

# The Attitudes Associated with Menstruation in College Women and Men

Anna Nguyen, Kaitlyn Baldwin, Sarah Wayer, Kira Morrison, Shelby Leclaire,  
Hui-Ya Han Ph.D



Usha Kundu College of Health  
Department of Psychology



# Previous Research

- ❖ Negative attitudes toward the menstrual cycle in the past
  - Historical view: Menstrual blood is toxic to women, causing them to be ill, and women are highly emotional and can be violent during menstruation (Johnston-Robledo & Chrisler, 2013).
- ❖ Men typically hold more negative views of menstruation compared to women (Peranovic & Bentley, 2017).

# Research Purpose

- ❖ To examine general attitudes about menstruation held by college women and men
  - Based on self-reported general attitude
- ❖ General attitude is composed of the three following dimensions:
  - Formation of Attitudes
  - Attitudes
  - Implications of Attitudes

# Methods

- ❖ Qualitative and quantitative data collected through an online self-report survey that assessed:
  - Relationship closeness and impact of those relationships
    - Formation of Attitudes Dimension



# Methods (cont'd)

- ❖ Qualitative and quantitative data collected through an online self-report survey that assessed:
  - Relationship closeness and impact of those relationships
    - Formation of Attitudes Dimension
  - General attitudes towards menstruation
    - Attitudes Dimension



# Methods (cont'd)

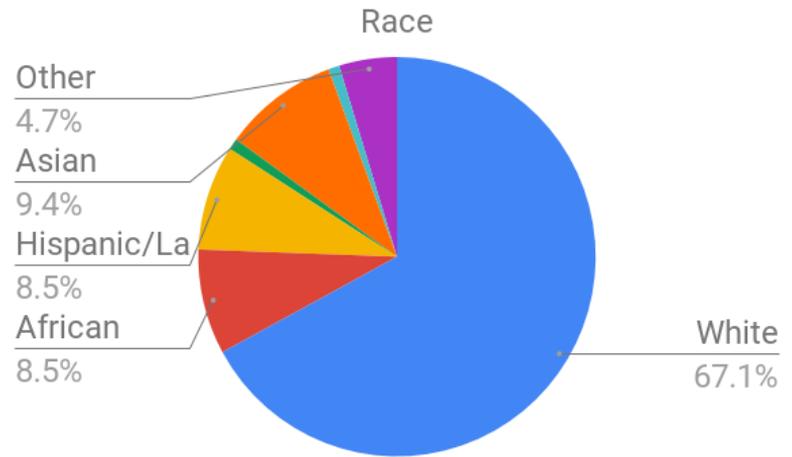
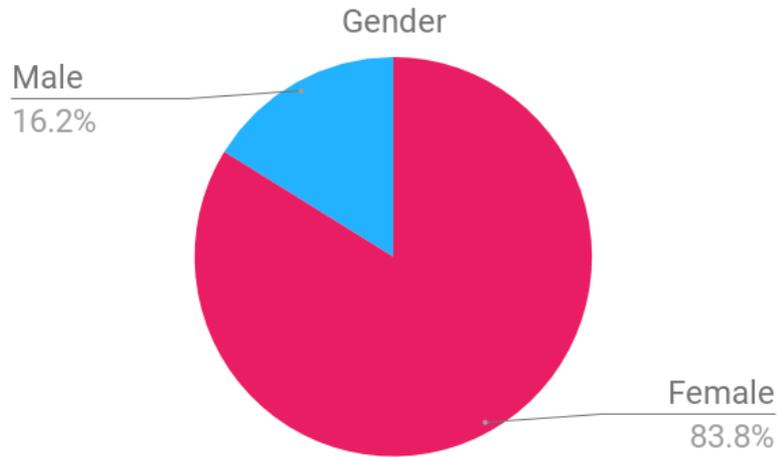
- ❖ Qualitative and quantitative data collected through an online self-report survey that assessed:
  - Relationship closeness and impact of those relationships
    - Formation of Attitudes Dimension
  - General attitudes towards menstruation
    - Attitudes Dimension
  - Comfort level discussing menstruation
    - Implications of Attitudes Dimension





# Participants

- ❖ Participants were recruited through UWF Sona Systems and snowball sampling.

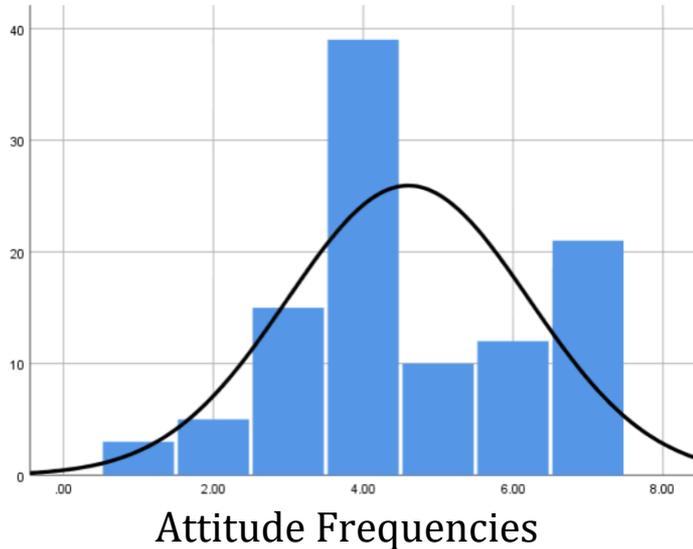


- ❖ 105 participants
- ❖ Ages ranged from 18-52 ( $M = 22 \pm SD = 5.99$ )

