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The effect of counseling on menstrual personal hygiene knowledge in grade VII female students

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Abstract

Background: Early adolescence is a transitional period that is vulnerable to various reproductive health problems, particularly due to a lack of understanding of personal hygiene during menstruation. Insufficient knowledge among adolescent girls about maintaining reproductive organ hygiene can increase the risk of infection and lead to physical and psychological impacts.

Purpose: to determine the effect of health education on menstrual personal hygiene knowledge among seventh-grade female.

Method: This study employed a quantitative approach, employing a pre-experimental method with a one-group pretest-posttest design and no comparison group. This means that all variables were collected simultaneously to assess the effect of counseling on personal hygiene knowledge among seventh-grade female students at SMPN 2 Mlati. The independent variable in this study was counselling.

Results: The results of data analysis using the Wilcoxon test showed a significance value of $p = 0.000 < 0.05$, which means that there is an effect of health education on menstrual personal hygiene knowledge before and after the education among seventh-grade female students.

Conclusion: There is an effect of health education on menstrual personal hygiene knowledge among seventh-grade female students.

Based on the results of this study, schools and health workers are expected to provide reproductive health education regularly and provide supporting facilities so that female students can practice good personal hygiene during menstruation.

Suggestion: Based on the results of this study, schools and health workers are expected to provide reproductive health education regularly and provide supporting facilities so that female students can practice good personal hygiene during menstruation.

Keywords: Knowledge; Menstrual; Personal Hygiene; Students.

INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a transitional period from childhood to adulthood, marked by physical and psychological changes, spanning the ages of 12 to 21. Seventh-grade students fall into the early adolescent category, being approximately 12 to 13 years old. Early adolescence is a transitional period that is vulnerable to environmental influences and often experiences confusion and anxiety as they adjust to these changes (Rahmawati & Ghasya, 2024).

During early adolescence, some adolescents still struggle to adjust to personal care needs due to a lack of understanding of the importance of maintaining personal hygiene. At this stage, adolescents do not fully pay attention to personal hygiene, including reproductive organ hygiene, which can cause discomfort, irritation, and increase the risk of health problems. During this phase, adolescents need a proper understanding of how to care for themselves to avoid health problems (Syamson & Murtini, 2022).

Personal hygiene comes from the Greek words *personal*, meaning individual or person, and *hygiene*, meaning health. In general, personal hygiene refers to a person's efforts to maintain cleanliness and health for their physical and mental well-being (Ahmad & Napitupulu, 2021). The goals of personal hygiene are to improve health, maintain personal hygiene, correct deficiencies, prevent disease, increase self-confidence, and create personal beauty (Gultom, Manik, & Sitepu, 2022).

Menstrual personal hygiene refers to efforts to maintain health through hygiene practices performed during menstruation. Maintaining hygiene during menstruation plays a crucial role in maintaining the reproductive health of adolescent girls (Purnama, 2021). Menstrual hygiene in adolescents requires attention, as inadequate knowledge can impact health (Hasnani, Suryati, & Rahmawaty, 2024).

Lack of knowledge about menstrual personal hygiene can have serious consequences, both short-term and long-term. Improper hygiene can lead to the risk of reproductive health problems, such as vaginal discharge, reproductive tract infections (RTIs), pelvic inflammatory disease (PID), and cervical cancer (Ningrum, Sutrisno, & Putra, 2025). Psychological impacts can also arise, such as anxiety, fear, and worry when facing menstruation due to a lack of

understanding of how to properly care for oneself. Anxiety can cause confusion, difficulty focusing, and learning difficulties. In such conditions, severe anxiety can potentially develop into depression (Revinel, Ani, Putri, & Nuryaningsih, 2024).

Lack of personal hygiene knowledge can increase the risk of reproductive tract infections (RTIs) (Tania, Putri, & Iklima, 2025). According to 2020 World Health Organization (WHO) data, adolescents are the group with the highest rate of reproductive tract infections (RTIs) in the world, at around 35%-42%, while in young adults it is 27%-33%. Common types of infections include candidiasis (25%-50%), bacterial vaginosis (20%-40%), and trichomoniasis (5%-15%) (Ninta, Rezeki, & Siregar, 2023). Based on the Indonesian Demographic and Health Survey, adolescent girls' behavior in maintaining personal hygiene during menstruation is still considered inadequate, at 66.6%. This is due to low levels of knowledge and a lack of information received by adolescent girls regarding personal hygiene during menstruation (Marbun, Ibnu, Butar, Nasution, Sari, & Siregar, 2025). A National Population and Family Planning Agency survey showed that Sleman has poor menstrual hygiene, with 83% of adolescents not understanding proper menstrual hygiene, 61.8% not understanding the risks of teenage pregnancy, and 42.4% not knowing the risks of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) (Silvia & Sulistyoningtyas, 2023).

