

The Solution to Workplace Equality Could be as Simple as Learning About Periods

By Georgina Grant

My name is Georgina Grant, and I have a period; I am not the only one. In fact, 1.8 billion people menstruate globally. Considering the consuming nature of menstruating, I used to believe that everyone would know about how to handle their periods. It was not until I experienced my sex-ed class and its unnotable results, that I began to realize I was wrong. Menstruation (or more commonly, a period) is a set of cycles the body experiences when preparing for pregnancy. People with female reproductive systems can experience menstruation from around eight to around sixty years old. Despite the normalcy and biological necessity of menstruation, I have continuously noticed how education and support for this topic are deprioritized. For example, schools will provide sex-ed curriculums teaching only about anatomy instead of practical information for menstruators to use in their everyday lives. Menstruation is hardly ever spoken about and menstruators feel shame confiding in trusted peers and adults or even other menstruators. Specifically, conversations with friends in my home state, Idaho, revealed how sexual education in public school systems constantly ignores menstruation, prioritizing topics about male reproductive systems or abstinence. As a student, I can attest to how this affects my peers as I constantly hear disheartening comments popularizing false stigmas about periods or girls normalizing painful experiences in the name of “oh it’s just my period.” This past year my frustration led me to create my own menstrual curriculum to supplement information I wish I had known and that I believed other girls should know as well. Despite working with amazing organizations, the next step is to provide the curriculum from a legislative, state-based approach. However, this seems impossible without information to support what makes menstrual education not only imperative for menstruators, but non-menstruators as well. As I have researched, outlined, wrote, and rewrote, I have truly immersed myself in most facets of menstrual inequity. This has enabled me to further support my curriculum and become an

expert on the social effects of menstruation. I hope this paper fills in the gap as to why you may know nothing about menstruation even if you (or someone very important to you) have periods every month.

This research analyzes the pipeline between menstrual belief systems created from school sexual education and how workplaces continue to utilize these belief systems to treat their menstruating female employees poorly. Then I will analyze how this affects women's labor productivity and how this connects with their economic contribution. My paper will be grounded in analysis of school legislation in the West Coast versus the South to provide ties to how this issue is apparent throughout America. To emphasize these key stages, my presentation will be organized in three "choose your own adventure" avenues: educating about menstruation, presenting menstrual understanding, and linking to lifestyle success. I will begin by educating about menstruation through a curriculum comparison between materials from the South, the West Coast, and my curriculum. Then, I will inform viewers of the statistical outcomes of learning about menstruation from each type of presentation. Afterwards, I will tie each educational outcome to workforce results, analyzing the productivity consequence or benefit seeded by each curriculum. To conclude, I will broadly address how employee productivity and poverty can affect the US's economic growth. This presentation is organized to provide clear results and processes to show how menstrual education is essential for personal and economic success of both menstruators and non-menstruators.

“No one should have to choose between their basic health needs and participating fully in school, work, or daily life. Access to period care products is as essential as access to soap and toilet paper.”¹ John Nothdurft the Director of Government Affairs for The Association for Cleaning and Public Affairs (ISSA) stated this to express the necessity of menstrual education and products. However, many states throughout America do not require that schools provide menstrual education as a part of sexual education (sex-ed) or accessible menstrual products in bathrooms. Similarly, many workplaces also do not provide menstrual products or policies ensuring normalcy and comfort towards menstruation. Comparing the American South with the West Coast schools shows a likely connection between lack menstrual curriculums and product access with belief systems that stigmatize menstruation; consequently, when menstruation is marginalized, workplaces engage in similar stigma by lacking menstrual company policies or accessible menstrual product access. This systematic oppression not only harms menstruator's livelihood, but also their potential to contribute economically.

The Cleveland Health Clinic defines menstruation as, “when you shed the lining of your uterus. This cycle is part of your reproductive system and prepares your body for a possible pregnancy.”² Located in the female reproductive system, this process typically lasts between 24 to 38 days.³ The menstrual cycle contains four stages: menses, follicular, ovulation, and luteal phases. The process begins by shedding the uterine lining from the uterus. Then a new egg grows in the ovaries, travels through the fallopian tubes, and if not fertilized implants in the uterus.⁴

¹ Jeff Cross, "A Look inside ISSA's Biggest Advocacy Event Yet," Cleaning and Maintenance Management, last modified April 3, 2025, accessed August 8, 2026, <https://cmmonline.com/articles/a-look-inside-issas-biggest-advocacy-event-yet>.

² "Menstrual Cycle," Cleveland Clinic, last modified December 9, 2022, accessed August 30, 2026, <https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/articles/10132-menstrual-cycle>.

³ "Menstrual Cycle," Cleveland Clinic, last modified December 9, 2022, accessed August 8, 2026, <https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/articles/10132-menstrual-cycle>.

⁴ "Menstrual Cycle," Cleveland Clinic.al-cycle.

While many believe the menstrual process only occurs when blood is visible, the female reproductive system constantly undergoes this cycle even when symptoms are internal.

Menstruation not only contributes to a healthy reproductive system, but also signals health in the entire body. For people with female reproductive systems, menstruation is a fifth vital sign.⁵ If discrepancies appear in the reproductive system or other areas of the body, menstruation can become irregular or disappear.⁶

Menstrual symptoms appear at multiple points during the cycle but most frequently occur as Pre-Menstrual Syndrome (PMS) during the luteal phase.⁷ Symptoms include throbbing body pain, stomach cramping, nausea, headaches, dizziness, skin reactions, and more.⁸ Menstrual pain likens to the severity of a heart attack, and 80% of menstruating women have reported experiencing painful menstrual symptoms.⁹ Furthermore, 43% of menstruators adjust their schedules to accommodate cycle symptoms, one-third of menstruators take off work due to menstrual pain, and 10% state menstrual pain renders them incapable of completing tasks.¹⁰

Despite menstruation requiring female reproductive biology, any identity with this anatomy can menstruate (e.g. transgender men, non-binary people, and more). My research analyzes how menstrual inequities affect female-identifying menstruators with female reproductive systems, yet this does not signify these issues and inequities only affect this demographic.

⁵ "Menstrual Cycles as a Fifth Vital Sign," Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Development, last modified September 13, 2021, accessed August 14, 2026, https://www.nichd.nih.gov/about/org/od/directors_corner/prev_updates/menstrual-cycles.

⁶ "Menstrual Cycles," Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Development.

