

Period Poverty and Its Consequences among Secondary School Students in Perak, Malaysia

Rehanna Mansor¹, Jannathul Firdous^{2,*}, Hani Nurdeena¹, Hannah¹, Iman¹, Kamal Imran Danish¹,
Muhammad Hafizhullah¹, Rafiqah Zahidahan-Nur¹

¹Faculty of Medicine, Royal College of Medicine Perak, Universiti Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

²Cluster for Integrative Physiology and Molecular Medicine (CIPMM), Faculty of Medicine, Royal College of Medicine Perak, Universiti Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Received January 30, 2024; Revised May 2, 2024; Accepted July 17, 2024

Cite This Paper in the Following Citation Styles

(a): [1] Rehanna Mansor, Jannathul Firdous, Hani Nurdeena, Hannah, Iman, Kamal Imran Danish, Muhammad Hafizhullah, Rafiqah Zahidahan-Nur, "Period Poverty and Its Consequences among Secondary School Students in Perak, Malaysia," *Universal Journal of Public Health*, Vol. 12, No. 4, pp. 730 - 738, 2024. DOI: 10.13189/ujph.2024.120412.

(b): Rehanna Mansor, Jannathul Firdous, Hani Nurdeena, Hannah, Iman, Kamal Imran Danish, Muhammad Hafizhullah, Rafiqah Zahidahan-Nur (2024). *Period Poverty and Its Consequences among Secondary School Students in Perak, Malaysia*. *Universal Journal of Public Health*, 12(4), 730 - 738. DOI: 10.13189/ujph.2024.120412.

Copyright©2024 by authors, all rights reserved. Authors agree that this article remains permanently open access under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License 4.0 International License

Abstract Period poverty refers to the lack of access to menstrual products. More than a billion women currently lack access to even the most basic supplies during their period, which can be linked to the inconveniences faced by women during their menstruation. The aim of this study was to evaluate period poverty issues among secondary school girls aged 15 to 17 in Ipoh, Malaysia. A cross-sectional questionnaire-based study was conducted among female secondary school students in Ipoh, Perak in order to determine the prevalence of period poverty and its consequences among adolescent girls. The study type was a convenient study, which involved distribution of questionnaires to the secondary school girls. Based on attitude adequacy on menstrual health practices, results showed students had good practices in maintaining menstrual hygiene and only 8.57% had an inadequate level of menstrual practices. Besides, period poverty is not prevalent among secondary school girls in Ipoh, Perak. This was due to that only 16.67% of students experienced period poverty. Moreover, previous study on period poverty showed how it affecting the students lifestyle. Results showed that 20.95% skipped the attendance in school, 37.62% experienced emotional stress and anxiety and 39.05% did not change their menstrual products due to unclean washing facilities and 54.76% experienced lack of participation in school activities.

Keywords Period Poverty, Prevalence, Consequences, Secondary School Students

1. Introduction

Menstrual health is a topic that has been grossly neglected for millennia due to the negative stigma and misconceptions surrounding a woman's menstruation [1]. Menstrual health management includes the ability to access accurate information on menstruation, sanitary products, and clean and safe washing facilities by people who menstruate [2]. Proper menstrual health education must be given to young girls who are experiencing menarche as their bodies are undergoing many changes during adolescence [3]. The stigma surrounding menstruation is especially true for many girls, leading to the feeling of embarrassment and reluctance to discuss this topic with their peers or the adults in their lives [4]. The most concerning issue is that most young girls tend to be unaware of how their bodies are developing and how to deal with their first menstruation [5]. Period poverty has several causes, one of which is limited access to products [6]. Menstruation supplies are quite hard to get in schools, which puts students at risk. A lot of students leave school