Wash the Moon" a name that was commonly used in Sierra Leon (C Knight, 2013). IT Winkler, 2020 pointed out that historically many decision makers have paid limited attention to menstruation which may be due to the oversight and deliberate exclusion. Despite all that he continued to urge that menstruation was rising to the level of global awareness for the last decades showing the menstrual movement from its past and it was at this background that my research is about menstrual effects on the academic performance of girls at Irise Institute East Africa in Jinja.

## **Conceptual background**

The conceptual background presented a brief description of the concepts or key terms in my research study as presented and described below. The key terms that were described include Menstruation, girls and academic performance respectively. J Hennegan et al.2021 viewed and defined menstruation as the process of girls and women discharged blood and other material from the lining of the uterus at intervals of about one lunar month from the puberty stage until the menopause except during pregnancy.

KA Hasson, 2020 continued to describe menstruation as a menstrual blood which was partly tissue from the inside of the girls' uterus flowing from the cervix and out of the body through the vagina and it is basically driven by hormones. A girl is any female child or a young woman especially those who were still in high school. A girl is furthermore described as a young female who tries to elevate her social status through bullying and cliquey behaviour, especially at high school (M Hayes, 2019).

A Hellas, 2018 defined academic performance as a measurement of the learning levels achieved by students or pupils which was considered as a key indicator of the effectiveness of an educational institution like Irise Institute East Africa in Jinja.

### **1.1.1 Contextual background**

The research study was carried out in a non-government organization by the name of Irise Institute East Africa. An organization that works towards increasing access to menstrual health information, products and services to school going girls and demystify cultural norms associated with period stigma in east Africa's Uganda communities such as Jinja.

## **1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

Menstruation, being natural yet a challenge to manage by many girls often affects their stay at school. Close to 76.0% of the girls reporting to schools can't effectively manage their menstrual related challenge by having a continuous access to the menstrual sanitary towels (Miuro, 2018). As of 2023, close to 3 of five girls miss school as a result of menstruation (ministry of education, 2023). This is because of the intense back pain, fear of leaking blood, and lack of privacy for changing the sanitary towels while at school.

For the fact that everyone deserves equal and proper education, the understanding ought to be drawn to the multifaceted impacts of the menstruation on the girl child education at the institute. Therefore, this research seeks to examine the menstrual related absenteeism, menstrual related stigma and the suggestion of strategies to enable the child thrive in education amidst menstruation.

## **1.3 GENERAL OBJECTIVES**

To examine both experiences of managing menstrual cycle and academic experiences among girls during menstrual cycle at Irise Institute Jinja.

## **1.4 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

- i. To describe the experiences of girls in managing the menstrual cycle at Irise Institute Jinja.
- ii. To find out the academic experiences among girls during menstrual cycle at Irise Institute Jinja.

## **1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

- i. What are the experiences of girls in managing the menstrual cycle at Irise Institute Jinja?

- ii. What are the experiences of academic performances among girls at Irise Institute Jinja?

## **1.6 SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

### **1.6.1 Content scope**

In this research study the process of completing the study from formulating this proposal to writing the final report will be guided by the research objectives that I developed. The research objectives include; To examine the effects of menstrual related absenteeism from academic performance of the girl children at Irise Institute Jinja, to analyse the impact of menstrual related stigma on academic performance of girls at Irise Institute Jinja and To suggest strategies employed in mitigating menstrual related challenges among girls at Iris Institute in Jinja

### **1.6.2 Geographical scope**

The research study will be carried out in a non-government organization by the name of Irise Institute East Africa. An organization that works towards increasing access to menstrual health information, products and services to school going girls and demystify cultural norms associated with period stigma in east Africa's Uganda communities such as Jinja.

### **1.6.3 Time scope**

This research stud will be carried out within the period of one month where the first week will be for data collection, the second week shall be for data analysis and presenting the findings, the third week will be for writing the final report and the fourth week will be for presenting the final report to my research supervisor.

## **1.6 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The purpose of the study was to acquire more knowledge on the effects of menstruation on academic performance of girls and to also understand more on the strategies employed in mitigating menstrual related challenges. The study also

looked forward towards contributing to the menstrual health of the school going girls at Irise Institute East Africa Jinja. Furthermore, am carrying out this research study to enhance my research skills and knowledge and it will be of purpose in my completion of Bachelor of Social Work and Social Administration.

### **1.7 JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY**

The justification of my research is the fact that many girls at Irise Institution East Africa in Jinja are facing unclear challenges that hinder their academic performance. The first area that to be researched about the organization is to understand the effects of menstruation on the girls' performance in academics. This is because many stakeholders such as parents aren't aware that menstruation is a big challenge to school going girls hence justifying the need for me to carry out my research.