Knowledge of menstrual hygiene is essential for adolescent girls to understand the importance of maintaining reproductive hygiene during menstruation. A lack of knowledge about maintaining and cleaning reproductive organs can lead to the risk of infection, inflammatory diseases, and even fertility problems, all of which can impact future health. Therefore, knowledge of menstrual hygiene is a crucial aspect of maintaining women's reproductive health (Utami, Lestari, & Herliana, 2024). This knowledge can be obtained from various sources, such as the mass media. Furthermore, parents, family members, teachers, and health workers play a role in providing health education through outreach programs in schools and the community (Yuningsi & Allobunga, 2023).

Factors influencing knowledge of personal menstrual hygiene include counseling. Through

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counseling, information can be delivered in a structured manner so that adolescents understand how to maintain personal hygiene during menstruation (Pawestri, Dhamanik, Khayati, Machmudah, & Rejeki, 2022). Age is also a factor, as knowledge develops with age. Personal experiences also shape knowledge based on past events. The mass media provides various sources of information that adolescents can utilize. Furthermore, peers and family, especially mothers, play a role in providing information about personal menstrual hygiene (Mba'u, 2021).

Counseling is an educational effort that applies learning principles to encourage changes in community knowledge and willingness to achieve healthy living conditions, both individually and in groups (Sari, Engkeng, & Rahman, 2021). Information about menstrual personal hygiene is important for adolescent girls, as a lack of education can lead to shame and negative perceptions of menstruation (Budiadi, Karmi, & Kurnia, 2023). Information can be provided through various methods, including lectures or counseling supported by leaflets and PowerPoint presentations. The advantage of leaflets is that they can be used as a reference for respondents and can be read repeatedly. PowerPoint presentations have the advantage of keeping respondents focused and

engaged with the presenter's presentation. The PowerPoint presentation also serves as the core of the material, reducing respondent boredom during counseling activities. This aligns with other research which showed that counseling on menstrual hygiene using lectures, leaflets, and Power Point presentations proved effective in increasing understanding of the importance of maintaining menstrual personal hygiene (Mawaddah, Agustina, & Hasnur, 2025).

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a quantitative approach, employing a pre-experimental method with a one-group pretest-posttest design and no comparison group. This means that all variables were collected simultaneously to assess the effect of counseling on personal hygiene knowledge among seventh-grade female students at Smpn 2 Mlati. The independent variable in this study was counseling. The dependent variable was personal hygiene. The sampling technique used purposive sampling with a sample size of 45 respondents. The inclusion criteria for respondents were seventh-grade female students at Smpn 2 Mlati who were menstruating and willing to participate. Exclusion criteria included respondents who were ill and did not complete the questionnaire completely.

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RESEARCH RESULTS**Table 1. Characteristics of Respondent (N=45)**

Variable	Results
Age (Mean±SD) (Years)	(12.73 ± 0.45) (12-13)
12	12/26.7
13	7/13.3
Class (n/%)	
7A	9/20.0
7B	10/22.2
7C	10/22.2
7D	8/17.8
7E	8/17.8
Menstrual Duration(n/%)	
1-4 Months	13/29.0
5-8	19/42.1
9-12	6/13.3
>12	7/15.6
Counseling Experience (n/%)	
Have Received Counseling on Menstrual Personal Hygiene	38/84.4
Have Never Received Counseling on Menstrual Personal Hygiene	7/15.6
Information Sources (n/%)	
Never	7/15.6
Friends	3/6.7
Family	15/33.3
Teachers	7/15.6
Electronic Media	5/11.1
Healthcare Professionals	8/17.8
Pre-Test Knowledge (n/%)	
Good	0/0
Fair	22/49.0
Poor	23/51.0
Post-Test Knowledge	
Good	6/13.3
Fair	37/82.2
Poor	2/4.4

Based on table 1. Respondent Characteristics shows that the majority of seventh-grade female students (33 students) are 13 years old (73.3%), and 12 are 12 years old (26.7%). The majority of respondents are from classes

