

Menstrual Hygiene Practices and Experiences Supplement

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Introduction

Caring for the body during menstruation in a way that is effective, supports hygiene, comfort and the preferences of women, adolescent girls and people who menstruate is essential for menstrual health. Menstrual hygiene practices refer to the actions taken to collect menstrual blood, handle menstrual materials/products and clean the body. Synthesis of past qualitative research has found that menstrual practices are a distinct construct from women's, girls' and people who menstruates' experience of enacting self-care behaviors. Soiling is another construct that is closely related to menstrual hygiene practices and experiences. It describes the unintentional leaking or staining of materials with menstrual blood.

Reasons to include **menstrual hygiene practice** measures in your work:

- To describe current practices among participants
- To explore the relationship between menstrual hygiene practices and urogenital infections
- To explore factors that influence menstrual hygiene practice

Reasons to include **soiling** measures in your work:

- To describe current soiling experiences among participants
- To explore the relationship between soiling and life outcomes such as social participation

Reasons to include **menstrual hygiene experience** measures in your work:

- To understand participants' experiences of menstrual blood management (menstrual hygiene practices, and any difficulties they experience.
- To explore the relationship between menstrual hygiene experiences and life outcomes such as education, sexual and reproductive health and mental health.
- To understand factors that may support improved menstrual hygiene experiences

Overview of Menstrual Hygiene Practices: Menstrual Practices Questionnaire (MPQ)

Definition	All of the activities undertaken in order to collect, contain, and remove menstrual blood from the body. ¹
Importance to Menstrual Health	Menstrual practices affect the daily experiences of menstruation from the materials that people who menstruate use, where they change their menstrual materials, and how often they wash their hands and genitals. ^{1,2} Collecting data on the ways people who menstruate manage their periods can help us understand their menstrual hygiene routines and vulnerability to physical health outcomes such as reproductive tract irritation and irritation. ³⁻⁸
Measurement Method	All questions: Self-reported by girls on an enumerator enumerator-administered survey
General Considerations¹	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The term “menstrual materials” in MPQ may need to be replaced with more familiar terminology. 2. All questions refer to the last menstrual period. 3. Not all questions are applicable for all respondents. Researchers and public health practitioners should select the appropriate questions for their situation. 4. Question order can be modified as appropriate and can be integrated with questions from other surveys.
Question Source	Menstrual Practices Questionnaire (MPQ): Hennegan, J., Nansubuga, A., Akullo, A., Smith, C., & Schwab, K.J., (2020). The Menstrual Practices Questionnaire (MPQ): Development, elaboration, and implications for future research. <i>Global Health Action</i> , 13(1), 1829402. https://doi.org/10.1080/16549716.2020.1829402

Construct’s Main Use in the AMEHC Study			
Proximal Exposure for:	Distal Exposure for:	Covariate for:	Outcome for:
Physical Health	Education Mental Health SRH		

Included in the Following AMEHC Study Activities*					
Baseline Girls Survey	Baseline Guardians Survey	Baseline School Audit	Sub-cohort 1 Survey	Sub-cohort 2 Survey	Sub-cohort 3 Survey
X			X	X	X

Wave 1 Survey	Wave 1 School Audit	Wave 2 Survey	Wave 2 Guardian Survey	Wave 2 School Audit	
X		X			

***Specific questions varied over different data collection activities according to study needs.**

Menstrual Hygiene Practice: MPQ Survey Questions in AMEHC

Question Number	Question	Response Options
MPQ1	<p>During your most recent menstrual period, what were all the materials you used to catch or absorb your menstruation?</p> <p><i>Select all that apply</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cloth/towel • Disposable sanitary pad (panty system) • Disposable sanitary pad (belt system) • Reusable sanitary pad • Toilet paper • Cotton wool • Mattress • Underwear alone (i.e. without other padding) • Natural material (e.g., leaves, sand, grass) • Period underwear • Menstrual cup • Tampon • Disposable sanitary pad (panty system) and tissue together • Disposable sanitary pad (belt system) and tissue together • Other (specify)