### **1.8 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

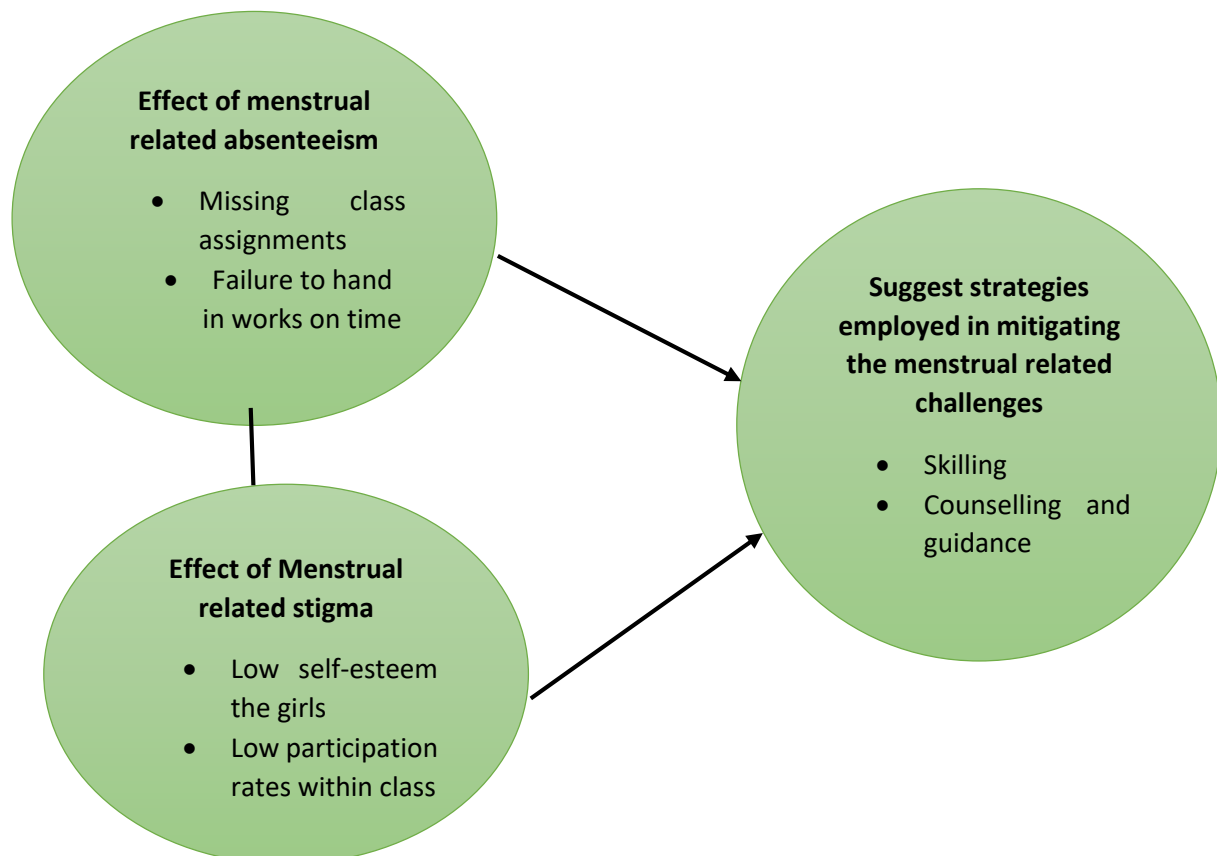
My research study is aimed at contributing on gathering information concerning the menstruation challenges and their effects on the academic performance of girls at Irise Institute East Africa Jinja. The information will also be of significance to the social workers and teachers to understand how menstruation affects the girls' academic performance and to also find more strategies that can be used by teachers and the social workers to mitigate the challenge.

### **1.9 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

This research employed the empowerment theory in the finding of the answers to the research questions as well as achieving the research objectives. Empowerment theory (Dauglas, 2016) suggests that it is a process and a collective effort which involves individual participation in the activities and decision making. This is at individual, group and community level whereby all parts of empowerment start from a single point of view in the long run. The processes through which the individuals

are equipped with skills and stand the ability to meet their needs and make their own decisions independently (Checkoway, 1992). Therefore, this theory shall guide the ground assessment of the menstrual related absenteeism, menstrual related stigma and suggest strategies in managing the menstrual related challenges.

### 1.10 CONCEPTUAL FRAME WORK



## CHAPTER TWO

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

#### 2.0 Introduction

The chapter contains literature reviewed from Journal articles, books and search engines like google specifically google scholar. The literature has been reviewed based on the two themes which are “The girls’ experiences in managing menstrual cycle and Girls academic performance.

#### 2.1 The experiences of girls in managing the menstrual period at Irise Institute Jinja.

Hennegan et al., 2019 urged that girls experienced poor confidence to managing, experiences of limited knowledge about menstruation, limited social support, externally enforced behavioural experiences from friends. The resource limitations with inadequate physical infrastructure to support girls in managing their menstruation cycle and other experiences included the nature of menstruation cycle management, perceptions of professionals in schools, shame, distress, and containment of bleeding have been the experiences that girls experienced in managing their menstrual cycle.

Vashisht, 2018 urges that management of menstrual cycle among school going girls influenced and also leads to sicknesses among the girls at school. This has been witnessed basing on the number of girls who were always absent from school during the menstruation period and were reported to be absent. The poor menstrual hygiene management, lack of privacy at school and restrictions imposed on girls during menstruation have been the negative experiences that girls have experienced as reported by (Pathak, 2018).

These experiences greatly contributed to the challenges girls face and experience at school because it affects their daily participation in activities at school (Pathak, 2018). The regular experiences of menstruation encountered by girls at Irise Institute schools have increasingly started affecting the girls' school participation of girls because of menstrual pain experiences and the impact of pain medication which has also increased absenteeism at schools among girls (Nabwera, 2022).

Brown et al., 2021 described many experiences as faced by girls in schools and sports during the process of menstrual management. The experiences that were described were the shame about managing their menstrual cycle, experiencing physical symptoms with mood disturbance and reduced motivation to sports which in my study its education that girls might be demotivated to attend classes.

Cotropia, 2019 presented a reason of lack of access to menstrual hygiene products in high school and primary schools as some of the common experiences faced by girls in school. The experiences of not attending school and classes among girls is also part of the outcomes in managing menstrual cycle among the girls at schools which leads to experiencing poor academic performances.

The girls experienced certain health complications while trying to manage their menstruation cycle in schools and among these health complications cramps were reported and stomach pains are always reported as health experiences (Cotropia, 2019). Some of the other girls in schools leave early in the day more especially during the menstruation period management which negatively impacts on their ability to learn in class.

Kumbeni et al. 2021 identified experiences among girls such as missing out school days during their menstrual period management process which acts as a lead to

menstruation-related school absenteeism among girls in schools which is almost a similar case at Irise Institute and anxiety was one of the major mental illnesses experienced by the girls. The girls were reported being absent from school due to menstrual management challenges that come with limited resources and materials used in managing menstruation.

The girls also suggested that the launch of good menstrual hygiene practices in schools could improve the negative experiences encountered by the girls while at school. Some of the experiences included failure of cleaning and washing external genitalia at least a day due to the limited resources to support girls to clean themselves (Ahmed, 2021).

Jahan et al. 2024 showed that it was a belief that menstruation management experiences among girls in schools impact the lack of menstrual hygiene management information and facilities in schools is a major contributor to adolescent girls' school absenteeism in low and middle -income countries like Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania. Furthermore, the girls' belief that menstruation cycle management affects school the girls' health because many tend to use old clothes due to the failure of affording the re-usable pads which results into diseases like skin diseases and other infections.