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7B and 7C (10 students) (22.2%), while a minority are from classes 7D and 7E (8 students) (17.8%). The characteristics of menstrual cycle duration among seventh-grade female students show that the majority (19 students) have experienced menstruation for 5-8 months, and the minority (6 students) have experienced menstruation for 9-12 months. Based on their experience with menstrual personal hygiene counseling, the majority (38 students) have received counseling (84.4%), while 7 (15.6%) have not. The majority of information obtained by adolescents regarding menstrual personal hygiene knowledge came from family (15 people) (33.3%), and a minority came from friends (3 people) (6.7%). the distribution of menstrual personal hygiene knowledge before the counseling intervention (pre-test) shows that the majority of seventh-grade female students (23 students) had poor knowledge, 22 students (48.9%) had adequate knowledge, and no seventh-grade female students had good knowledge before the counseling intervention. the frequency distribution of personal menstrual hygiene knowledge after the counseling intervention (post-test) shows that the majority of seventh-grade female students (82.2%) had sufficient knowledge, while the minority had insufficient knowledge, 2 students (4.4%).

Table 2. Data Normality Test Results

Knowledge			Shapiro-Wilk	
			Sig (p)	Conclusion
Knowledge Score Before Counseling			0.071	Normal
Knowledge Score After Counseling			0.000	Not normal ping

Based on table 2. the results of the Shapiro-Wilk normality test show that the significance value of knowledge before counseling is 0.071 and knowledge after counseling is 0.000. Both values indicate $p > 0.05$ and $p < 0.05$, indicating that the data is not normally distributed. Therefore, the analysis test used in this study uses the non-parametric Wilcoxon Test.

Table 3. Analysis of the Influence of Counseling on Menstrual Personal Hygiene Knowledge

Knowledge Pre Test-Post Test	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Z hitung	P-Value
Post Test < Pre Test	0	0.00	0.00		
Post Test > Pre Test	42	21.50	903.00	-5.677	0.000
Post Test = Pre Test	3				

Based on Table 3. Analysis of the Effect of Counseling on Menstrual Personal Hygiene Knowledge in Grade VII Female Students using the Wilcoxon test shows a p-value of $0.000 < 0.05$, thus H_a is accepted and H_o is rejected, indicating that there is an effect of counseling on menstrual personal hygiene knowledge. The post-test knowledge score < pre-test score is 0, for both the mean rank and sum of ranks. A score of 0 indicates that no adolescents' knowledge decreased after the counseling. The post-test score > pre-test score indicates that 42 adolescents' knowledge increased after the counseling. The post-test score = pre-test score

indicates that 3 adolescents' scores remained unchanged. Overall, almost all respondents experienced an increase in knowledge after the counseling.

DISCUSSION

Data on menstrual personal hygiene knowledge among seventh-grade female students before the counseling intervention showed that 22 (48.9%) had adequate knowledge of menstrual personal hygiene, 23 (51.1%) had inadequate knowledge, and no students had good knowledge of menstrual personal hygiene before the counseling intervention.

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Knowledge arises from human curiosity. Knowledge is acquired through the process of asking questions and using it to discover the truth (Siola, Haq, Attwar, Anggraeni, & Asmar, 2025). Knowledge is the process of seeking information, moving from ignorance to knowledge, or from inability to ability. This process of seeking knowledge can be achieved through various means, such as education, experience, or information from others. The majority of seventh-grade female students' knowledge of menstrual personal hygiene before the counseling intervention fell between adequate and inadequate. This indicates that the understanding of seventh-grade female students was still suboptimal before the counseling intervention.

A person's level of knowledge is influenced by education, information, socio-cultural factors, economic factors, environment, knowledge, and age (Sofiyati, 2023). The knowledge in this study focused on personal menstrual hygiene among seventh-grade female students. Menstrual personal hygiene refers to the practice of maintaining the health and cleanliness of the feminine area during menstruation to avoid infection-causing bacteria (Dewi & Djide, 2024). Factors influencing menstrual personal hygiene, other research include education, age, experience, mass media, peers, and family (Pawestri et al., 2022; Mba'u, 2021).

Based on the age characteristics of the respondents, the seventh-grade female students at SMPN 2 Mlati were 12-13 years old. This age group falls within the early adolescent category. Menstruation first occurs between the ages of 12 and 16 (Mariyana & Hamdiah, 2025). However, it is possible for menstruation to occur earlier depending on the varying physical conditions of women. Adolescence is a period of development in terms of knowledge and can influence personal hygiene behavior during menstruation. Adolescence is characterized by unstable thinking and physical and psychological changes. This can lead to seventh-grade female students having sufficient and insufficient knowledge, as the majority are in a developmental stage. This aligns with other research which states that knowledge can influence adolescent girls' attitudes toward menstruation preparedness, such as personal hygiene, as evidenced by a p-value of $0.005 < 0.05$.