MPQ2	<p>What was the menstrual material you used most often when you were at home during your most recent menstrual period?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cloth/towel • Disposable sanitary pad (panty system) • Disposable sanitary pad (belt system) • Reusable sanitary pad • Toilet paper • Cotton wool • Mattress • Underwear alone (i.e. without other padding) • Natural material (e.g., leaves, sand, grass) • Period underwear • Menstrual cup • Tampon • Disposable sanitary pad (panty system) and tissue together • Disposable sanitary pad (belt system) and tissue together • Other (specify)
MPQ1_clothtype	<p>Were your cloths bought to be used for menstruation or used for something else first?</p> <p><i>Note: Only ask if the respondent answered "cloth/towel" to MPQ1</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes, bought to be used for menstruation • No, used for something else first (e.g., clothes, bedding) • Don't know
MPQ3	<p>Who pays for your menstrual materials?</p> <p><i>Select all that apply</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Materials were free (recycled) • Myself • Husband/boyfriend • Mother • Father • Other family (specify) • Provided by NGO • Provided by school • Other (specify)
MPQ_panties	<p>Do you wear panties... every day, only when you have your period, or never?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every day • During menstruation • Never

MPQD	Who usually makes decisions about the materials you use to absorb or catch menstrual blood?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You • Your parents (or guardian) • You and your parents (or guardian) jointly • Someone else • Someone else and you jointly
MPQ4	During your most recent menstrual period, how many times did you change your menstrual materials on the heaviest day of bleeding?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 time • 2 times (morning and evening) • 3 times (morning, evening, and once during the day) • 4 times (morning, evening, twice during the day/night) • More than 4 times
MPQ5	Where did you most often change your menstrual materials when you were at home during your last period?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bedroom • Bathroom (in the house) • Bathroom (outside the house) • Outside/bush • Other (specify)
Hands1	Did you wash your hands with soap before changing your menstrual materials during your last menstrual period?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every time • Some of the time • None of the time
Hands2	Did you wash your hands with soap after changing your menstrual materials during your last menstrual period?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every time • Some of the time • None of the time
MPQ6	Did you dispose of (throw away) any menstrual materials during your last period? <i>Note: includes single-use materials and reusable materials at the end of their life</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No • Yes
MPQ6_wash	During your most recent period, did you wash your used menstrual pad before throwing it away?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No • Yes

MPQ7	Where did you dispose of your used menstrual materials at home during your most recent period?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pit latrine • Toilet • Burned • Household rubbish bin • Took to community rubbish • Brush/buried/river • Drain • Store for later disposal (by self) • Store for later disposal (by someone else) • Other (specify)
MPQ7_storage	<p>Where are your menstrual materials THEN disposed (after they have been stored)?</p> <p><i>Note: Only ask if the respondent answered “store for later disposal” to MPQ7</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pit latrine • Toilet • Burned • Household rubbish bin • Took to community rubbish • Brush/buried/river • Drain
MPQ6_wash	<p>During your most recent period, did you wash your used menstrual pad before throwing it away?</p> <p><i>Note: Only ask if the respondent answered “disposable pad”, or “disposable pad and tissue” to MPQ1</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No • Yes

MPQ_school	<p>Did you attend any school during your most recent period?</p> <p>If not, when was the last time you attended school during your period?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes, Participant attended some/any school during the last period. • Participant attended no school during the last period, answers correspond to a period within the past 3 months. • Participant attended no school during the last period, answers correspond to a period within the past 6 months. • Participant did not attend school during menstruation during the past 6 months.
MPQ8	<p>During your most recent menstrual period, what did you use most often to catch or absorb your menstruation when you were at school?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cloth/towel • Disposable sanitary pad (panty system) • Disposable sanitary pad (belt system) • Reusable sanitary pad • Toilet paper • Cotton wool • Mattress • Underwear alone (i.e. without other padding) • Natural material (e.g., leaves, sand, grass) • Period underwear • Menstrual cup • Tampon • Other (specify)
MPQ9	<p>During your most recent menstrual period, where did you most often change your menstrual materials during school hours?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Went home to change • Waited until home • School bathroom • Another room at school • Another toilet or latrine (not at school) • Outside/bushes