⁷ "Menstrual Cramps," Mayo Clinic, accessed August 8, 2026, <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/menstrual-cramps/symptoms-causes/syc-20374938>.

⁸ "Menstrual Cramps," Mayo Clinic.

⁹ Hanna Brooks Olsen, "How Much Does a Period Cost, Anyway?," *Bloody Hell: Part 2* (blog), October 17, 2017, accessed July 3, 2026, <https://medium.com/s/bloody-hell/how-much-does-a-period-cost-anyway-6a2263828ae3>.

¹⁰ Olsen, "How Much," *Bloody Hell: Part 2* (blog).

Period poverty disadvantages menstruators physically, emotionally, and financially. The UN defines period poverty as “the inability to afford and access menstrual products, sanitation and hygiene facilities, and education and awareness to manage menstrual health.”¹¹ Menstruators experiencing period poverty are unable to consistently afford menstrual supplies such as tampons, pads, and menstrual cups. Therefore, they instead reuse soiled products or materials unsafe for vaginal and reproductive system use; these foreign materials can cause vaginal infections, creating pain and discomfort.¹² Popularized menstrual stigmas normalize concealing menstrual bleeding, resources, and PMS symptoms. These stigmas cause many menstruators to perceive their cycles shamefully, conceal their use of menstrual products, and hide menstrual symptoms during the day-to-day to reduce the association of menstruation with their performance.¹³ A study on the gap in menstrual education states, “From young girls whose mothers instilled in them a culture of shame to young boys who only learned about periods through whispers and rumors, a lack of understanding is what much of this stigma stems from.”¹⁴ When girls and women are not taught the necessary scientific information about menstruation, they are unable to discount false data, leaving them more vulnerable to stigmas; this leads to a lack of self-confidence and emotional wellness.¹⁵

Financially, the constant cost of expensive menstrual products creates economic hardship. A study on the cost of menstruating stated that, “a lifetime supply of cheap tampons will cost a

¹¹ UN, "Period Poverty- why millions of girls and women cannot afford their periods," UN Women, UN, last modified July 28, 2025, accessed July 7, 2026, <https://www.unwomen.org/en/articles/explainer/period-poverty-why-millions-of-girls-and-women-cannot-afford-their-periods>.

¹² ACLU, *The Unequal Price of Periods* (ACLU, November 6, 2019), 2, accessed July 3, 2026, <https://www.aclu.org/publications/unequal-price-periods>.

¹³ "The Stigma of Stain," Critical Debates HSGJ, <https://criticaldebateshsgj.scholasticahq.com/article/92024-the-stigma-of-a-stain-the-gap-in-menstrual-education>.

¹⁴ "The Stigma," Critical Debates HSGJ.

¹⁵ Margaret L. Schmitt et al., "The Intersection of Menstruation, School and Family: Experiences of Girls Growing up in Urban Cities in the U.S.A.," *International Journal of Adolescence and Youth* 26, no. 1 (2021): 103, <https://doi.org/10.1080/02673843.2020.1867207>.

person around \$1,035, but they could cost much more if you have a longer, heavier flow.”¹⁶ While this seems inexpensive, this cost reflects cheap, frequently uncomfortable tampons, instead of name-brand menstrual products.¹⁷ Additionally, this baseline estimate compounds by purchasing organic products, heating pads or ibuprofen for pain mitigation, or having irregularly long cycles. However, one unpaid sick day for every year of menstruation leads to lifetime income loss of around \$7,222.¹⁸ This financial loss is common for menstruators as 10% of women report being unable to carry out daily activities due to their menstrual symptoms.¹⁹ For middle class income earners and above, these costs have a lessened effect, but for menstruators living under the poverty line, these additional financial burdens compound. They experience difficulty purchasing menstrual products due to their high expenses, and do not receive support from government assistance programs.²⁰ Because public bathrooms do not provide menstrual products, menstruating girls and women experience constant pressure to re-buy products during an emergency.

Considering this research roots in the comparison between the American South and West Coast, it must note how period poverty disproportionately affects Black women. In Southern regions, larger concentrations of poverty are intensified by minority statuses.²¹ A Duke study analyzed these connections, stating, “In the Deep South, which has even higher rates of poverty, some family demographics that are positively associated with poverty (eg. less education, single motherhood, rural residence) are even more exacerbated... In a study of states in the Deep South, Hattery and Smith (2007) find the higher percentage of Blacks in a county is associated with

¹⁶ Hanna Brooks Olsen, "How Much Does a Period Cost, Anyway?," *Bloody Hell: Part 2* (blog), October 17, 2017, accessed July 3, 2026, <https://medium.com/s/bloody-hell/how-much-does-a-period-cost-anyway-6a2263828ae3>.

¹⁷ Olsen, "How Much," *Bloody Hell: Part 2* (blog); ACLU, *The Unequal*, 2.

¹⁸ Olsen, "How Much," *Bloody Hell: Part 2* (blog).

¹⁹ Olsen, "How Much," *Bloody Hell: Part 2* (blog).

²⁰ Olsen, "How Much," *Bloody Hell: Part 2* (blog).

²¹ Baker, *Poverty and Place*, 73.

poorer residents, less access to education, and less wealth accumulation.”²² This highlights that being Black or a single mother increases the probability of impoverishment. For Black women, these variables compound, resulting in 1 in 5 Southern Black women living below the poverty line.²³ Because period poverty most drastically affects menstruators below the poverty line, this economic condition disproportionately affects Southern Black women compared with women in other regions. If a menstruator faces difficulty affording basic necessities like residence, water, food, and transportation (unincluding the additional support for her family), then expensive menstrual products can be labeled as an unnecessary financial burden.²⁴

Additionally, many Southern states place high taxes on menstrual products. For example, Tennessee, Mississippi, and Louisiana place a 7% upcharge on menstrual products, labeling them as “luxury goods;” states in the Northeast and West Coast do not charge extra costs or sales tax for menstrual goods.²⁵ In rural areas, stores carrying menstrual products can be far from residence compounding costs for gas and transportation. These variables further prevent impoverished menstruators from rationalizing the cost of menstrual products in their budgets, forcing many to use other materials or reuse products. The intersection between period poverty’s variables and Southern poverty ensures period poverty unjustly affects Southern Black women in rural regions.

