

A Survey of Free Menstrual Supplies in Public Places in China and The Experience of Spain

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Abstract: At present, many public places such as schools, workplaces and public bathrooms in our country have had popularization and action in providing menstrual supplies for free, this initiative aims to reduce the economic burden on women, and ensure that all women can get the products needed for menstrual periods, and the health care of the sanitary napkin is also the progress of humanity. This paper will discuss the current situation of providing free menstrual products in public places in China through literature survey, questionnaire survey, comparative research and other research methods, and provide some suggestions and ideas for the development of this action.

Keywords: Menstrual Products; Publicity; Investigate; Analyze.

1. Investigation of Free Menstrual Supplies in Public Places in China

Providing menstrual products for free in public places is a free loving service provided by women during their menstrual period in public places. Some colleges and universities and individual enterprises in China have begun to independently provide free menstrual products, and the phenomenon is becoming more and more common. From the current point of view of our country, this measure has been implemented in a number of cities and continues to develop, step by step to meet the basic needs of women. However, due to the recent development of public opinion and the problems arising from the implementation of the measure, the initiative of the measure has also been inhibited. This paper takes undergraduate, undergraduate and above students of various grades and majors in universities across China as the subject of investigation, and investigates the current situation of providing free menstrual supplies in public places in their places, analyzes the statistical data, compares it with the current situation of implementing this measure in Spain, and gives some suggestions and ideas for the development of this measure.

2. Survey Objects and Survey Methods

2.1. Survey Respondents

In this paper, students of undergraduate, undergraduate and above majors and grades in universities across China in 2022 are taken as the main body of investigation, and universities across the country as a whole are taken as the research object.

2.2. Investigation Method

(1)Literature investigation method: Through the literature review of a large number of related news and electronic resource libraries, a rigorous investigation plan has been established, and the authenticity and availability of the literature to be used have been checked to ensure the systematic and reliability of the investigation, so as to understand the current situation of providing menstrual products for free in public places in China, improve the understanding of it, and clarify the development and

significance of the project.

(2)Questionnaire survey method: Through questionnaire survey, we conducted a preliminary survey on our school and other colleges and universities in China, and studied the views and opinions of college students on providing menstrual products for free in public places.

(3)Comparative research method: By comparing the differences between different cities in China and between China and different countries in the implementation of the measure of providing menstrual products for free in public places, the current situation, development prospect and significance are studied.

(4)Experience summary method: According to the investigated data, summarize the experience and lessons of the implementation of the project, explore a suitable model for the implementation of the project, and give reasonable suggestions for all aspects and the future development of the project.

3. Survey Results and Analysis

3.1. Survey Result

According to the survey, participants in the questionnaire covered 13 provinces in China, mainly college students in central and eastern provinces, among which Jilin Province and Jiangxi Province accounted for the largest proportion. The proportion of undergraduate education is more than 70%, which is mainly sophomore and junior students, and the ratio of men to women is 4:5.

From the survey content, 60% of the students think that they understand the relevant knowledge of sanitary napkins, including its use, annual sales, and specific prices; 70% of the students think that the price of sanitary napkins purchased in the market is high; 60% of students are troubled by the use of menstrual products due to menstrual instability. Of these, 40% of the students are in colleges and universities

There are "menstrual aid boxes" in public places, and found in the city's public places to provide free menstrual supplies supply points, these students mainly concentrated in the eastern coastal provinces, at the same time, 80% of the students think that this behavior is correct and reasonable, and hope to popularize. Up to 90 percent of students believe that

menstrual products should be provided free of charge in universities and other public places to meet the universal

needs of women and bring good effects to society.

Location distribution



Figure 1. Location distribution

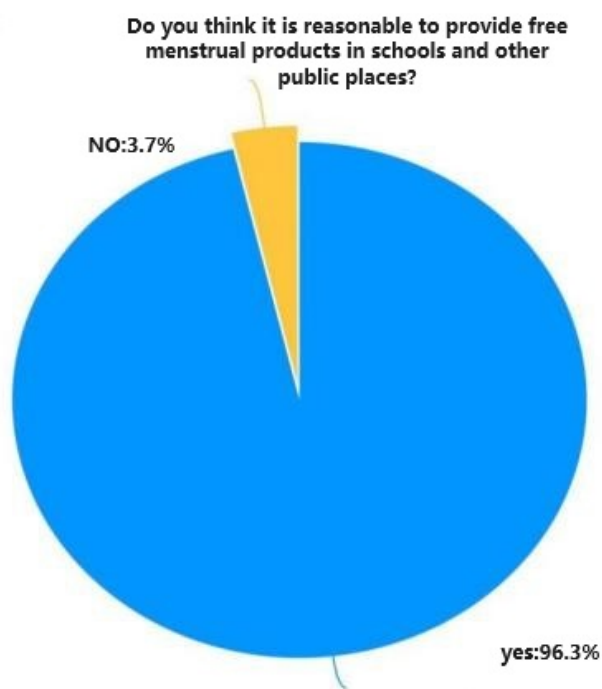


Figure 2. Pie chart

3.2. Investigation and Analysis

(1) The benefits of providing free menstrual products in public places

Positive impact on women's health. Providing free menstrual products in public places can improve women's health. Menstrual hygiene is essential to prevent infections and other health problems, but many women are not financially able to afford the products they need. By providing these products for free, women are more likely to practice

good menstrual hygiene, which can reduce the risk of health problems for women and make them more comfortable during this time.