MPQ10	What was the main place you disposed of your used menstrual materials at school during your most recent period?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Took home to dispose • Bin/bucket inside toilet/latrine • Bin/bucket outside toilet/latrine • Into the toilet • Incinerator onsite • Bush/buried/river • Drain
MPQ11	Did you wash and reuse any menstrual materials during your most recent period?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No • Yes • Yes, but a female family/household member washes for me
MPQ14	How often did you use soap or detergent to soak or wash your menstrual materials during your last period? <i>Note: Materials means padding – things to absorb/collect menstrual blood</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Never • Sometimes • Every time
MPQ15	Where did you most often dry your menstrual materials during your last menstrual period?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outside (hanging) • Outside (hidden) • Inside (hanging) • Inside (hidden)
MPQ15_sun	During your last period, how often did you dry your materials in the sun?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Never • Sometimes • Every time
MPQ16	When your menstrual materials were drying did you cover them with anything?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No • Yes
MPQ17	How often, during your last period were your menstrual materials completely dry before you used them?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Never • Sometimes • Every time
MPQ18	During your last period, were your menstrual materials ironed before you used them?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No • Yes

GW1	How often did you wash your genitals during your last menstrual period?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the end of my period only • Every 2-3 days • Once per day • Twice per day • Three or more times per day
GW2	When you washed your genitals, did you use soap inside your vagina?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No • Sometimes • Yes
GW3	When you washed your genitals, did you use soap?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No • Some of the time • Yes

Overview of Soiling Experiences

Definition	The unintentional leaking or staining of clothing, underwear, or other materials with menstrual blood.
Importance to Menstrual Health	Society expects individuals to conceal their menstruation. ⁹⁻¹² Leaking menstrual blood, particularly onto outergarments where it can be seen has frequently been reported as a subject of stress and anxiety in studies with adolescent girls. Accidental leakage can lead to embarrassment and a reluctance to engage in class or social activities. ⁹⁻¹² 2/10/2025 4:06:00 PM
Measurement Method	All questions: Self-reported by girls on an enumerator-administered survey
General Considerations	Depending on the context, the answer options may need to be changed. The answer options below are specific to Bangladesh. This was an enumerator-administered survey. If your survey will be self-administered, consider shortening the number of responses for soil5.
Question Source	Questions draw on past research from the study team, such as Hennegan, J., Bukenya, J. N., Makumbi, F. E., Nakamya, P., Exum, N. G., Schwab, K. J., & Kibira, S. P. (2022). Menstrual health challenges in the workplace and consequences for women's work and wellbeing: a cross-sectional survey in Mukono, Uganda. <i>PLOS Global Public Health</i> , 2(7), e0000589. Hennegan, J., & Sol, L. (2020). Confidence to manage menstruation at home and at school: findings from a cross-sectional survey of schoolgirls in rural Bangladesh. <i>Culture, health & sexuality</i> , 22(2), 146-165.

Construct's Main Use in the AMEHC Study			
Proximal Exposure for:	Distal Exposure for:	Covariate for:	Outcome for:
Social Participation	Education Mental Health		

Included in the Following AMEHC Study Activities*					
Baseline Girls Survey	Baseline Guardians Survey	Baseline School Audit	Sub-cohort 1 Survey	Sub-cohort 2 Survey	Sub-cohort 3 Survey
X			X	X	X
Wave 1 Survey	Wave 1 School Audit	Wave 2 Survey	Wave 2 Guardian Survey	Wave 2 School Audit	
X		X			