The American South and West Coast are characterized by geographic, cultural, and commercial differences. The American South classifies as Virginia, West Virginia, Kentucky, Arkansas, Tennessee, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Mississippi, Louisiana, Alabama,

²² Baker, *Poverty and Place*, 71-73.

²³ "The Ongoing Influence of Slavery and Jim Crow Means High Poverty Rates and Low Economic Mobility in the South," Economic Policy Institute, last modified April 3, 2025, accessed July 24, 2026, <https://www.epi.org/publication/rooted-racism-part4/>.

²⁴ Olsen, "How Much," *Bloody Hell: Part 2* (blog).

²⁵ Julie Keeler, "Which States Tax on Feminine Hygiene Products," Magnolia Women's Health, last modified May 7, 2026, accessed July 24, 2026, https://magnoliawomenshealth.com/which-states-tax-on-feminine-hygiene-products.html#google_vignette.

Florida, and Texas.²⁶ While Maryland and District of Columbia classify as the Southern region as well, they share fewer cultural and societal norms.²⁷ Due to the Southern region's size, these states are labeled either as the "Deep South" or "Peripheral South;" the "Deep South" includes Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi and South Carolina, while the "Peripheral South" is comprised of Arkansas, Florida, North Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia.²⁸ This research examines statistics from both the "Peripheral" and "Deep" South to comprehensively analyze this region. Culturally, the South is known for their emphasis towards community and hospitality.²⁹ Connected with faith, Christianity is a basis of many Southerners' values and belief systems.³⁰ The popular term "Southern Hospitality" has roots in Christian teachings, emphasizing kindness, charity, and loving one's neighbor.³¹ Southern states identify their own approach to business legislation. The "Southern Business Model" is legislation that provides minimal regulations, low taxes, weak minimum wage standards, and strong opposition towards unions.³² This business model benefits business owners, yet many employees have cheap safety nets, low salaries, and no paid sick leaves or other benefits.³³ Primary Southern industries are machinery manufacturing, aerospace, production, and oil refining.³⁴

²⁶ Adam Gopnik, "United States," ed. Britannica, Britannica, accessed July 23, 2026, <https://www.britannica.com/place/United-States/The-South>.

²⁷ Gopnik, "United States," Britannica.

²⁸ Regina Smalls Baker, *Poverty and Place in the Context of the American South* (Duke, n.d.), 69-70, accessed July 23, 2026, <https://dukespace.lib.duke.edu/server/api/core/bitstreams/1f0c0b70-ee7f-4b1c-98f8-1c4233fdddef/content>.

²⁹ Haley Roberts, "The Cultural South of the United States," *Deep South Magazine*, March 12, 2026, accessed July 23, 2026, <https://deepsouthmag.com/2026/03/12/the-cultural-soul-of-the-southern-states/>.

³⁰ Roberts, "The Cultural."

³¹ "The Deep Roots and Modern Evolution of Southern Hospitality," *Southern Magazine*, last modified April 15, 2025, accessed July 23, 2026, <https://southernmagazine.com/the-deep-roots-of-southern-hospitality/>.

³² Chandra Childers, "Breaking down the South's Economic Underperformance," Economic Policy Institute, last modified June 11, 2024, accessed July 23, 2026, <http://usafacts.org/answers/what-is-the-gross-domestic-product-gdp/state/florida/>.

³³ Childers, "Breaking down," Economic Policy Institute.

³⁴ Victor Whitman, "Commercial Spotlight: Southeast Region," *Scotsman Guide*, last modified March 2020, accessed August 14, 2026, <https://www.scotsmanguide.com/commercial/commercial-spotlight-southeast-region/>.

Comparatively, the West Coast is made up of California, Washington, and Oregon. Popularized West Coast culture includes diversity and liberation.³⁵ Home to Silicon Valley, California is a hub of innovation, science, and technology. Similarly, Washington houses major technology companies like Microsoft and Amazon; Oregon ranks seventh of most innovative states, and provides industries like clean energy and renewable electricity generation.³⁶ The West Coast is diverse, characterized by multi-cultural hubs and communities throughout all three states.³⁷ Employers face strict legislation for high minimum wage requirements, statutory paid leave, and diversity and harassment workplace regulations.³⁸ While these aspects improve employee lifestyle, the West Coast has greater tax expenses and business limitations. This region accounts for 18% of the national GDP, as one of America's financial powerhouses.

State-legislated sex-ed for many Southern schools is either not mandatory or requires abstinence-focused curricula. However, school districts choosing to provide sex-ed in states where it is not required fulfill fewer curricula requirements and minimal scientific accuracy. Southern states with mandatory sex-ed require curriculums to emphasize abstinence.³⁹ Mississippi, requires "abstinence plus" curricula stating, "Abstinence-only education shall remain the state standard for any sex-related education taught in public schools... Teaches that a mutually faithful, monogamous relationship in the context of marriage is the only appropriate setting for sexual intercourse."⁴⁰ These standards align with many other Southern states teaching abstinence-based curricula. In Alabama, SB 277 (passed in 2026) stated that, "This bill would

³⁵ Lalie Azhar, "A Look into California's Complex Political Landscape," The California Aggie, <https://theaggie.org/2026/01/27/a-look-into-californias-complex-political-landscape>.

³⁶ State of Oregon, "Why Oregon," Business Oregon, State of Oregon, accessed August 14, 2026, <https://www.oregon.gov/biz/programs/homeareas/oregon/Pages/default.aspx>.

³⁷ Azhar, "A Look," The California Aggie.

³⁸ "Navigate California, Oregon, and Washington Employment Laws in 2026," GovDocs, accessed July 23, 2026, <https://www.govdocs.com/home-page/resources/guides/west-coast-compliance-guide/>.

³⁹ "State Profiles," Sex Ed for Social Change.

⁴⁰ Education, Miss. Code Ann. §§ 37-13-171. Accessed July 3, 2026. <https://codes.findlaw.com/ms/title-37-education/ms-code-sect-37-13-171/>.

prohibit any sex education...(i) from providing... information about how to acquire an abortion; (ii)... demonstrating the use of contraceptives; (iii) using images that are sexually explicit.” This bill restricts curriculum material like abortion information for teen pregnancy or sexual assault, how to properly use contraceptives for intercourse, and images of genital regions.