Mohammed, 2020 reported that the poor menstrual hygiene experiences may impact negatively on the academic performance of the girls at schools and those that were engaged in good menstrual hygiene reported low menstrual -related experiences in schools among girls at schools. Alam, 2016 presented that ninety percent of the girls stated that there are negative academic experiences resulting from the pressure of menstrual management.

Hailemeskel, 2016 also urged that the academic performance is influenced commonly by the experiences of menstrual pain on the students' among the students due to poor methods of menstrual management like use of old clothes and sometimes lack of water and sanitary pads for girls who cannot constantly afford to buy pads. The poor management of menstrual hygiene experiences leads to the adolescent girls into being absent in schools during the menstruation where almost seventy five percent perceived that the menstruation experiences interferes on the girls school performance (Bali, 2020).

The girls experienced menstrual distress which occurs during the menstruation period which negatively impacts the academic performance of girls in schools because it is prevalent and associated with absenteeism hence affecting academic performance of girls in schools (Sihag, 2022).

The girls further experienced psychological disturbances, limited social engagements and experience physical pain too which results due to process of menstrual cycle management (Hennegan et al., 2019). Heavy bleeding was reported to among the challenging experiences that girls have had to face and it shocks those that are experiencing their first periods which becomes more complicated when the resources are scarce (Mason et al.,2013).

## **2.2 The academic experiences among girls during menstruation period at Irise Institute Jinja.**

The most challenging academic experiences were found among girls from girls that came from families with smaller status. The commonest experiences that were discovered were absenteeism, impaired participation and concentration, declining academic performances and the inadequate sanitation facilities for menstrual

management and challenges containing menstruation have negatively impacted education of girls under menstruation (Munro et al, 2021).

Therefore, Olson et al, 2022 urged that stigmatization of girls under menstruation has a negative academic experience for girls in schools due to the discrimination the girls experience from the other gender of boys. The result of this stigma in many instances has led to the institutionalization of girls into single sex schools which makes them miss the interaction social skills hence poor academic experiences in the examination results (Olson et al, 2022).

The menstrual discomfort and psychosocial experiences have impacted the daily academic activities of girls in schools which makes them negative experiences to the girls in menstruation period. The learners are experiencing the prevalence of dysmenorrhea and their psychosocial effects which leads to limited attention of students in class. The mentioned main experiences also lead to common experiences and health complications such as headaches, dizziness, depression, menstrual disorderliness and menstrual disorder was also experienced by the girls in schools (Titilayo et al., 2009).

Menstrual cycle hinders academic discussion among the girls and boys in school as the girls fear to interact with the boys during the menstruation periods which leads to missing out of educational content hence poor academic performance. The girls in menstruation are perceived as irrational and too emotional which results into lesser capabilities of girls in schools hence affecting their academic performance. Menstrual stigma restricts social, physical activities and has health consequences which negatively impact the academic performance of girls (Olson et al, 2022).

Menstrual related stigma negatively influenced the existence of anxiety which forces girls to stay at home during their periods which lowers the academic grades of the girls (Hunter et al, 2022) hence menstrual stigma causing negative impacts on the academic performance of girls. The menstrual related stigma diminishes the girls' academic confidence and makes them feel like they are incapable of actively participating in academic discussions with the people of different gender (Hunter et al, 2022) which influences poor academic performance.

The privacy that girls demanded during the menstruation period due to menstrual related stigma of people around them was identified as cause of decline of the academic performance. Privacy becomes a barrier as an emergency shelter for the girls to hide during their menstruation period because most of them tend to hide till they are safe from the periods which leads them to miss out a lot from class hence poor academic performance (Patel et al., 2022).

The menstruation related stigma leads to societal challenges which becomes one of the barriers facing girls in schools hence poor academic performance of the girls under menstruation periods (Critchley et al., 2020). A lot of girls who menstruate around the world, menstruation regularly and often catastrophically disrupts their physical, mental, and social well-being, the abnormal uterine bleeding and other menstruation-related disorders have influenced stigmatization hence poor academic performance of girls in schools (Critchley et al., 2022).

The menstrual related stigma was a founder of difficulties in managing menstruation at school because the adolescents aren't assisted in managing menstrual related challenges. This situation leads to poor academic performance among the girls at schools like Irise Institute East Africa Jinja (Hannegan et al. 2016). Hunter, 2019

urges that the public's stigmatization with the idea that the girls under menstruation are dirty has led to the increased dodging of classes hence poor academic performance of the girls in schools and Irise Institute East Africa Jinja.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

This chapter presented the research design, the methods of data collection, the instruments of data collection, the data analysis procedures, the methodological anticipated challenges, the procedures of data collection and the data sampling procedures.

#### **3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN**

The exploratory research design was used for this research study together with qualitative approach for data collection. The research design helped the researcher to describe the experiences of girls in managing menstrual cycle and to find out the academic experiences among girls during menstrual cycle. Here, the girls at Irise institute Jinja were interviewed and data shall be collected at group or individual level.

#### **3.2 AREA OF STUDY**

The research shall be conducted at Irise institute Jinja. A centre which works on the menstrual needs of the school going girls as well as other program all pushed towards the proper menstrual health of the school going girls.

#### **3.3 SOURCES OF DATA.**

This research used both the primary and secondary sources of data. Reports by Irise institute on the menstrual health of the girls shall be reviewed as well as one on one interaction with the school going girls at Irise institute, the institutional heads, and the organisational social workers to collect the information.

#### **3.4 POPULATION AND SAMPLING**

This researcher used the simple random sampling. This a type of sampling strategy which put all the research participants the chance of being selected to be part of

the research. The researcher randomly chooses the people to participate in the research. All the girls especially who have started menstruation shall stand a chance of taking part in the research.

Through this, rough estimate of 25 participants were be got from a process of select deselect procedure and this shall be repeated consecutively until the number is met of the respondents in the research on the menstruation and academic performance.

### **3.5 METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION**

#### **FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS**

Focus group discussions were used during this data collection. This is a qualitative method of data collection that involved the group of people discussion a specific topic in an interactive setting. Here, the open ended questions shall be sued which shall give the researcher a conducive time to collect the needed information on the menstruation related topics among the girls at the institute. The researcher made small groups of 6\_12 girls, institution heads, and the social workers. The group coordinator shall ensure that the research participants participate effectively to be in line to collect the data from the different individual since most of them have different perspectives and ideas.