To help improve the economic situation of low-income women. According to statistics, every woman has been saddled with up to 40,000 yuan of sanitary napkin "debt" since birth, and many low-income women are difficult to afford menstrual products, which may have a significant impact on their finances, resulting in a decline in their quality of life, and even affect basic survival. By providing these products for free, women can save money that could be spent on other necessities, such as food and housing.

Promote social inclusion. Periods are a natural part of a woman's life, and women should not feel ashamed or embarrassed to openly discuss their needs. By making menstrual products readily available, society can send a signal that periods are normal and should be recognised and supported, rather than stigmatised. Providing free menstrual products can help reduce the feelings of isolation and shame that many women feel during their periods. When women have access to the products they need, they are more likely to feel confident and comfortable in social settings, rather than anxious or self-conscious about their period needs.

Demonstrate social responsibility. Providing menstrual products for free in public places can not only reflect the care and respect of the government, enterprises and institutions for women's lives, but also reflect the responsibility and responsibility of the society for public health and health, indicating that the plight of women has been widely valued by all sectors of society.

Promote gender equality. Providing free menstrual products helps eliminate social discrimination and inconvenience for women during their physiological period, promote gender equality and respect, and enhance social

harmony and stability.

(2) Problems in providing free menstrual supplies in public places

While there are many benefits to providing free menstrual products in public, there are also some challenges to implementing such programs.

The issue of cost commitment. The most critical part of implementing this measure is funding, as providing menstrual products for free is costly. However, there are also opportunities to obtain funding through government grants, donations, or partnerships with businesses or non-profit organizations.

Abuse problem. Providing menstrual products for free in public places has the problem of being abused by some people who want to, resulting in a waste of resources and an imbalance between supply and demand, which may make it impossible for those who really need them to obtain enough menstrual products. The implementation of this measure needs to ensure that these products are accurately and readily available to women who need them. This requires working with local governments, schools, workplaces and other public bodies to install distribution devices or stock menstrual supplies at specific locations. In addition, it is important to educate women about the availability of these products and how to obtain them.

Privacy concerns. Some women feel embarrassed or ashamed to collect menstrual products provided in public places, because it may involve private menstrual problems, and many women can not overcome the psychological barrier, which will lead to the implementation of the measure is limited.

Sustainability issues. If measures to provide menstrual supplies are not sustainable or planned for the long term, this may lead to a shortage of funds or insufficient supply of resources. Failure to implement the measure in the long term could leave women who rely on these products without the necessary support, increasing their burden of living.

4. Second, Compare with the Status Quo of Free Menstrual Supplies in Public Places in Spain

With the continuous improvement of Spanish local residents' living standards and healthy life awareness, female consumers' requirements for menstrual products in functions, comfort, safety, health and other aspects continue to improve, providing free menstrual products for women is also a cause that the Spanish government has long been committed to: Let any woman in need, reasonable, easy, dignified access to different types of menstrual products.

As of now, China has no national law or policy requiring free menstrual products. Most of the initiatives have been initiated by local governments and schools to provide free menstrual supplies to students in need, especially in rural areas. In addition, a number of ngos and businesses are actively participating in the initiative to help reduce the cost and burden of living for poor women and girls. In 2021, Spain passed a law called "LOBO" (Ley de Bienes de primera necesidad, or Law on Basic Necessities), which aims to ensure that women have access to menstrual products for free or at a low cost during their periods. According to this law, menstrual hygiene products such as sanitary pads and menstrual cups are listed as basic necessities, and it is the responsibility of the government and local governments to

ensure the supply of these goods, especially for low-income families and students. Here are some key points of the law's implementation: Public schools are required to provide free menstrual supplies in girls' restrooms; Free or low-cost menstrual products should also be available in public facilities such as hospitals, clinics and public toilets; For women who need financial assistance, the government will provide subsidies so that these products do not become more of a financial burden to buy in places such as pharmacies and supermarkets; Ngos and businesses are encouraged to participate in the provision of these menstrual products as part of their social responsibility.

