




Importance of Developing Supportive Policies for Managing Menstrual Health in Workplaces

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Dear Editor,

While most planning and research efforts related to menstruation focus on school and community outcomes, the effects of MHH on the adult population in workplace settings should be addressed in global efforts and are undocumented in the literature [1]. This is even though menstruation is a natural biological process that occurs on average 65 days a year for women and can have wide-ranging effects on their productivity, physical and mental health, and quality of life in the workplace. Despite the importance of this issue, there are no specific support policies to manage these challenges in most countries and organizations [2]. In this article, he examines the necessity of formulating protective policies for working women during menstruation from a human rights perspective and how to provide welfare and justice for this segment of society through appropriate policies.

In many low- and middle-income countries, research and interventions have primarily focused on menstrual health among adolescent girls and rural women. In

contrast, the needs of working women remain unaddressed. This narrow focus has not only led to ignoring the menstrual needs of women during adulthood but also ignored the wide-ranging effects this issue has on their professional lives. For example, research conducted in different countries has shown that many women miss work days or have low productivity when they are at work due to menstrual problems [3-5]. This indicates that menstruation can directly affect the quality and quantity of women's labor force participation. As a result, formulating appropriate supportive policies in this area is necessary.

Menstruation-related problems such as dysmenorrhea, premenstrual syndrome (PMS), and premenstrual dysphoric disorder (PMDD) can seriously affect women's performance in the workplace. The pain caused by these problems, sometimes severe and debilitating, reduces productivity and increases absenteeism [6, 7]. However, many women refuse to express their issues to their employers due to social taboos related to menstruation, and this not only aggravates their physical and mental problems but may

also lead to discrimination in the workplace [8]. Therefore, it is necessary that support policies not only pay attention to the physical issues of women during menstruation but also respond to the psychological and social challenges associated with it.

The experiences of women in developing countries have shown that menstrual health needs in the workplace are widely ignored. Women in these countries have reported unpleasant experiences in the workplace due to a lack of proper hygiene facilities, an inability to manage pain and fatigue, and social taboos associated with menstruation. These issues not only affect the physical and mental health of women but can also lead to a decrease in the quality of their working life and a decrease in their economic participation in society [2, 9]. Therefore, policymakers must view these issues as human rights concerns and take measures to improve women's working conditions during menstruation.

In many countries and organizations, paying attention to menstrual issues in the workplace and implementing supportive policies still need improvement. However, the experience of working women has shown that menstruation can directly affect their productivity and quality of work life [10]. Various supportive policies can help improve women's conditions during menstruation. These policies include, for example, menstrual leave. More recently, private organizations have implemented menstruation and/or menopause policies, including vacation and/or leave entitlements, as part of "progressive" HRM policies [11]. Providing appropriate facilities for menstrual health management at the workplace (such as access to sanitary products and clean and private environments, the possibility of working from home during menstruation, and providing necessary training to managers and employees about the effects of menstruation and how to deal with these issues [12]. Implementing such policies can help reduce stress, increase job satisfaction, and improve productivity.

In addition, supportive policies should be designed to reduce gender discrimination and provide a work environment free of any judgment and discrimination. This includes promoting an open and accepting culture in organizations, educating employees and managers about menstruation-related needs and problems, and creating a safe space for women to express their issues without fear of judgment or humiliation [13]. Such an approach not only improves the quality of life of working women but also strengthens the workforce and creates a healthier, more equal environment for all employees. Supportive policies are not only a social and health need; from a human rights perspective, they should also be considered part of the moral and legal obligations of employers and governments [14].

Finally, it should be noted that the issue of menstruation and related needs is not only a health issue but also a human rights issue. Failure to address these needs can

lead to violations of women's rights in the workplace, discrimination, and reduced equal opportunities for professional development [14]. Therefore, governments, international organizations, and human rights institutions should seriously develop and implement supportive policies for menstruating women and, in this way, promote justice and equality in the workplace. Only through such an approach can we ensure that all women, regardless of their physical condition or menstrual cycle, have equal opportunities to participate in the workforce and advance in their careers.

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