# Hypotheses

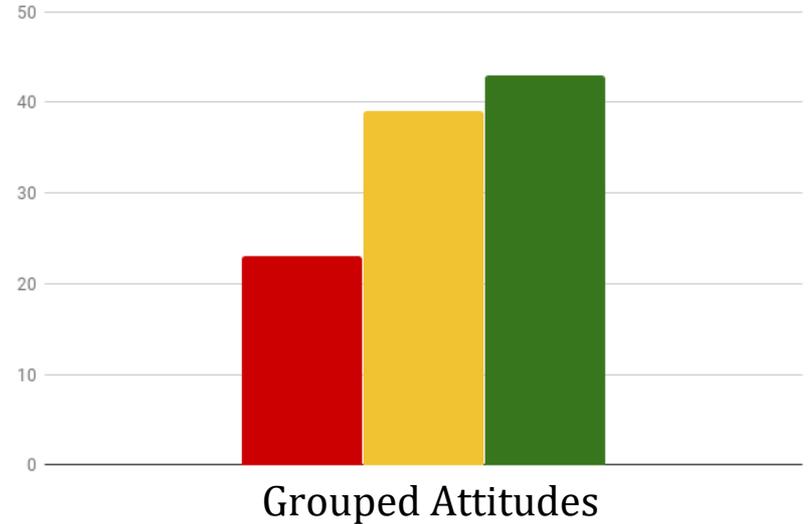
- ❖ Participants' closeness (strength) of a relationship to an individual, along with that individual's attitudes (positive or negative) may relate to the participants' attitudes towards menstruation.
- ❖ Female participants' attitudes may relate to concealing behavior. Male participants' attitudes may relate to their desire to learn more about menstruation.
- ❖ Participants' attitudes may relate to their comfort level discussing menstruation.

# Results: 40.9% of participants have positive general attitudes towards menstruation



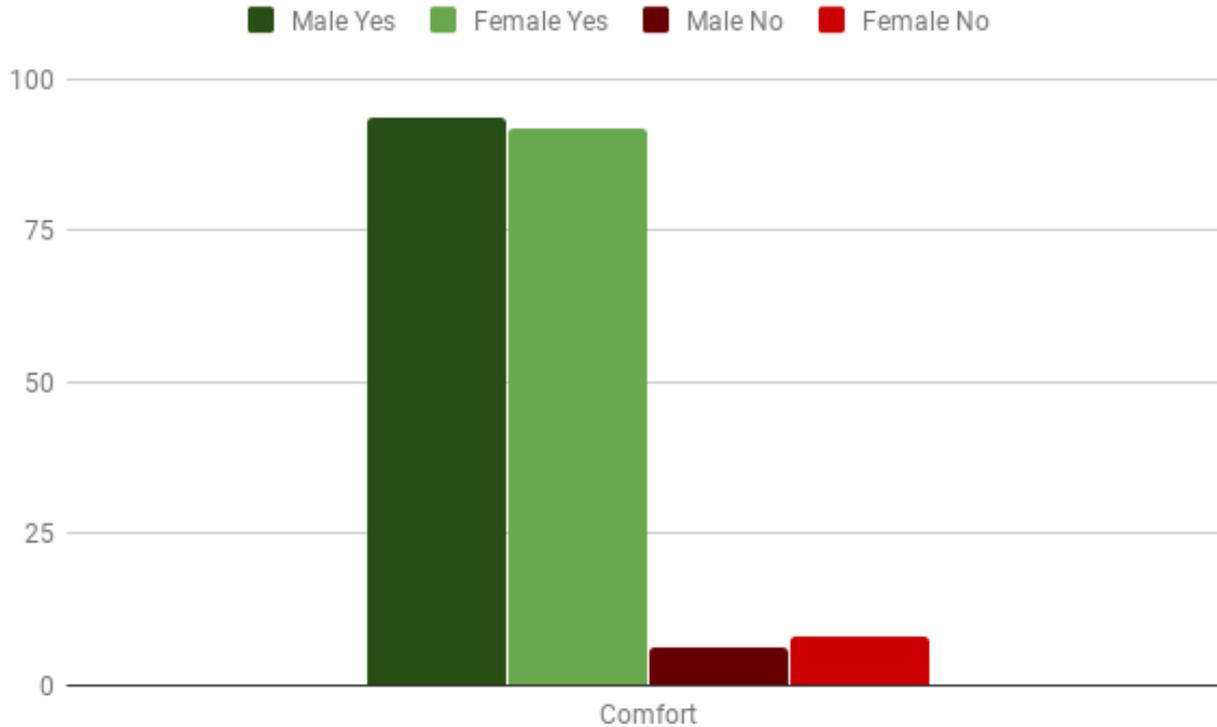
Mean = 4.6  
SD = 1.615

Above: Graph of attitudes toward menstruation on a scale from 1 (extremely negative) to 7 (extremely positive)