#### **3.6 INTERVIEW**

Under here, the structured interviews were conducted whereby the interview guide shall be drafted and the questions on the effect of menstruation on the academic performance shall be drafted in an open ended way to give the respondents and participants enough gap to respond to the questions in an elaborative way.

The interviews were conducted on a group and individual procedure. The group way shall be conducted through the school going girls to assist in easing the work and

easy yet verifiable way of data collection. The confidentiality of the clients shall be ensured and reassurance shall be put into consideration.

### **3.7 PROCEDURE OF DATA COLLECTION**

The researcher submitted the proposal to the researcher supervisor who approved it. Upon approval, the researcher collected the research introductory letter from the school of social sciences of Uganda Christian University which shall be taken to the in charge of Irise institute Jinja upon which data collection shall be commenced.

### **3.8 DATA ANALYSIS**

This research used the thematic data analysis. This is one of the most common analysis methods for the qualitative data. This is where the researchers systematically organize and analyse complex data sets by searching for themes that can capture the narratives available in the account of the data collected. (Dawadi, 2020). The researcher begins by arranging the data through the themes and the data that seems similar to each other and then this is further documented.

### **3.9 METHODOLOGICAL CONSTRAINTS**

The researcher was most likely to face the challenge of resource constraints especially to facilitate the research assistants, the research participants and the transport to and from Jinja.

The bias and failure to open up by the girls due to the fear and what the world has raised about the issues of menstruation which may hinder the easy access of data hence a challenge.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### PRESENTATION ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

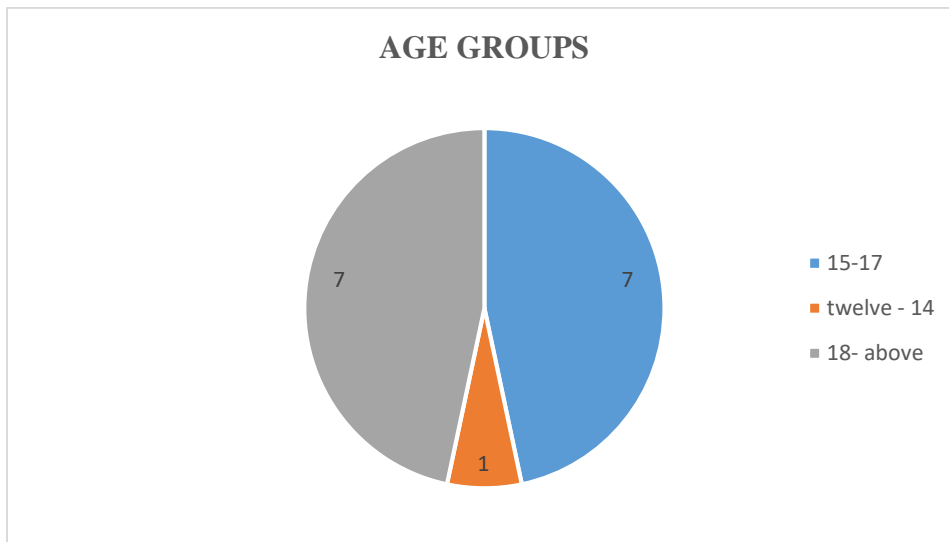
#### 4.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter basically presents the findings, data analysis, interpretations, and responses of the demographic information of the respondents

#### 4.1 THE EXPERIENCES OF GIRLS IN MANAGING THE MENSTRUAL PERIOD AT IRISE INSTITUTE JINJA

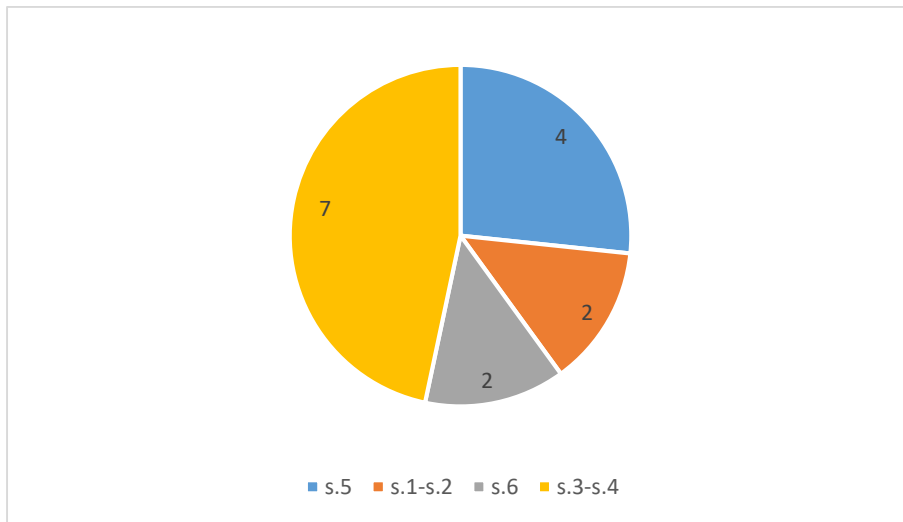
The researcher conducted this on 15 respondents using both the interview guide and the Focal Group Discussion and these were the findings.

**Figure 1: A pie chart representing age groups**



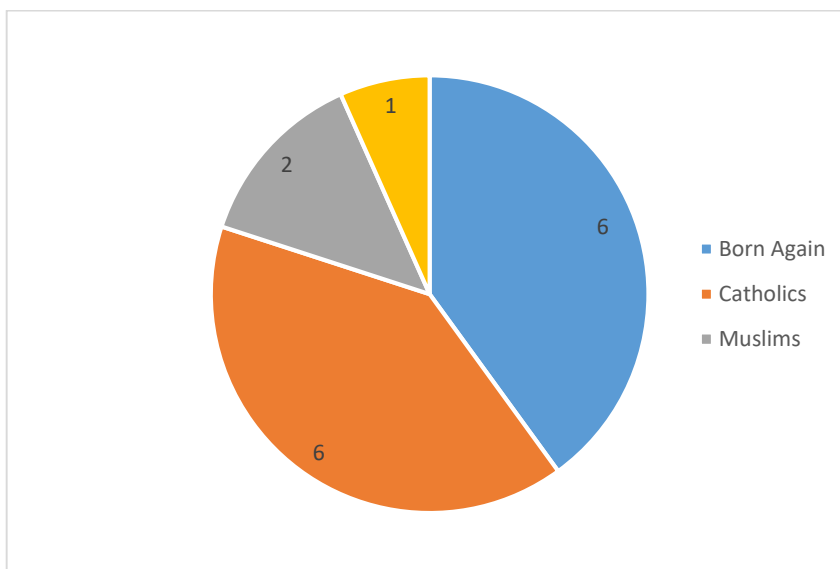
The age group of 15-17, 18 and above had same number as (7) and 12- 14 was (1). According to the pie chart its very clear that the participation was dominated by respondents between the age of 15-17 and 18 years and above with the number of female (12) and male (3).