However Southern state’s legislation not only restricts the content that can be taught, but also the age students receive sex-ed. Florida’s House Bill 1069 was introduced at a subcommittee hearing at the Florida House, where state representative Ashley Gantt asked, “Does this bill prohibit conversations about menstrual cycles? We know that typically, the age is between 10 and 15, so if little girls experience their menstrual cycle in fifth grade or fourth grade, would that prohibit conversations from them since they are in a grade lower than sixth grade?,” and to this, state representative Stan McClain responded, “It would.”⁴¹ This conservative legislation restricts educating students about their bodies, even as they experience puberty. Specifically, this negatively affects female students who can not learn unbiasedly about menstruation from elsewhere⁴²

Absence of menstrual education in sex-ed curricula debilitates girls from successfully handling their menstruation. A study into girls’ attitudes towards their menstrual cycles exposed that compared with girls who did not learn about menstruation, girls who are prepared have a more positive relationship with their cycle.⁴³ This is because having information about the positive and negative attributes about the menstrual cycle and how to handle the menstrual cycle allows girls to feel knowledgeable and in control of their bodies. An experiment inspecting the intersection between menstruation and education confirms that girls reported avoiding physical

⁴¹ Eleni Becker, "Florida Republican Rep. Stan McClain," The Charger Account, Dos Pueblos High School, last modified April 2023, accessed August 14, 2026, <https://chargeraccount.org/3136/news/florida-republican-rep-stan-mcclain/>.

⁴² "The Stigma," Critical Debates HSGJ.

⁴³ "The Stigma," Critical Debates HSGJ.

activity classes because of the belief that their menstrual cycles made them ill, weaker, or unable to participate.⁴⁴ Girls stated they would also spend academic class periods concerned about stains on their clothes due to uncertainty that they were wearing their menstrual product correctly.⁴⁵ Based on this evidence, lack of menstrual knowledge for female students becomes a distraction because their confusion hinders them from participating in class. Similarly, lacking accurate menstrual education can increase' susceptibility to popularized menstrual stigmas, intensifying their embarrassment and causing them to close-off socially, develop insecurities, and contribute less to class.⁴⁶

Lack of school support for menstruating students is heightened as many Southern public schools also lack accessible menstrual products in bathrooms. States such as Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, South Carolina, and Florida do not require free menstrual products to be accessible in school bathrooms. Alabama, Georgia, and North Carolina provide product funding but also do not require product access.⁴⁷ Lack of both menstrual education and product accessibility reduce the likelihood for teen girls to succeed in school.⁴⁸

Minimal access to menstrual products negatively affects menstruating students' academic and personal success.⁴⁹ A study about period health in the workplace stated that 86% of women have started menstruating in public without products; female students likely also experience menstrual emergencies in school settings.⁵⁰ Additionally, menstruation's unpredictability warrants that even girls who constantly have menstrual supplies will be unprepared by surprise

⁴⁴ Schmitt et al., "The Intersection," 102.

⁴⁵ Schmitt et al., "The Intersection," 98.

⁴⁶ Schmitt et al., "The Intersection," 100-102.

⁴⁷ "Your State Requires Free Menstrual Products: Here's How to Actually Comply," Unicorn in Every Stall, last modified April 23, 2026, accessed August 14, 2026, <https://www.everystall.com/post/period-product-requirements-by-state#viewer-92ucx505>.

⁴⁸ Schmitt et al., "The Intersection," 97.

⁴⁹ Schmitt et al., "The Intersection," 97.

⁵⁰ The Period," Reproductive & Maternal Health Compass.

menstruation. By not having access to products at school, female students have greater trouble mitigating accidents, and a leak can cause absence from school or other peer distraction when asking around for products.⁵¹

Female students living in poverty likely can not afford to buy additional products at unplanned inconveniences, and some are unable to afford products at all.⁵² A lack of accessible products places these students at a greater disadvantage because they have less mobility in the event of a menstrual accident, and they may have to reuse products or use materials not fit for vaginal use.⁵³ A publication about period poverty conducted by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) stated that one in five impoverished American teens experience lost educational opportunities due to lack of menstrual product access.⁵⁴ Therefore, this gap not only affects girls' livelihood, but also their academic success.

While resources exist to mitigate the lack of support for menstruation, many are inconsistently accessible or stigmatized. School nurses, mothers, and supplemental programs are primary areas for providing menstrual support. In school environments, nurse offices can provide products, heating pads, and cots for menstruating students. However, there are no federal laws mandating the presence of a trained nurse at schools, and many school systems do not have the financial capability to provide products or pain mitigators.⁵⁵ Additionally in under-resourced school districts, many nurses work interchangeably between multiple schools throughout the week.⁵⁶ If girls experience menstrual discomfort, pain, or tiredness during the school day, they are unable to leave class for support from a school nurse.⁵⁷ Accordingly, when girls experience

⁵¹ Schmitt et al., "The Intersection," 101.

⁵² ACLU, *The Unequal*, 1.

⁵³ ACLU, *The Unequal*, 2.

⁵⁴ ACLU, *The Unequal*, 1.

⁵⁵ Schmitt et al., "The Intersection," 100-104.

⁵⁶ Schmitt et al., "The Intersection," 100.

⁵⁷ Schmitt et al., "The Intersection," 100.

pain and uncomfortability, they either endure class or leave school; however, each option results in missing classwork or important curriculum topics.⁵⁸

Another unsupportive resource for menstruating girls is mothers presenting biased information.⁵⁹ When school does not provide sufficient menstrual education, mothers frequently supplement the answers girls need. However, mothers can be unaware of how to approach this topic, provide inaccurate information or stigmas popularized by the family.⁶⁰ This perpetuates a cycle of stigmatization as mothers may inaccurately educate their daughters about menstruation in a way perpetuating the popular biases they believe.

Similarly, programs to supplement sex-ed can be influenced by popular bias in the region. Decisions, Choices, and Options (DCO) is a program from Alabama created to supplement sex-ed curricula for schools.⁶¹ However, their program skews towards abstinence and Christian beliefs. A DCO testimonial stated, “During my freshman year of high school, the local pregnancy resource center came to my school and presented the DCO Life Choices program to our health class. The materials and concepts I learned reinforced what I was being taught by my parents, our church, and the values of my community.”⁶² Instead of educating about sex-ed scientifically, biased curricula undervalues select topics, over-emphasizing others. This creates inconsistency within the curricula, heightening the likelihood that menstrual education is not taught comprehensively enough. Therefore, menstrual education should be science-based and provide information girls need to be prepared for handling menstruation adjacent with their everyday lives.