***Specific questions varied over different data collection activities according to study needs.**

Soiling Experiences Survey Questions in AMEHC

Question Number	Question	Response Options
Soil1	During your last menstrual period, did you experience any leaking or staining?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No • Yes
Soil2	What was soiled? <i>Select all that apply</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Panties only • Salawar (pants) • Kameez (outer garment layer) • Burka • Bedding • Seat • Other
Soil3	Could anyone see that you had soiled? (That is, was the stain visible to other people)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No • Yes
Soil4	Where were you when you soiled?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home • School • Somewhere else
Soil5	When/why did you soil? <i>Select all that apply</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Period just started and was unprepared • Overnight • Bled through absorbent: heavy bleeding • Bled through absorbent: could not change when needed to • Bled through absorbent: sitting for a long time • Bled through absorbent: physical activity/sport • Other (specify)

Overview of Menstrual Hygiene Experiences: Menstrual Practice Needs Scale (MPNS)

Definition	A participants' experience of managing their menstrual bleeding. Including perceptions of the extent to which the practices and environments used to manage menstrual bleeding meet their needs. ¹³
Importance to Menstrual Health	Perceptions about menstrual hygiene practices and environments significantly affect how people experience menstruation. Prior research identified a link between perceptions of unmet needs and distress, health, well-being, education, and social participation. ^{2,13}
Measurement Method	All questions: Self-reported by girls on an enumerator-administered survey
General Considerations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Not all questions are applicable for all respondents. Researchers and public health practitioners should select the appropriate questions for their situation. 2. Question order can be modified as appropriate and can be integrated with questions from other surveys. 3. MPNS creators found asking respondents will likely find it easier to answer about behavioral practices <i>before</i> perceptions of menstrual practices. <p>More information on the Menstrual Practice Needs Scale (including the 36-item, short form and rapid form of the tool) is available online: https://mhevidence.au/measures/mpns/</p>
Question Source	<p>Menstrual Practice Needs Scale (MPNS): Hennegan, J., Nansubuga, A., Smith, C., Redshaw, M., Akullo, A., & Schwab, K.J. (2020). Measuring menstrual hygiene experience: Development and validation of the Menstrual Practice Needs Scale (MPNS- 36) in Soroti, Uganda. <i>BMJ Open</i>, 10, e034461. http://dx.doi.org/10.1136/bmjopen-2019-034461</p> <p>Development of the MPNS-SF in Bangla, as used in the AMEHC study: Hennegan J, Hasan MdT, Jalil T, et al. The Menstrual Practice Needs Scale Short Form (MPNS-SF) and Rapid (MPNS-R): Development in Khulna, Bangladesh, and Validation in Cross-Sectional Surveys from Bangladesh and Uganda. <i>Public and Global Health</i>; 2024. doi:10.1101/2024.01.22.24301625</p>

Construct's Main Use in the AMEHC Study			
Proximal Exposure for:	Distal Exposure for:	Covariate for:	Outcome for:
Mental Health Education SRH			

Included in the Following AMEHC Study Activities*					
Baseline Girls Survey	Baseline Guardians Survey	Baseline School Audit	Sub-cohort 1 Survey	Sub-cohort 2 Survey	Sub-cohort 3 Survey
X			X	X	X
Wave 1 Survey	Wave 1 School Audit	Wave 2 Survey	Wave 2 Guardian Survey	Wave 2 School Audit	
X		X			

*Specific questions varied over different data collection activities according to study needs.

Menstrual Hygiene Experience: MPNS Survey Questions in AMEHC

Instructions: Now I am going to ask you about your experience of managing your period. Women and girls have different preferences and concerns about caring for their bodies during menstruation. I am going to read a series of questions about different experiences that might apply to you. I will ask how often this applied to you during your most recent menstrual period. For each question, I'll ask if this applied to you: never, some of the time, most of the time, always.