**Figure 2: A pie chart representing the number of students who participated as respondents.**



The respondents were mainly from s.3- s.4 (7) followed by s.5 (4), s.1- s.2 (2) and finally s. 6 (2). Lusoga was the most dominating language spoken (6), Luganda closer to it with (5) and few spoke English (4).

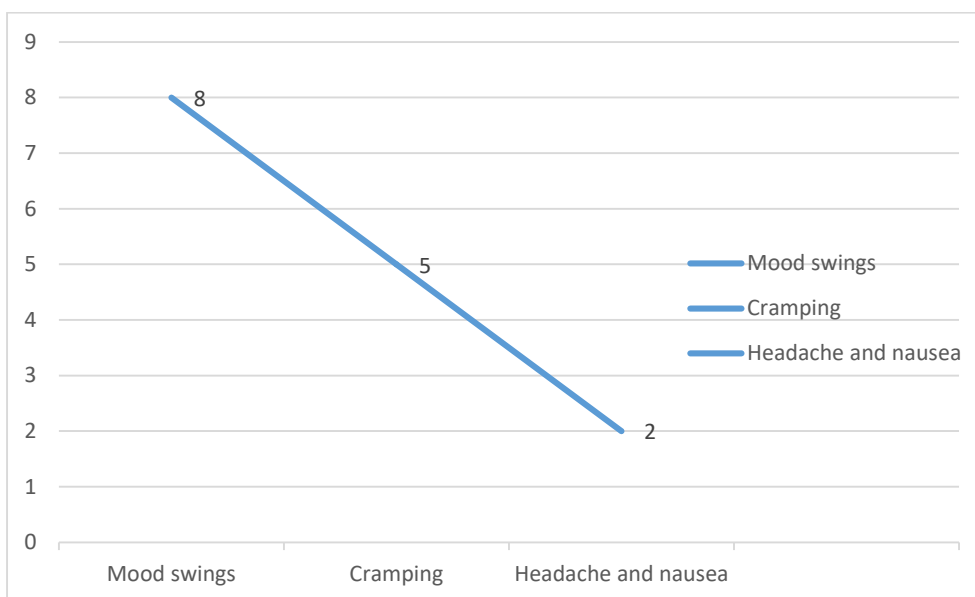
**Figure 3: A pie chart representing the religious categories that participated in the research study.**



These respondents were mostly born again (6) and Catholics (6), however, the Muslims (2) also participated and (1) other. The pie chart above shows how participatory the religious sector and body are interested and were not shying away from participating into the research to empower the gender.

The respondents who resided in Jinja and had their favourite subjects as science (6), math (5) and English (4), and also challenging subjects; math (7), science (5) and social studies and Christian Religious Education (3), they were involved in various school activities that kept them active and flexible, which included netball (7), music dance and drama (7) then very few were involved in football (1). They preferred both male teachers (7) to and female teachers (7). The respondents stated that they mainly use disposable pads (9) and few use re-usable pads (3).

**Figure 4. A line graph representing the experiences of girls during menstruation period.**



The girls always have experiences during their menstrual period, physically, there is back pain, dizziness and mood swings (8), cramping, bloating and breast tenderness (5) and fatigue, headache and nausea (2).

These pain shifts their moods and is sometimes backed up by loneliness. The sources of menstrual cycle management experiences are so common in families (10), low in peers (4) and very low among teachers (1).

The respondents extended their views on how girls manage their menstrual cramps in which majority suggested through use of pain reliever (11), some said engaging in physical activities (3) and only (1) apply heat or cold packs to lower abdomen. The girls are maximally (10) encountering new experiences during menstrual period however, few are minimal (5) coping up.

As explained, girls under going through menstrual period have emotional challenges they face and it all varies, according to the respondents, anxiety, depression and mood swings (12) escalate other emotional feelings like irritability, frustration and anger (3), on a positive note, they illustrated no feelings of embarrassment, shame and low esteem.

Nevertheless, there are proposed ways on how the respondents manage emotions during their menstrual cycle, to a bigger extent, a mass of them suggested talking to friends, families and trusted adults (12) in which they guide them on what and how to do behave during that time of the month, a few added engaging in relaxation techniques (3) where you have limited time to engage in long conversation with people which at the end annoy you.

Due to challenges such as limited access to affordable menstrual products (6), lack of availability of menstrual products in schools and public restrooms (5) and shame associated with menstrual periods (4), girls face such challenges making them unable to easily access menstrual products. Girls during menstrual periods always experience changes in their body hygiene and if not well managed, they end up having bad odors failing them to associate in public places, however, there is always ways to manage such that were provided by the respondents as, using sanitary pads and menstrual pads (7) majorly, practicing good hygiene such as often washing genital areas (6) and finally changing menstrual products like pads regularly (2).

Additionally, the researcher presented the cultural and societal factors influencing girls experience during menstruation as limited education and awareness about menstruation (7), religious beliefs that restricts activities during menstruation (5) and shame associated with menstruation (3).

The daily activities of a girl are affected due to their menstrual experiences, for instance avoiding social activities (8), missing school and work due to menstrual cramps and heavy bleeding (6) and (1) feeling of anxiety and stress about managing menstrual symptoms. Most systems surrounding girls are support systems that help guide them out of the painful experience, family members such as sisters, mothers and aunts (8) highly support these girls, friends and peers who can offer advice and support (4) since they are closer to them too and some have once experienced that

and finally school nurses, counsellors and teachers who provide resources and services (3), the girls with this combination tend to stand strong and confident.