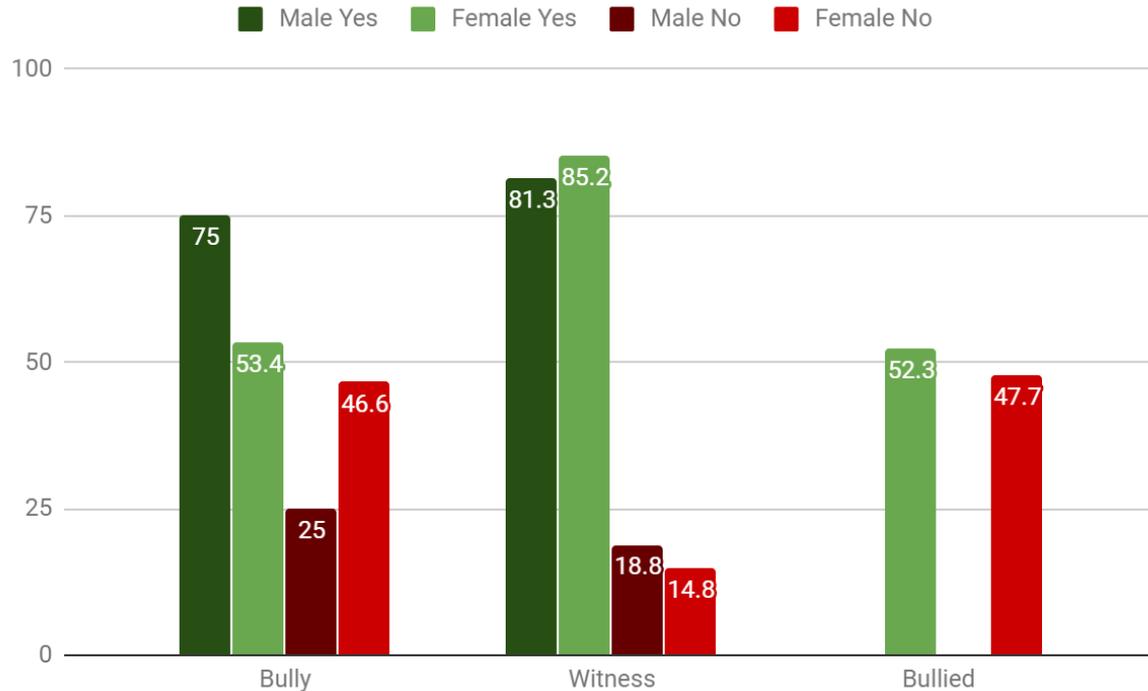


Above: Attitudes grouped by generally negative, neutral, and generally positive. 40.9% have positive attitudes.

# Results: 92.4% of participants were comfortable discussing menstruation



# Results: Experiences with stigmatization were common among both women and men



Left: Participants were asked if they had ever laughed at, been rude to, or criticized someone for their menstruation. 75% of male participants answered yes, 53.4% of females also said yes.

Middle: Participants were asked if they had ever witnessed bullying due to menstruation. 81.3% of males and 85.2% of females said yes.

Right: Female participants were asked if they had ever been the target of any menstruation related bullying. 52.3% said they had.

# Examples of Open-Ended Answers

- ❖ Participants were asked to explain the scenarios where they had witnessed bullying or been bullied due to menstruation.
- ❖ “A women I know was mad and the guy said that she should not be mad and asked her if she was on her period. Basically undermining her right to have her own feelings.”
- ❖ “Me and my parents were getting ready for an event and we were all rushing, so when everything was almost ready, we were all getting agitated with each other. My dad yelled out "It's the wrong time of month to be doing this!" referring to my and my mother's periods. On the way there, he kept making comments like "I don't know what that does to you to make it so hard to function like a normal human being" and such...”

# Discussion

- ❖ In general, the participants:
  - Had a positive attitude towards menstruation
  - Were comfortable discussing menstruation
- ❖ However:
  - Both men and women report witnessing “bullying”
  - Women report being “bullied”
- ❖ What does this mean?
  - Why is there a disconnect between reported attitudes and real world experiences?

## Future Directions

- ❖ Analyze open-ended responses, in order to have a more holistic view of participants' attitudes
- ❖ Look into the inconsistencies between experiences with stigmatization and attitudes towards menstruation
- ❖ Analyze the relationship between attitudes towards menstruation and bullying behavior

# Limitations

- ❖ We have an underrepresentation of males
- ❖ Data was self-reported through a survey

# Acknowledgment

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Questions?