Question Number	Question	Response Options
MPN1	During your most recent menstrual period... Were your menstrual materials comfortable?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Never • Some of the time • Most of the time • Always
MPN2	During your most recent menstrual period... Did you have enough menstrual materials to change them as often as you wanted to?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Never • Some of the time • Most of the time • Always
MPN5	During your most recent menstrual period... Were you worried that your menstrual materials would allow blood to pass through to your outer garments?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Never • Some of the time • Most of the time • Always

MPN7	During your most recent menstrual period... Were you worried about how you would get more of your menstrual material if you ran out? (For example, if you needed to purchase materials, retrieve materials from home, or ask someone for materials)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Never • Some of the time • Most of the time • Always
MPN11	During your most recent menstrual period... Were you able to wash your hands when you wanted to?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Never • Some of the time • Most of the time • Always
MPN13	During your most recent menstrual period... Were you able to dispose of your used materials in the way that you wanted to?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Never • Some of the time • Most of the time • Always
MPN15	During your most recent menstrual period... Were you concerned that others would see your used menstrual materials in the place you disposed of them?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Never • Some of the time • Most of the time • Always
MPNS_home	The next few questions ask you about your experience of your most recent menstrual period when you were at home.	
MPN16	When at home during your most recent period... Were you able to change your menstrual materials when you wanted to?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Never • Some of the time • Most of the time • Always
MPN17	When at home during your most recent period... Were you satisfied with the place you used to change your menstrual materials? (For example, if you needed to purchase materials, retrieve materials from home, or ask someone for materials) <i>Note: Changing can also mean putting on or taking out padding</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Never • Some of the time • Most of the time • Always

MPN20	When at home during your most recent period... Were you worried that someone would see you while you were changing your menstrual materials?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Never • Some of the time • Most of the time • Always
MPN21	When at home during your most recent period... Were you worried that someone would harm you while you were changing your menstrual materials?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Never • Some of the time • Most of the time • Always
MPN_School	<p>Thanks for sharing your experience with me. Now that we've asked about your experience at home, the next few questions ask you about your experience at school during your last menstrual period.</p> <p><i>Note: If attended school during the most recent period then ask about the most recent period, otherwise if attended school during menstruation in the past 6 months, then ask the respondent to answer for the most recent period she had at school.</i></p>	
MPN23	When at school during your most recent period... Were you able to change your menstrual materials when you wanted to? <i>Note: This is just that she CAN change WHEN she wants to (that can include if she goes home to change). If she does not need to change then she can always change when she wants to.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Never • Some of the time • Most of the time • Always
MPN24_alt	When at school during your most recent period... Were you satisfied with the places available at your school for changing your menstrual materials?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Never • Some of the time • Most of the time • Always
MPN24_alt2	Are you satisfied with the places available at your school for changing your menstrual materials?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Never • Some of the time • Most of the time • Always

MPN38	<p>During your most recent menstrual period... Did you change your menstrual materials at school?</p> <p><i>Note: Only read the first four response options. The additional response option “never needed to change” is ONLY if a respondent says they never change BECAUSE they have a light flow, or only attend school on their light flow days.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Never • Some of the time • Most of the time • Always • Never needed to change during the school day
MPN27	<p>When at school during your most recent period... Were you worried that someone would see you while you were changing your menstrual materials?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Never • Some of the time • Most of the time • Always
MPN28	<p>When at school during your most recent period... Were you worried that someone would harm you while you were changing your menstrual materials?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Never • Some of the time • Most of the time • Always
MPN39	<p>When at school during your most recent period... Were you worried about the time you needed to travel home (or elsewhere) to change your menstrual materials?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Never • Some of the time • Most of the time • Always
MPNS_reuse	I just have a few more questions that ask about your experience of washing and drying your reusable menstrual materials.	
MPN29	<p>During your most recent menstrual period... Did you have enough water to soak or wash your menstrual materials?</p> <p><i>Note: Materials/things are any padding used to absorb/catch menstrual blood.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Never • Some of the time • Most of the time • Always
MPN31	<p>During your most recent menstrual period... Were you able to wash your menstrual materials whenever you wanted to?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Never • Some of the time • Most of the time • Always

MPN35	During your most recent menstrual period... Were you worried that your menstrual materials would not be dry when you needed them?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Never • Some of the time • Most of the time • Always
MPN36	During your most recent menstrual period... Were you worried that others would see your menstrual materials while they were drying?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Never • Some of the time • Most of the time • Always

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