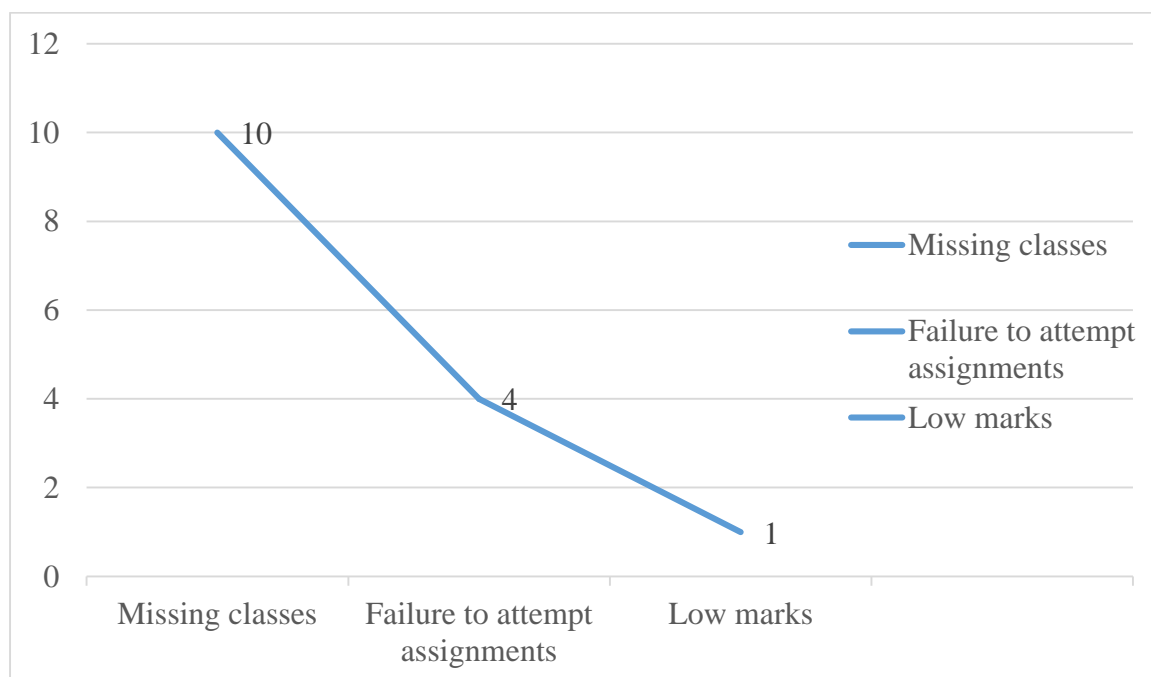
The negative experiences in managing menstrual cycle are cramps 911) where your lower abdomen pains a lot, limited menstrual hygiene products (3) and heavy bleeding (1).

Finally, the girls noticed a number of socio-cultural experiences during their menstrual cycle, that is, religious beliefs (13) and social norms (2). The girls explained how they overcome their negative experiences as, engaging in co-curricular activities (10), sharing with parents (4) and (1) joining discussion groups.

#### 4.2 THE ACADEMIC EXPERIENCES AMONG GIRLS DURING MENSTRUATION PERIOD AT IRISE INSTITUTE JINJA

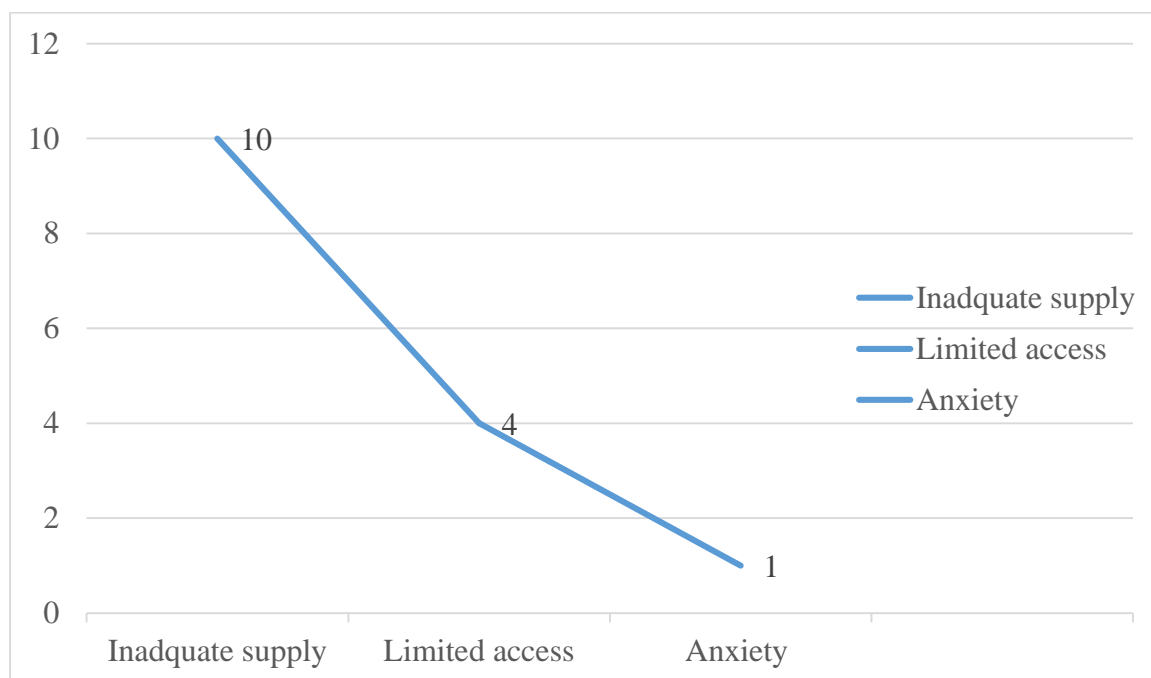
The girls experiences affect their academic performances through,) girls fall behind in their school work due to missed classes and assignments (10) and menstrual related anxiety and stress can negatively impact girls self-esteem and confidence (5), cramps as well act as main disturbances to the girls in that they miss school and arrive late hence missing lessons and assignment (10), leads to fatigue, making it difficult for girls to focus in academics (4) and girls may participate less in class (1).

**Figure 5. A line graph representing factors affecting academic performance**



Factors that affect academic performance during menstrual cycle is majorly missing classes (10), failure to attempt assignments (4) and low marks (1). The girls are demotivated to academics during menstrual cycle, through self-isolation (8), shame (4) and through lowering self-esteem (3).