⁵⁸ Schmitt et al., "The Intersection," 100.

⁵⁹ "The Stigma," Critical Debates HSGJ.

⁶⁰ Schmitt et al., "The Intersection," 99.

⁶¹ Decisions, Choices, & Options, "Public Education," Decisions, Choices, and Options, accessed July 3, 2026, <https://dcoinc.org/>.

⁶² Decisions, Choices, & Options, "Public Education," Decisions, Choices, and Options.

West Coast school legislation emphasizes the importance of comprehensive sex-ed curricula, while specifically incorporating menstrual education into curriculum standards.⁶³ In California, Oregon, and Washington, sex-ed requires inclusion of a breadth of topics, basis in scientific accuracy, and incorporation of a variety of resources like contraceptives or supplemental perspectives.⁶⁴ Additionally, sex-ed requires inclusivity for students of all backgrounds, limiting emphasis towards certain unscientific values or biases.⁶⁵ Oregon and California state menstrual education to be a core standard of their sex-ed, enforcing school systems to have curriculums about menstruation. Oregon developed a sex-ed and menstrual program from student feedback forms that requested information about menstruation.⁶⁶ Their program begins in kindergarten by teaching the cycle phases and reproductive anatomy; the curriculum continues to build depth and scope and by high school students learn about complex topics like “the impact of Oregon’s Menstrual Dignity Act on menstruation stigma and period poverty.”⁶⁷ While Oregon’s sex-ed curriculum does not only focus on menstruation, their emphasis on this topic ensures students will have a comprehensive understanding of menstruation beyond anatomy or cycle phases. Similarly, California’s “Know Your Period” Act

⁶³ Comprehensive Sexual Education, Wash. Rev. Code § 28A.300.475. Accessed July 8, 2026. <https://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=28A.300.475>; Oregon Department of Education, *2023 Oregon Health Standards* (Oregon Department of Education, October 19, 2023), 6, accessed July 8, 2026, <https://www.oregon.gov/ode/educator-resources/standards/health/Documents/Health%20Standards%20adopted%2010.19%20%28v2%29.pdf>; California Department of Education, "Comprehensive Sexual Health and HIV/AIDS Instruction," California Department of Education, California, accessed July 8, 2026, <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/he/se/>.

⁶⁴ Comprehensive Sexual Education, Wash. Rev. Code § 28A.300.475. Accessed July 8, 2026. <https://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=28A.300.475>; Oregon Department of Education, *2023 Oregon*, 6; California Department of Education, "Comprehensive Sexual," California Department of Education.

⁶⁵ Comprehensive Sexual Education, Wash. Rev. Code § 28A.300.475. Accessed July 8, 2026. <https://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=28A.300.475>; Oregon Department of Education, *2023 Oregon*, 6; California Department of Education, "Comprehensive Sexual," California Department of Education.

⁶⁶ Oregon Department of Education, *Menstrual Dignity for Students Toolkit* (Oregon Department of Education, n.d.), 3, accessed July 8, 2026, <https://www.oregon.gov/ode/students-and-family/healthsafety/Documents/Menstrual%20Dignity%20for%20Student%20Toolkit.pdf>.

⁶⁷ Oregon Department of Education, *Menstrual Dignity*, 12.

requires the state board of education and the Office of State Superintendent of Education to develop a new comprehensive menstrual curriculum for public school sex-ed.⁶⁸ The menstrual curriculum has to cover the topics, “Understanding the menstrual cycle, premenstrual syndrome and pain management, menstrual disorders and irregularities, and menopause and menstrual stigma.”⁶⁹ This breadth of topics supports that the California sex-ed program will teach both about scientific menstrual information and useful everyday tools.

Another support the West Coast school systems provide menstruating students are additional resources like mandatory menstrual product dispensers and support programs. Washington, Oregon, and California all require that menstrual products are accessible in female school bathrooms; Oregon requires menstrual products to be in every school bathroom, and California and Washington require menstrual products to be in all female school bathrooms and at least one male bathroom as well.⁷⁰ Additionally, each dispenser provides varying sizes and product types to accommodate flows.⁷¹ Oregon’s “Menstrual Dignity Act” highlights how Falls City School used student feedback to create an additional support resource for menstruating students.⁷² The school installed a multi-level menstrual product dispenser for different types and sizes of products.⁷³ They also created inspirational posters to boost menstrual empowerment, and dinners for menstruating students to discuss and ask questions.⁷⁴ When legislation normalizes

⁶⁸ "Know Your Period Act," Lori D. Wilson Assemblywoman, District 11, accessed July 8, 2026, <https://wilson.asmdc.org/know-your-period-act>.

⁶⁹ "Know Your," Lori D. Wilson Assemblywoman, District 11.

⁷⁰ Menstrual Hygiene Products, Wash. Rev. Code § 28A.210.420. Accessed July 8, 2026. <https://app.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=28A.210.420>; Oregon Department of Education, *Menstrual Dignity*, 9.; "Know Your," Lori D. Wilson Assemblywoman, District 11.

⁷¹ Menstrual Hygiene Products, Wash. Rev. Code § 28A.210.420. Accessed July 8, 2026. <https://app.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=28A.210.420>; Oregon Department of Education, *Menstrual Dignity*, 11.; "Know Your," Lori D. Wilson Assemblywoman, District 11.

⁷² Oregon Department of Education, *Menstrual Dignity*, 12.

⁷³ Oregon Department of Education, *Menstrual Dignity*, 12.

⁷⁴ Oregon Department of Education, *Menstrual Dignity*, 12.

school support for menstruating students, the likelihood increases for school leaders to independently create comfortable and safe environments for menstruators.

Developing school-based support resources and comprehensive menstrual education creates a supportive environment for menstruating students. When girls are more prepared for menstruation, they feel greater positivity towards their cycles.⁷⁵ Comprehensive education ensures preparedness from an anatomical, scientific lens and a practical lens; additionally, menstrual education informs girls about support resources they have at school when they experience menstrual accidents or symptoms.⁷⁶ Providing accessible products also ensures that girls do not deplete valuable class time by asking peers for a product or leaving to buy products. These students are less likely to be distracted by fear of leaking as they know where menstrual products are immediately accessible.⁷⁷

Resources and education do not only benefit female menstruators but non-menstruators as well. A publication analyzing a study about male perspective towards menstruation, stated, “When we educate children about puberty, many classrooms are split up by gender, leaving most boys in the dark about this biological process... Most of these boys started out as curious, but when silence was the only response, these biases and prejudices were quick to form.”⁷⁸ This highlights the importance of male menstrual education to ensure curiosity is met with scientific information instead of popularized stigmas. When students learn comprehensively about menstruation and see menstrual products accessible, it normalizes menstruation, limiting the opportunity for stigma to supplement absence of information. Therefore menstruating students experience less fear as to whether their peers know they are menstruating, that they use

⁷⁵ "The Stigma," Critical Debates HSGJ.