Based on the respondents' characteristics regarding menstrual duration, the majority of seventh-grade female students have menstruated for 5-8 months. The duration of menstruation can influence seventh-grade female students' knowledge, as the longer a woman menstruates, the greater her knowledge. This study indicates that prior to the counseling intervention, most female students had sufficient and insufficient knowledge regarding menstrual hygiene. This may be influenced by the source of information received regarding menstrual hygiene.

Based on the characteristics of their experiences and sources of information, the majority of seventh-grade female students have received counseling on menstrual personal hygiene. However, their knowledge before the counseling intervention was still categorized as sufficient and insufficient. This may be influenced by the sources of information received by the seventh-grade female students. The results showed that the majority of seventh-grade female students obtained their knowledge of menstrual personal hygiene from family sources. This information may risk differing perceptions of menstrual personal hygiene theory compared to information obtained directly from health professionals. This is supported other research which states that adolescents' lack of knowledge is due to a lack of information from various sources, such as electronic media, and a lack of socialization and counseling about menstrual personal hygiene. Menstrual Personal Hygiene Knowledge in Seventh-Grade Female Students Following Counseling Intervention (Ruspita, Wati, & Fitriani, 2022).

Data on menstrual personal hygiene knowledge in seventh-grade female students following counseling intervention revealed that 37 (82.2%) had adequate knowledge of menstrual personal hygiene, 6 (13.3%) had good knowledge, and 2 (4.4%) had inadequate knowledge. This indicates that the counseling was effective as a means of providing information to seventh-grade female students about menstrual personal hygiene.

Menstrual personal hygiene counseling is a health education program proven to be effective in improving cognitive domains by enhancing knowledge, understanding, and critical thinking skills related to healthy lifestyle behaviors (Budi, Putri, Puspitasari, &

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Sena, 2024). Effective counseling is demonstrated by the quality of the counseling, from preparation of tools and materials to completion. The results of this study indicate that there was an increase in knowledge among seventh-grade female after the counseling, from merely knowing to understanding the importance of personal hygiene. This is in line with other research regarding health education with knowledge levels which states that education has been proven to increase students' understanding (Butarbutar, Hakim, Margolang, & Kristian, 2025).

The respondents were seventh-grade female students aged 12-13, entering early adolescence. During this phase, adolescents are particularly concerned with physical changes, such as breast growth and menstruation. Furthermore, this phase is characterized by seeking the truth about something, whether good or bad, from various sources (Atiqah, Sulhan, Ardaniah, & Rahmadi, 2024). The education on menstrual personal hygiene was highly impactful and suited the characteristics of seventh-grade female students at SMPN 2 Mlati, who still require structured guidance. This aligns with other research which states that during adolescence, students gain a better understanding, and their knowledge increases with age (Kasim, Hafid, & Mohamad, 2025).

Based on the duration of menstruation among seventh-grade female students the majority of respondents had experienced menstruation for 5-8 months. The duration of menstruation can influence respondents' habits regarding menstrual personal hygiene practices. Seventh-grade female students have only experienced menstruation for a relatively short time, so they have limited personal experience and may not fully understand the information provided. This is supported by other research who found that most respondents had good knowledge of menstrual hygiene. This study emphasized the importance of menstrual education and hygiene practices during menstruation (Ahmed, Hasan, Aunto, Ahmed, & Zahid, 2025).

Based on the information sources obtained, the majority of seventh-grade female students at obtained information about menstrual personal hygiene from their families. This indicates that family is the initial source of information for respondents in understanding reproductive health. Furthermore, they obtained information through counseling provided at

school, thus providing more comprehensive information.

Although there was a general increase in knowledge after the intervention, two respondents still fell into the category of insufficient knowledge. This could be due to differences in comprehension ability, concentration levels during counseling, and respondents' interest in reproductive health topics. This is also supported other research who examined the effect of concentration on learning comprehension, which stated that there is an effect between concentration and student learning comprehension (Yulistari, 2025).