**Figure 6. Line graph representing the challenges encountered by girls.**



The girls face challenges such as lack of availability of menstruation equipment and inadequate supply (10), limited access to clean and private sanitation facilities (4) and shame associated with menstruation, leading to embarrassment and anxiety (1), the girl’s performance drops immediately and the girls fails to complete all the exercises assigned.

According to the respondents, girl’s confidence in academics is affected majorly through influencing shame (10) and pain (5). Additional, teachers and school administrators support girls through creating a supportive and non-judgmental environment (8), providing access to menstrual products or sanitary facilities (6) and very less extent that they offer flexibility with assignments (1) however, the girls most times feel embarrassed (10) seeking help from, and (5) have limited trust in teachers and school administrators claiming they may not maintain confidentiality.

In extra-curriculum activities, girls are affected in a way that they may avoid participating in sports due to pain (8), anxiety and stress can impact their confidence and self-esteem (7). They also experience sickness (9), missing school (4) and exclusion from friends (2) as key effects to their participation in academic activities. Furthermore, the most noticeable experiences before and after the cycle period are poor performance (15)

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the summary of findings, conclusions, recommendations and areas for further research.

#### 5.1. SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

##### 5.1.1 Girls experience in managing the menstrual period.

Menstruation was termed to be a blessing in every girl and a sample that you have higher chances of conceiving, it does not come completely with no experiences, sometimes girls had different experiences every month of their cycle and that remains untold. According to the researcher, girls between 15-18 years have first time experience and sometimes find hardships in managing themselves in such a situation, the experiences tend to come with pain that is either emotional or physical that changes their moods, body shape, they feel scared, guilty or some other isolate themselves.

Regardless of the pains, there are various ways they can be managed for instance, use of prescribed painkiller drugs from clinical officers, use of warm water applied below the belly and also exercises to reduce the pain. Additionally, fear and anxiety is registered during this cycle more so in seeking for resources such as reusable or non-reusable pads enabling them to keep up with the hygiene. The fears from boys who bully the girls in the community and schools discourages the girls from socially interacting in public.

##### 5.1.2 ACADEMIC EXPERIENCES DURING MENSTRUATION PERIOD.

The performances of the girls during this period is highly lowered due to numerous effects, mainly because they miss classes due to excessive pain and sometimes fear to be embarrassed once a mistake occurs and it appears behind their clothes, on the other side, menstrual period comes with different feelings and sometimes the feeling of laziness overwhelms the girls making them unable to attend all classes.

In schools, most toilets do not have sanitary pads for emergencies for the girls in the end for those who cannot afford have to remain home until their cycle is complete.

The environment created doesn't necessarily favour the girls, because both the other children and teachers lack confidentiality in which they end up embarrassing these girls in classes or compounds. To a very less extent that the experience on academic performance is positive; well off children from a good socio-economic status provide all required for such a girl, that is to say, care, love, resources and counselling strengthening their confidence.

## **5.2 CONCLUSION**

Menstruation period requires monthly education since it's a monthly cycle preparing the girls, boys and teachers how to handle any of such a case, in some schools, NGOs take sex education programs to all students which prepares the girls both mentally and physically. It is true that sometimes the experiences are negative however, according to the research, there is hope that these negative experiences can be transformed to positives when these girls are given all ears and guidance in case they start the process. The young girls need to understand and be motivated that it is a good thing to go through all the menstruation cycle and in case there's is failure a doctor can be sought.

## **5.3 Recommendations**

Recommendation to schools. The researcher recommends that all schools should have senior women teachers who every week must get time to guide and counsel the girls on sex education and management of menstruation cycle so as not to affect their performance in school and social life.

Recommendation to health workers. The health workers especially from government hospitals should distribute pads either reusable or disposable in schools and other public places for easy access to every girl so as to prevent its lack and anxiety and also having to first ask someone else for assistance.

Recommendation for social worker practitioners and students. The researcher recommends that both the social worker practitioners and social work students to design and establish education programs that would empower girls in schools about menstrual hygiene.

#### **5.4 Area for further research.**

The researcher suggests that other students could research about “The public perception on menstrual hygiene among women” which the researcher believes will help people acquire more knowledge on menstrual hygiene.

#### **5.5 SOCIAL POLICY**

The researcher recommends that the government should establish a social policy where all schools and public institutions are distributing both re-usable and non-reusable pads to the school going girls to support them receive sanitary equipments.

#### **5.6 SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE**

The social worker practice should further be exercised under these identified circumstances identified by the researcher so as to make social work relevant to the clients and communities.

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**APPENDIX 1: INFORMED CONSENT FORM**

Dear Respondent,

My name is PHIONAH ARIGANYIRA a Bachelor’s student of Social Work and Social Administration at Uganda Christian University Mukono. As a requirement for the award of a degree, a student is expected to undertake a research study. I have therefore chosen to achieve this by investigating the ‘Effects of Menstration on Academic Performance of Girls at Irise Institute Jinja.’ I therefore humbly request you to participate in this interview to enable me acquire the desirable data to complete the investigation.

The information that you will provide shall be held with strict confidentiality, anonymity and participation is voluntary. However, I understand that even if you agree to participate now, you can withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind.

Your cooperation is greatly valued.

Thank you,

.....

Signature of Respondent

.....

Date

.....