⁷⁶ "The Stigma," Critical Debates HSGJ. ; Oregon Department of Education, *Menstrual Dignity*, 12.

⁷⁷ Schmitt et al., "The Intersection," 94.

⁷⁸ "The Stigma," Critical Debates HSGJ.

menstrual products, or even if they leak blood during class. This builds a belief system normalizing menstruation as a biological aspect of female life instead of a limitation rooted in insecurity and inferiority.

Comparing cultural norm patterns between schools and workplaces in the South and West Coast presents the likelihood that values created in schools translate to culture in workplaces. The *Journal of Adolescent Health* identifying sex-ed as shaping how children perceive the world, stated, “SEL [social-emotional learning] has been found to improve academic outcomes and behaviors that confer real-life benefits among students from kindergarten through high school including improved classroom behavior, increased ability to manage challenging emotions, and better attitudes about themselves, others, and school.”⁷⁹ School-based sexual education contributes to developing students' lifelong perspectives and beliefs.

Analyzing Southern school systems' approach to menstrual and sexual education shows stigma and exclusion-based education because Southern sex-ed curriculums frequently exclude information about menstrual health, promote shame towards abortion, and popularize the Christian-influenced emphasis on hetero-specific marriages.⁸⁰ These stigmatizing values are similar to the structure of the Southern Business Model as it prioritizes financial productivity and exclusion instead of citizen livelihood.⁸¹ This business model favors hiring white men instead of people of color or women, provides an extremely weak safety net to protect citizens from

⁷⁹ Eva S. Goldfarb and Lisa D. Lieberman, "Three Decades of Research: The Case for Comprehensive Sex Education," *Journal of Adolescent Health* 68, no. 1 (2021): 23, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2020.07.036>.

⁸⁰ SIECUS, "Florida State of Sex Ed," SIECUS: Sex-Ed for Social Change, accessed August 17, 2026, <https://siecus.org/stateprofiles/florida-state-profile-2025/>; SIECUS, "Alabama's State of Sex-Ed," SIECUS: Sex-Ed for Social Change, accessed August 17, 2026, <https://siecus.org/stateprofiles/alabama-state-profile-2025/>; SIECUS, "Mississippi State of Sex-Ed," SIECUS: Sex-Ed for Social Change, accessed August 17, 2026, <https://siecus.org/stateprofiles/mississippi-state-profile-2025/>; SIECUS, "Louisiana State of Sex-Ed," SIECUS: Sex-Ed for Social Change, accessed August 17, 2026, <https://siecus.org/stateprofiles/louisiana-state-profile-2025/>; SIECUS, "Arkansas State of Sex-Ed," SIECUS: Sex-Ed for Social Change, accessed August 17, 2026, <https://siecus.org/stateprofiles/arkansas-state-profile-2025/>; SIECUS, "Georgia State of Sex-Ed," SIECUS: State of Sex-Ed for Social Change, accessed August 17, 2026, <https://siecus.org/stateprofiles/georgia-state-profile-2025/>.

⁸¹ Childers, "Breaking down," Economic Policy Institute.

detrimental poverty, and has limited employee protection legislation.⁸² Citing the exclusion rooted in this business model, The Economic Policy Institute stated, “Low wages and a weak safety net undermine workers and households’ spending powers... Black men without a criminal record are less likely to receive a call back from employers than White workers with a criminal record.”⁸³ Similar values of identity-based discrimination and exclusion are apparent in Southern school education (specifically sex-ed curricula); this connection exposes the likelihood of a pipeline between belief systems established in school and how they later represent values in the adult workplace.

Comparatively, sex-ed curriculum in the West Coast prioritizes diverse perspectives, menstrual education, and science-based education.⁸⁴ West Coast workplace legislation such as the California Equal Pay Act and mandatory harassment training ensures diverse, inclusive workplaces are normalized and emphasized.⁸⁵ Due to the likely connection between values taught in sex-ed and belief systems adults later develop, this suggests sex-ed educating about menstruation produces employees and workplaces that normalize menstruation.

Workplaces without clear menstrual support policies, stigmatize menstruators and elicit discomfort for female employees. Many company policies do not include parameters outlining menstrual support services.⁸⁶ Frequently, policies lack clear information regarding access to menstrual supplies in the office, leave for menstrual symptoms, or breaks throughout the work

⁸² Childers, "Breaking down," Economic Policy Institute.

⁸³ Childers, "Breaking down," Economic Policy Institute.

⁸⁴ SIECUS, "California State of Sex-Ed," SIECUS: Sex-Ed for Social Change, accessed August 17, 2026, <https://siecus.org/stateprofiles/california-state-profile-2025/>; SIECUS, "Washington State of Sex-Ed," SIECUS: State of Sex-Ed, accessed August 17, 2026, <https://siecus.org/stateprofiles/washington-state-profile-2025/>; SIECUS, "Oregon State of Sex-Ed," SIECUS: Sex-Ed for Social Change, accessed August 17, 2026, <https://siecus.org/stateprofiles/oregon-state-profile-2025/>.

⁸⁵ "Building a Diverse and Inclusive Workplace in California," Pomona Chamber of Commerce, accessed August 8, 2026, <https://pomonachamber.org/building-a-diverse-and-inclusive-workplace-in-california/>.

⁸⁶ "The Period Pivot," Reproductive & Maternal Health Compass, accessed August 8, 2026, <https://rmhcompass.org/trend-report-periodpivot>.

day to accommodate menstrual pain.⁸⁷ Menstruating employees likely experience confusion and stigmatization as it is unclear whether they should utilize sick days for mitigating symptoms or if they will experience criticism or minimization. Additionally, many female employees' are not comfortable speaking with leadership to clarify policies for menstruation or their symptoms.⁸⁸ A trend report by Reproductive and Maternal Health Compass (RMH) stated, "only 20% of women surveyed felt comfortable discussing menstrual health needs with their managers."⁸⁹ This presents that not only do women face difficulty appropriately handling menstrual needs in accordance with company policy, but many are also fearful of clarifying their confusion with management.