The Catalonia region of Spain has launched a groundbreaking women's health initiative with the aim of providing free reusable menstrual products to women and girls. The initiative was launched by the Catalan government to ensure that all people have equal access to sanitary pads. Thanks to the program, about 2.5 million women, girls, transgender and non-binary people in the northeastern region of Spain are able to receive free menstrual products. The project, the first of its kind in the world, aims to eradicate menstrual poverty, which affects one in four women in Catalonia, while promoting gender equality and mutual respect and breaking down the stereotypes and taboos surrounding periods. According to the Catalan government, the program, which will cost 8.5 million euros, will be purchased by the public health care system covering the entire population and distributed by more than 3,000 private pharmacies in the region, and its implementation has been remarkable, attracting widespread attention and support from society. This humanized care measure initiated by the Catalan government reflects the importance of the state and the government to women's health and rights, and calls for ensuring that women's health rights and interests are protected, which has a positive guiding role and social significance.

It can be seen that in China, although some local governments and schools provide menstrual supplies at free or subsidized prices, the coverage may not be widespread enough and the implementation is inconsistent. This may be influenced by factors such as resource allocation, promotion and cultural attitudes. In some cities and schools, there may be educational campaigns about menstrual health, but in rural or economically disadvantaged areas, there may be relatively little resources and attention. In contrast, Spain has made more progress in providing menstrual products for free. Some local governments and schools have actively promoted policies to provide menstrual products for free, and some cities have even incorporated them into the public health care system to ensure that women have easy access to the products they need. This initiative has played an important role in improving women's health and promoting gender equality, and has been widely recognized and supported by society. Although the methods are different, both countries attach great importance to the multi-faceted feelings and individual needs of women, reflecting the understanding and respect for women, and showing a positive and responsible national image.

5. Suggestions on China's Measures to Provide Menstrual Products for Free in Public Places

(1) In terms of cost commitment, suggestions and

applications can be made to government departments or relevant agencies to formulate relevant policies or regulations and provide financial support. Moreover, the government can strengthen publicity awareness and education, set up display boards and posters to publicize the content in public places, publicize the importance and use of menstrual products, not only improve women's awareness and attention to physiological health, promote a healthier lifestyle, but also strengthen the understanding and respect of society for women's physiological health.

(2) In terms of abuse, we can cooperate with businesses, supermarkets, schools, offices, etc., to set up special free menstrual supplies supply points, and strengthen safety supervision in the corresponding locations. Designated supply points can be set up in public places, such as women's toilets, rest areas and other places, placing free sanitary napkins, tampons and other menstrual products, so that women in need can access them at any time. You can also provide personal menstrual supplies, including sanitary napkins, wet wipes, tampons, etc., easy for women to carry and replace, to maintain personal hygiene and health.

(3) In terms of sustainability issues, the first is to cooperate with relevant manufacturers to promote the sustainable development of menstrual products. For example, the use of biodegradable materials to produce menstrual products, such as organic cotton, pulp, etc., to reduce the impact on the environment. There are also several sustainable menstrual options available, such as reusable cloth pads or biodegradable bioplastic tampons. The second is that relevant organizations and institutions need to regularly check the inventory of menstrual supplies, avoid waste and expiration, and provide adequate standby inventory of menstrual supplies in public places to meet sudden needs.

(4) In terms of privacy issues, you can collect feedback from users. In the process of providing free menstrual supplies, we can take the initiative to collect feedback from users, understand the different needs and satisfaction of users, solve existing problems, constantly improve and perfect services, improve user experience, and promote the sound development of this measure.

(5) In addition, relevant public welfare activities can be organized, publicity and promotion can be carried out to improve the awareness and understanding of the community on the provision of menstrual supplies, and more units and organizations can be promoted to join the ranks of providing menstrual supplies. We advocate enterprises and social organizations to pay attention to the physiological health needs of female employees, students and other groups, and provide adequate support and care. Individuals can also be encouraged to take spontaneous actions, provide menstrual supplies to public places, and share and promote them through social media and other means to guide more people to participate in this public welfare activity and improve the participation of all sectors of society.

6. Conclusion

In short, providing free menstrual products in public places

is an important measure that reflects social civilization and progress, which can have a positive impact on women's health, social welfare and social inclusion, and is also of great significance in promoting gender equality and improving the social atmosphere. By ensuring that all women have access to the products they need during their periods, society can take action to support women's overall well-being and empowerment. Despite the challenges of implementing these measures, the benefits far outweigh the costs, making it a worthwhile measure for women's rights and dignity. It is hoped that all relevant units and organizations can pay attention to this issue, actively promote the popularization and provision of menstrual products, and make due efforts and contributions to the construction of a more friendly and healthy social environment.

Acknowledgments

Project: Practice and Innovation Training Project for College students in Jilin Province in 2022 "Investigation and Analysis of Free menstrual Supplies in Public Places" S2023 10964041.

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