Statistical analysis revealed that 42 respondents experienced an increase in knowledge after the counseling session. Three respondents maintained the same knowledge before and after the counseling session, and no respondents experienced a decrease in knowledge after the counseling session. The Wilcoxon test showed a p-value of $0.000 < 0.05$, indicating a significant difference between menstrual personal hygiene knowledge before and after the counseling session. The results of the counseling session showed that many seventh-grade female students still had knowledge in the fair and poor categories. After the counseling session, there was an increase in knowledge in the fair and good categories. This indicates that the counseling session improved basic understanding of genital hygiene, frequency of changing sanitary napkins, underwear hygiene, and the risk of infection from poor hygiene.

The counseling session in this study used a lecture method supported by PowerPoint presentations and leaflets containing material on the definition, purpose, and implementation of personal hygiene during menstruation. Students' knowledge was measured using a 20-question questionnaire. The use of visual media helped increase the enthusiasm of seventh-grade students during the counseling activities and made it easier for them to understand and recall the material presented.

According other study counseling is divided into three media: print, electronic, and outdoor media. This research was supported by printed media, namely leaflets (Asda & Sekarwati, 2023). The leaflets, which discussed the importance of menstrual personal hygiene, were designed to be as attractive as possible, from the color to the layout, making it

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easier for seventh-grade students to read and understand the content. The counseling in this study was a large-group counseling session with more than 15 respondents. The counseling used a lecture method supported by PowerPoint presentations, allowing seventh-grade students to focus on the presenter's presentation. This finding aligns with other research which found that menstrual personal hygiene counseling was proven effective in improving knowledge of menstrual personal hygiene in adolescent girls, with a 19.44% increase in grades (Sinaga, Nirwana, Kartika, & Yucika, 2025). Before receiving counseling, some seventh-grade female students still had limited understanding of how to maintain genital hygiene during menstruation, the correct frequency of changing sanitary napkins, and the risk of infection if personal hygiene is not maintained properly. After receiving counseling, the seventh-grade female students received information presented in a structured and systematic manner through a lecture method supported by PowerPoint and leaflets, making it easy to understand. This finding aligns with other research which found that counseling had an effect on students' knowledge levels, with a p -value of $0.000 < 0.05$ (Maurindha, Soimah, & Sholihah, 2025).

The effectiveness of this counseling was also influenced by the characteristics of the respondents, who were in early adolescence, aged 12-13, when their ability to absorb new information is still high and their curiosity about bodily changes is developing. The results showed that three respondents had consistent knowledge scores before and after the counseling intervention.

The post-test results showed that two respondents still had insufficient knowledge. This is due to differences in comprehension, concentration, and interest in the topic of menstruation, as well as varying experiences among respondents.

This research aligns with several previous studies showing that health education can improve adolescent girls' knowledge about menstrual hygiene. A study entitled "The Effect of Reproductive Health Education on Adolescent Girls' Knowledge of Menstrual Hygiene in Students with Mental Disabilities" found that reproductive health education significantly increased menstrual hygiene knowledge with a p -value of $0.001 < 0.005$ (Mawaddah et al.,

2025). Similar results were also found in a study entitled "The Effect of Health Education on Menstrual Hygiene on Adolescent Girls' Knowledge." The study, using a one-group pretest-posttest design, involved 35 female who had experienced menstruation and demonstrated an increase in knowledge after receiving health education with a p -value of 0.000 (by Dolang & Kiriwenno, 2020). In addition, other research entitled "Menstrual Hygiene Booklet Can Improve Adolescents' Knowledge and Attitudes" also showed consistent results, namely an increase in knowledge of 75% and an increase in attitudes of 82% after the intervention, with a p value = 0.000 < 0.05 (Hastuty & Nasution, 2023).

These findings indicate that although counseling effectively increases general knowledge, health education efforts regarding menstrual personal hygiene need to be carried out continuously and reinforced with repetition of material and support from the school to ensure that knowledge is more evenly distributed among all female students.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research results and discussion regarding the effect of counseling on knowledge of menstrual personal hygiene among seventh-grade female students at SMPN 2 Mlati, it can be concluded that before the counseling, most respondents had poor knowledge (23 students (51.1%)) and sufficient (22 students (48.9%)), with no students having good knowledge before the intervention. After the counseling, knowledge levels increased, with the majority of respondents in the sufficient category (37 students (82.2%)), good (6 students (13.3%)), and poor (2 students (4.4%)). The results of the analysis using the Wilcoxon test showed a significance value of $0.000 \leq 0.05$, so it can be concluded that there is a significant influence between before and after being given personal hygiene menstrual counseling to seventh grade female students.

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