## **APPENDIX 2: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR KEY INFORMANTS**

### **SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION**

#### **1. AGE:**

12 - 14

15 - 17

18 and above

#### **2. CLASS**

s.1 - s.2

s.3 - s.4

s.5

s.6

#### **3. FAVORABLE LANGUAGE**

English

Lusoga

Luganda

#### **4. GENDER:**

Female

Male

#### **5. RELIGION**

Born Again

Moslem

Catholic

Others

#### **6. RESPONSIBILITY OF RESPONDENT**

Head teacher

Teacher

Social worker

Councillor

#### **7. PLACE OF WORK**

Irise Institute Jinja

## **8. RESIDENCE**

- Jinja

## **9. FAMILY SIZE**

- 1-2
- 3-4
- 5-6
- 7 and above

## **10. Co-curricular activities**

- Football
- Netball
- Music Dance and Drummer

## **11. Favorable subjects**

- English
- Science
- Mathematics

**12. Preferred teaching gender**

Female teacher

Male teacher

**13. Time of arrival at school**

6: 00am- 7:00am

8: 00am-9:00am

**14. Most challenging subjects**

English

Science

Mathematics

Social Studies and Religious Education

**15. Commonly used types of menstrual hygiene products**

Re-useable pads

Disposable pads

**SECTION B: TO DESCRIBE THE EXPERIENCES OF GIRLS IN MANAGING MENSTRUAL CYCLE.**

1. What are the physical symptoms experienced by girls during their menstrual cycle?

- Cramping, bloating and breast tenderness
- Fatigue, headaches and nausea
- Back pain, dizziness and mood swings

2. What are the commonest sources of menstrual cycle management experiences?

- Families
- Peers
- Teachers

3. How do girls manage their menstrual cramps?

- Using pain relievers
- Applying heat or cold packs to lower abdomen
- Engaging in physical activities

4. At what level are the girls encountering new experiences due menstrual management?

- Maximum
- Minimum

5. What are the emotional challenges faced by girls during their menstrual cycle?

- Anxiety, depression and mood swings
- Irritability, frustration and anger

Feelings of embarrassment, shame and low self esteem

6. How do girls manage their emotions during their menstrual cycle?

Talking to friend, family and trusted adults

Engaging in relaxation techniques

Writing in a journal

7. What are the challenges faced by girls in accessing menstrual products?

Limited access to affordable menstrual products

Shame associated with menstruation

Lack of availability of menstrual products in schools and public restrooms

8. How do girls manage their menstrual hygiene?

Using sanitary pads and menstrual pads

Practicing good hygiene such as washing genital areas

Changing menstrual products regularly

9. What are the cultural and societal factors that influence girls' experience of menstruation?

Shame associated with menstruation

Religious beliefs that restrict girls' activities during menstruation

Limited education and awareness about menstruation

10. How do girls' experiences of menstruation affect their daily lives?

Missing school and work due to menstrual cramps and heavy bleeding

Avoiding social activities

- Feeling anxious or stressed about managing menstrual symptoms

11. What are the support systems available to girls for managing their menstrual cycle?

- School nurses, counselors and teachers who provide resources and services
- Family members such as sisters, mothers and aunts
- Friends and peers who can offer advice and support

12. What are the reasons for the negative experiences encountered in menstrual cycle management?

- Cramps
- Limited menstrual hygiene products
- Heavy bleeding

13. Are there any socio-cultural experiences you notice during menstrual cycle management?

- Institutional rituals
- Religious beliefs
- Social norms

14. How do you overcome the negative experiences due to menstrual management experiences?

- Joining discussion groups
- Sharing with parents
- Engaging in co-curricular activities

15. What painful experiences do you normally go through during management of menstrual cycle?

- Pain from medications

- Headache
- Cramps

**SECTION C: THE ACADEMIC EXPERIENCES AMONG GIRLS DURING MENSTRUAL CYCLE.**

16. What the most challenging subjects during menstrual cycle periods?

- English
- Science
- Mathematics

17. How do girls' experiences of menstruation affect their academic performance?

- Menstrual related anxiety and stress can negatively impact girls' self-esteem and confidence.
- Girls fall behind in their school work due to missed classes and assignments.
- Cramps, bloating and fatigue can impair concentration and focus

18. How do menstrual cramps affect girls' attendance and participation in school?

- Menstrual cramps cause girls to miss school and arriving late hence missing lessons and assignment.
- Girls may participate less in class
- Cramps lead to fatigue, making it difficult for girls to focus in academics.

19. How does menstrual cycle affect academic performance of girls?

- Failure to attempt assignments
- Missing of classes

Low marks

20. How does the menstrual cycle affect the girls' motivation to academics?

Self-isolation

Shame

Lowering self-esteem

21. What are the challenges faced by girls in managing their menstruation in school?

Limited access to clean and private sanitation facilities

Lack of availability of menstruation equipments and inadequate supply

Shame associated with menstruation, leading to embarrassment and anxiety.

22. Is absenteeism an academic experience as a result of menstrual cycle?

Yes

No

23. How does absenteeism as an academic experience due to menstrual cycle affect the performance of girls?

Poor performances

Failure to complete and attempt exercises

24. How does the menstrual cycle affect the girls' confidence in academics?

Through pain

Through influencing shame

25. How do teachers and school administrators support girls during menstruation?

Providing access to menstrual products or sanitary facilities

- Offering flexibility with assignments
- Creating a supportive and non-judgmental environment

26. What are the barriers to seeking help for menstrual related issues in school?

- Fear of embarrassment
- Limited trust in teachers and school administrators
- Limited knowledge and resources about menstruation

27. What are the effects of menstruation on girls' participation in extracurricular activities?

- Girls may avoid participating in sports due to pain
- Anxiety and stress can impact girls' confidence and self-esteem
- Feeling embarrassed about managing their menstruation cycle

28. Which experiences can you identify as key effects to your participation in academic activities?

- Missing school
- Exclusion from friends
- Sickness

29. What are some of the noticeable experiences before and after menstrual cycle period?

- Active participation in school activities
- High performances
- Poor performances

30. How has the menstrual cycle period affected the girls' academics?

Shame

Limited time to engage in discussions

Thank you



# UGANDA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

A Centre of Excellence in the Heart of Africa

April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2025

## TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir/Madam

Re: INTRODUCTORY LETTER FOR RESEARCH

This is to introduce to you ALIGANYIRA Phionah Registration number S23B15/084, a student of Uganda Christian University, pursuing Bachelor's degree in Social Work and Administration. She is expected to carry out research in the final year under the guidance of a university supervisor in partial fulfillment for the requirements of the above mentioned award.

Topic: "The Effect of Menstruation on Academic Performance of Girls at Irise Institute Jinja."

The purpose of this communication is to request your office to allow her collect data from your organization. Any assistance rendered to her will be highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully,

Betty Enyipu Akurut, PhD  
HoD, Undergraduate Studies  
Tel: 0772602382  
Email: bakurut@ucu.ac.ug



A Centre of Excellence in the Heart of Africa



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Ugandachristianuniversity @UCUniversity, Founded by the Province of Church of Uganda, Chartered by the Government of Uganda.