Confusion about menstrual workplace policy leads women to engage in presenteeism, lessening their productivity rates.⁹⁰ Two options for employees with debilitating menstrual symptoms are work absenteeism- working from home to mitigate menstrual symptoms- or work presenteeism- remaining at work to endure menstrual symptoms.⁹¹ RMH reports that roughly 3.5 million women struggle to function one to two days a month because of severe menstrual symptoms.⁹² Working from home or utilizing sick leave to mitigate menstrual symptoms results in greater medical benefits because it allows for the body to rest and regain energy.⁹³ When menstruators engage in presenteeism, they experience painful symptoms in the workplace. However, this actually reduces productivity compared to resting at home.⁹⁴ Menstruating

⁸⁷ "The Period," Reproductive & Maternal Health Compass.

⁸⁸ "The Period," Reproductive & Maternal Health Compass.

⁸⁹ "The Period," Reproductive & Maternal Health Compass.

⁹⁰ Alexandra Sasha Cook and Robin Van Den Hook, "Period Pain Presenteeism: Investigating Associations of Working While Experiencing Dysmenorrhea," *Journal of Psychosomatic Obstetrics and Gynecology* 44, no. 1 (2023): accessed July 16, 2026, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/0167482X.2023.2236294>.

⁹¹ Cook and Van Den Hook, "Period Pain."

⁹² "The Period," Reproductive & Maternal Health Compass.

⁹³ Cook and Van Den Hook, "Period Pain."

⁹⁴ Cook and Van Den Hook, "Period Pain."

employees who engage in presenteeism account for 8.9 days of non-productivity annually.⁹⁵ Comparatively, menstruating employees who take sick leave or work from home lose only 1.3 days of productivity annually.⁹⁶ This suggests comfortability and access to pain mitigation ensures menstruators regain energy, reduce pain, and efficiently return to the workplace to maintain their productivity. However, many menstruating employees remain in the workplace to lessen stigmatization from co-workers.⁹⁷ This poor workplace culture directly affects menstruators productivity and company cumulative success.

Many companies not only lack administrative menstrual support, but also resources for menstruation. The RMH study found that 63% of employers do not provide accessible menstrual products in employee bathrooms.⁹⁸ Additionally, even though menstrual pain is likened to a heart attack, the majority of workplaces do not have relief areas where female employees can mitigate symptoms throughout the workday.⁹⁹ While female employees benefit from always carrying menstrual products, menstruation's irregularity can cause surprise bleeding: RMH stated, "86% of women have started their period unexpectedly in public without the supplies they need."¹⁰⁰ A lack of workplace product access limits immediate remedy to surprise menstrual accidents, and if female employees experience menstrual pain, lack of workplace support forces her to endure the discomfort.

This lack of access to menstrual products negatively affects menstruating employees' productivity, and success. When a workplace does not provide accessible menstrual products, likelihood increases that women will waste working hours mitigating menstrual accidents. Due

⁹⁵ Cook and Van Den Hook, "Period Pain."

⁹⁶ Cook and Van Den Hook, "Period Pain."

⁹⁷ Levitt and Barnack-Tavlaris, "Addressing Menstruation."

⁹⁸ "The Period," Reproductive & Maternal Health Compass.

⁹⁹ Rachel B. Levitt and Jessica L. Barnack-Tavlaris, "Addressing Menstruation in the Workplace: The Menstrual Leave Debate," *The Palgrave Handbook of Critical Menstruation Studies*, 2020, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-15-0614-7_43.

¹⁰⁰ "The Period," Reproductive & Maternal Health Compass.

to menstruation's unpredictability, 86% of women have begun menstruating in public without necessary supplies, and 62% of women have been forced to leave the workplace to buy menstrual products.¹⁰¹ Additionally, 53% of women reported asking co-workers to borrow menstrual products.¹⁰² Obligation to leave the workplace during the workday to procure menstrual supplies reduces hours of productivity. This worsens for women who cannot afford to sporadically buy menstrual products, forcing them to return home for products. When menstruating employees do not leave the workplace for products, they ask co-workers for them instead. Therefore, increasing workplace distraction and disrupting productivity for multiple employees. That said, providing accessible menstrual products in bathrooms would reduce workday disruption because menstrual accidents could be easily mitigated, and employees would waste less of their workday sourcing products.

These oversights primarily stem from gender inequality among workplace leadership. Men are 78% more likely to hold leadership roles compared to women, and in the US 63% of men hold corporate leadership positions.¹⁰³ Due to lack of physical awareness, many male leaders are ignorant towards menstrual needs and stigmatization. However, neglect further abnormalizes menstruation in the workplace, pressuring female employees to conceal menstruation.¹⁰⁴ Many female employees believe advocating for menstrual needs or utilizing menstrual policies will cause other employees to view them as less capable.¹⁰⁵ The Palgrave

¹⁰¹ "The Period," Reproductive & Maternal Health Compass.

¹⁰² "The Period," Reproductive & Maternal Health Compass.

¹⁰³ "Men Are TWICE as Likely as Women to Attain Senior Leadership Roles in America, Reveals New Data," GirlTalkHQ, last modified March 28, 2025, accessed August 12, 2026, <https://www.girltalkhq.com/men-are-twice-as-likely-as-women-to-attain-senior-leadership-roles-in-america-reveals-new-data/>.

¹⁰⁴ Mikaela Cohen, "Menstrual Health Continues to Be a Taboo Topic at Work. HR Can Help Change That.," HR Brew, last modified May 5, 2026, accessed August 12, 2026, <https://www.hr-brew.com/stories/menstrual-health-continues-to-be-a-taboo-topic-at-work-hr-can-help-change-that>.

¹⁰⁵ Rachel B. Levitt and Jessica L. Barnack-Tavlaris, "Addressing Menstruation in the Workplace: The Menstrual Leave Debate," *The Palgrave Handbook of Critical Menstruation Studies*, 2020, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-15-0614-7_43.

