

Supplementary File 1. English version of the study questionnaire.

APPENDIX - I

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

TITLE: *Period Poverty and Menstrual Hygiene Management Among Adolescent Schoolgirls in the Northern Himalayas of India: A Cross-Sectional Study from Ladakh*

Instructions to Respondent (Explain in simple terms):

This study is about **monthly periods (menstruation)** and related practices.

- There are no right or wrong answers.
- Your participation is voluntary.
- All information you provide will be kept confidential and used only for research purposes.
- You may skip any question that you do not wish to answer.
- Thank you for your participation.

S. No.: _____

Date: _____

District: Leh / Kargil

Block: _____

Village: _____

School name: _____

PART I: GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Name of the respondent: _____

2. Age (in years): _____

3. Class: _____

4. Family type:

☐ Nuclear (parents + children)

☐ Joint (extended family)

5. Total family members: _____

6. Monthly household income (approx.):

☐ Below ₹10,000

☐ ₹10,000–₹30,000

☐ Above ₹30,000

☐ Don't know

7. Do you have a toilet at home?

☐ Yes ☐ No

8. Source of water:

☐ Tap ☐ Handpump ☐ River ☐ Other: _____

PART II: MENSTRUAL HISTORY

(Menstruation means monthly bleeding from the body in girls/women)

1. Have you started menstruating (periods)?

☐ Yes ☐ No → (If No, **STOP** here)

2. Age when you got your first period: _____

3. Your menstrual cycle is:

☐ Regular (comes monthly)

☐ Irregular

4. Number of days bleeding lasts: _____

5. Do you feel pain during periods?

☐ No

☐ Yes →

☐ Mild (manageable)

☐ Moderate

☐ Severe (affects daily activities)

PART III: KNOWLEDGE

1. Before your first period, did you know about menstruation?

☐ Yes ☐ No

2. From whom did you learn about it?

☐ Mother ☐ Teacher ☐ Friends ☐ Internet ☐ Health worker ☐ Other

3. What do you think menstruation is?
- ☐ Natural process
 - ☐ Disease/problem
 - ☐ Don't know
4. Do you know how to maintain cleanliness during periods?
- ☐ Yes ☐ No
5. Do you know that poor menstrual hygiene can cause infections? ☐ Yes ☐ No

PART IV: PRACTICES

(Sanitary pads = ready-made absorbent products used during periods)

1. What do you usually use?
- ☐ Sanitary pads
 - ☐ Cloth
 - ☐ Both
2. How many times do you change it in a day?
- ☐ Less than 2 times
 - ☐ 2–3 times
 - ☐ More than 3 times
3. How do you dispose used material?
- ☐ Dustbin
 - ☐ Burn
 - ☐ Open area
 - ☐ Toilet
4. Do you wash hands after changing?
- ☐ Yes ☐ No

PART V: PERIOD POVERTY (ACCESS)

(Period poverty means lack of access to sanitary products or facilities)

1. Do you always have access to sanitary pads when needed?
☐ Yes ☐ No
2. Where do you get them from?
☐ Buy from shop
☐ Government/school supply
☐ NGO
☐ Other
3. Have you ever missed school because of periods?
☐ Yes ☐ No
4. If yes, why?
☐ No pads available
☐ Pain
☐ No toilet
☐ Restrictions at home
5. Have you used cloth because you could not afford pads?
☐ Yes ☐ No
6. Cost of sanitary pads is:
☐ Affordable ☐ Expensive ☐ Very expensive

PART VI: CULTURAL PRACTICES

1. Are there any restrictions during periods?
☐ Yes ☐ No
2. If yes, which?
☐ Not going to school
☐ Not entering kitchen

☐ Not going to religious places

☐ Other: _____

3. Do you feel shy talking about menstruation?

☐ Yes ☐ No

PART VII: SCHOOL FACILITIES

1. Does your school have:

Facility	Yes	No
Separate girls' toilet	☐	☐
Water facility	☐	☐
Disposal facility	☐	☐

2. Are sanitary pads available in school?

☐ Yes ☐ No

PART VIII: HEALTH

1. Do you experience:

☐ Pain ☐ Irritation ☐ Infection ☐ None

2. Do you take treatment?

☐ Yes ☐ No

3. If yes, where?

☐ Doctor ☐ Pharmacy ☐ Home remedy

PART IX: OPINION

1. What is the biggest problem you face during periods?

2. What support do you need?

PART – X: ATTITUDE and PERCEPTION SCALE (LIKERT SCALE)

Instruction: Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.

Scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree | 2 = Disagree | 3 = Neutral | 4 = Agree | 5 = Strongly Agree

S. No.	Dimension	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
A. KNOWLEDGE and AWARENESS							
1	Knowledge	I understand what menstruation is	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2	Knowledge	I know how to maintain hygiene during menstruation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3	Knowledge	I know how often sanitary materials should be changed	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4	Knowledge	I am aware that poor hygiene can cause infections	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5	Knowledge	I do not consider menstruation an important health issue	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
B. PRACTICES							
6	Practice	I follow recommended hygiene practices during menstruation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7	Practice	I change sanitary materials regularly	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8	Practice	I dispose of menstrual waste safely	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
C. PERIOD POVERTY							
9	Period Poverty	I can afford sanitary pads easily	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10	Period Poverty	I always have access to sanitary products when needed	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
11	Period Poverty	Lack of money affects my menstrual hygiene	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

12	Period Poverty	I have to compromise on hygiene due to high cost of sanitary products	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
D. CULTURAL and SOCIAL FACTORS							
13	Culture	There are restrictions during menstruation in my home	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
14	Culture	I feel embarrassed discussing menstruation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
15	Culture	Society considers menstruation a taboo topic	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
E. SCHOOL SUPPORT and FACILITIES							
16	School Support	My school provides adequate menstrual facilities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
17	School Support	Clean toilets are available in my school	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
18	School Support	Sanitary pads are available in school when needed	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Signature of Investigator: _____

Signature of Respondent: _____