Struggles of Girls and Women during Menstruation in Nepal

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Menstrual Restrictions in Nepal

- Girls and women are isolated during menstruation:
  - adjoining in same house,
  - separate house or hut,
  - separate room
  - separate corner of the room or tents during diasters.

- During isolation, they follow three sets of restrictions:

  I. **Restriction in terms of food** e.g. no diary products

  II. **Restrictions in terms of touch** e.g. no touch of household member

  III. **Restriction in terms of mobility** e.g. no entry in to the house or community program
Consequences of Menstrual Restriction on Nepalese Women: Ecological Perspectives

**Public:** Deep silence everywhere against rape, murder, menstrual restriction no research including religion, poor enforcement of constitution, NO

**Community:** Deprived from participation in any social, cultural, economic activities, beaten by wild animals, rape, sexual abuse

**Relational:** Failing in school, stigma and discrimination from friends, religious people, child/early marriage,

**Individual:** 
Traumatic feeling, suicidal attempt, isolation, no proper food, water, clothing, cleansing, hygiene, absentism in school and work, reproductive and urinary infections, rape, sexual abuse,
Consequences of Menstrual Restriction for Nepalese Women

Peace ↔ Human Right ↔ Empowerment

Murder, abuse, rape, sexual abuses

Increased vulnerability, exclusion, marginalization

Low Economic opportunities, less income, poverty

Trauma, shock and suicide

High Absentism in work

Death: bites from snakes, wild animals, collection of carbon monoxide

Uterus prolapse +Cancer

Menstrual Blood is impure, dirty, bad luck, sin from god

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Power, Gender Inequality, violence, Injustice, Patriarchy, Masculinity

Sustainable Development

Empowerment

Stigma, Ostracize, Discrimination

Restrictions on entering/mobility

Malnutrition

Limited Participation

Low +Mobility

Restrictions on food

Poor psychological health

Restrictions on touch

Increased vulnerability, exclusion, marginalization

School dropped out 60 days/year

Spontaneous Abortions

Infertility

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Why do Menstrual Restrictions Continue in Nepal?

Supplies of Menstrual Hygiene Products:

- Ignorance about the menstrual hygiene products including physiology of menstruation
- No practice of use of sanitary products: use a saree or wrapper for 3-4 days, no use of panty in rural areas
- No availability of all products, imposed sanitaray pads
- Not affordable, even if available (expensive products, Poverty)
- Stigma and rumours associated with it such as infection, infertility
- Waste management of used products e.g. dogs carrying here and there
- Not priority of family, girls used the money from notebooks or snacks
- No priority for government & funders/finaancing - struggling for last five years
- No mechanism for promotion of sanitary products e.g. subsidies
Religion and Poor Mindset: Missing the links among front liners including donors, activists, teachers, health NGO workers, male, priests etc.

Gender Discrimination: Considered a sole business of women, considered as bad luck, impure, polluted

Unavailability of toilets with water supply: Only 37% toilet coverage (NPC, 2015)

Research and Policy Attention: Merely absence, no priority, deep culture of silence

Why do Menstrual Restrictions Continue? contd....
Do I make mistake with menstruation? If NOT when will be the priority of menstrual hygiene products?