Handbook of Menstrual Studies reported that, “participants rated a woman more negatively (for example, less competent, less likeable, and more irrational) when they believed that she was menstruating.”¹⁰⁶ This report also identified that non-menstruators determine menstruation as a workplace hindrance, stating, “men used women’s absences as a way to make women appear less committed to their jobs.” Therefore even if a workplace provides resources for menstruation, workplace culture can dictate whether a female employee will utilize these resources. Menstruating employees not only endure workplace discomfort from reduced menstrual support, but also avoid provided resources if workplace culture stigmatizes menstruating.

Therefore, women in stigmatizing workplaces are not only less productive but also marginalized by male colleagues. A study about menstruation in the workplace stated, “In a study on the gendered impact of long working hours on managers, Simpson found that men purposefully use women’s absence from work to progress their own position... Simpson also found that men used women’s absences as a way to make women appear less committed to their jobs, which helped men increase their own workplace resources while simultaneously hindering the achievements of their female coworkers.”¹⁰⁷ This presents that when women leave work to mitigate severe menstrual symptoms, they can be labeled as inferior to male coworkers. This blocks opportunities to attain higher-paying positions or leadership roles. From the leading American companies on the S&P 500, 94% are run by male Chief Executive Officers (CEO’s) and 6% are run by female CEO’s.¹⁰⁸ Therefore, female absence from work could exclude her

¹⁰⁶ Levitt and Barnack-Tavlaris, "Addressing Menstruation."

¹⁰⁷ Levitt and Barnack-Tavlaris, "Addressing Menstruation."

¹⁰⁸ "The Business Case for Gender Diversity: Why More Women in Leadership Benefits Everyone," National Girls Collaborative Project, accessed August 18, 2026, <https://ngcproject.org/business-case-gender-diversity-why-more-women-leadership-benefits-everyone>.

from opportunities to advance career or economic capability, even if menstrual symptoms cause uncontrollable absence.

However, consequential diminishment of female contribution in the workplace links with reduced economic productivity. In the US, women make up almost 69% of workers in the lowest paying jobs: wages under \$10 an hour.¹⁰⁹ Accordingly in the US, median female weekly earnings are only 82% of male weekly earnings.¹¹⁰ Therefore, women earn considerably less money and hold fewer high-income positions than their male counterparts; however, women more frequently are financially burdened by childcare and gendered prices of products or healthcare.¹¹¹

The cost of menstruation reduces women's flexibility to contribute to the consumer market by supporting goods and services. In many areas of the US, menstrual products are an expensive annual cost as they are heavily taxed. Due to minimal income and prices of necessities, many women likely spend the majority of their income on basic needs. In communities where there is a concentration of low-income women, goods and services businesses likely experience less consumer spending. Because these women are unable to afford more than basic necessities, they experience greater difficulty endorsing their local economy. Consumer spending stagnation affects national economic growth as these trends are becoming more frequent.

¹⁰⁹ Jasmine Tucker and Kayla Patrick, *Low Wage Jobs Are Women's Jobs: The Overrepresentation of Women in Low-Wage Work* (National Women's Law Center, n.d.), 1, accessed August 18, 2026, <https://nwlc.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Low-Wage-Jobs-are-Womens-Jobs.pdf>

¹¹⁰ "Median Weekly Earnings Increased over the Year for All Major Race and Ethnicity Groups," U.S Bureau of Labor Statistics, last modified August 6, 2026, accessed August 12, 2026, <https://www.bls.gov/opub/ted/2026/median-weekly-earnings-increased-over-the-year-for-all-major-race-and-ethnicity-groups.htm>.

¹¹¹ US Department of Health and Human Services: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *Fertility of Men and Women Aged 15-49 in the United States: National Survey of Family Growth, 2015-2019*, Rep. No. 179 (Jan. 10, 2023). Accessed August 18, 2026. file:///Users/georginagrants/Downloads/cdc_122080_DS1.pdf.; "The Lifetime Cost of Being a Woman: Understanding How Gender-Based Pricing Impacts Your Long-Term Wealth," Medium, last modified October 23, 2025, accessed August 18, 2026, <https://medium.com/@alistairgevens/the-lifetime-cost-of-being-a-woman-understanding-how-gender-based-pricing-impacts-your-long-term-00e60b4a4cef>.

Even while women face economic disadvantages, their financial and labor participation is essential to economic growth. McKinsey's Global Institute Power of Parity report states, "\$28 trillion of additional annual GDP in 2025 in the full-potential scenario of bridging the gender gap."¹¹² However, when women are unable to work or are in unproductive labor situations, the possible growth gap remains stagnant. Providing opportunities and support for women to integrate into leadership positions could increase companies success and economic growth. The difference in returns between female-led versus male-led companies is respectively 384% versus 261%.¹¹³ Additionally, companies with increased diversity in their leadership are 9% more likely to outperform competitors financially.¹¹⁴ This highlights the importance of female participation in leadership positions and higher-income positions. Heightened female workforce participation and female leadership could grow the economy and strengthen the labor market.

Menstrual education ensures success in all aspects of life. When comprehensive menstrual education and products are provided in school, students develop belief systems normalizing menstruation. Then, employees create workplace policies and culture to support menstruation, enabling menstruators to utilize destigmatized leave and easily accessible products. Not only would these support systems enhance the livelihood of menstruators, but they improve menstruators productivity and confidence in the workplace. Supporting menstruators not only benefits their health and livelihood, but their career growth and economic capability as well. Menstrual education does not need to be expensive or complex; instead it should provide information that menstruators can use to succeed in their daily life, and it should provide

¹¹² McKinsey Global Institute, *The Power of Parity: How Advancing Women's Equality Can Add \$12 Trillion to Global Growth* (McKinsey&Company, n.d.), 9, accessed July 23, 2026, https://www.mckinsey.com/~/media/mckinsey/industries/public%20and%20social%20sector/our%20insights/how%20advancing%20womens%20equality%20can%20add%2012%20trillion%20to%20global%20growth/mgi%20power%20of%20parity_full%20report_september%202015.pdf.

¹¹³ "The Business," National Girls Collaborative Project.

¹¹⁴ "The Business," National Girls Collaborative Project.

non-menstruators with scientific context to support menstruation. Normalizing accessible products presents menstruation as a biological norm instead of a financial burden or opportunity for profit. Stigmatizing basic support throughout the menstrual cycle contributes to lack of female success in all areas of her life. However, strengthening school-wide menstrual curriculum and product access could result in belief systems that normalize menstruation in the workplace. Providing this support to menstruators throughout multiple stages of their life would not only enhance their livelihood but their measurable success as well.

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