

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Menstruation is the shedding of the lining of the uterus (endometrium), which contains numerous blood vessels, and typically lasts 5-7 days each month (Kartika Adyani et al., 2022). During menstruation, women need to use menstrual hygiene products. Many types of menstrual hygiene products are available, such as disposable pads, panty liners, tampons, menstrual cups, menstrual discs, and others. Women in Indonesia generally use disposable pads. Pads collect blood and tissue released from the uterus.

Disposable pads consist of several components, generally consisting of absorbent cotton, a plastic lining, and wings (optional). This plastic lining is the base component that collects the blood and tissue absorbed by the absorbent cotton. This lining has adhesive that attaches the plastic lining to the underwear. If a disposable pad has wings (the plastic parts that protrude on the sides of the pad), their function is to secure the pad so it doesn't come loose from the underwear. However, even with wings, leakage is not uncommon during use. Blood and tissue that is not properly collected leaks out of the absorption area and stains underwear and clothing.

Disposable sanitary napkins are short-lived. Their use requires increased attention to hygienic practices. Hygienic practices during menstruation include cleaning the vagina with clean water and wiping from front to back (from the vagina to the anus) to prevent dirt and bacteria from the anus from entering the vagina. Change the sanitary napkin as often as possible, no more than 6 hours after it is full (Achmad et al., 2024). With the recommended usage period of disposable sanitary napkins no longer than 6 hours, women who use these products need to purchase disposable sanitary napkins regularly.

Women typically have a menstrual period of 5-7 days. If they use disposable sanitary napkins for a minimum of 4 hours each time, they will need at least 30 disposable sanitary napkins during a menstrual period lasting up to 5 days. This creates a problem related to waste that pollutes the environment. In addition to environmental pollution, some Indonesian women are vulnerable to certain materials found in disposable sanitary napkins.

The absorbent component of sanitary napkins is generally made of cotton that meets Indonesian National Standards (SNI) standards, and some also use recycled pulp or paper waste. Sanitary napkins, commonly used by women, especially in Indonesia, are typically bleached by adding various chemicals and chlorine bleach to the absorbent material to give them a white appearance (Nurhaliza et al., 2023). Besides chlorine, another common chemical added to sanitary napkins is formaldehyde (Fannisa Dini Larasati, 2023).

Not many Indonesian women use alternative menstrual hygiene products. Yet, women now have a wide range of options to suit their individual needs, especially for women with active lifestyles. Menstrual cups are considered the most effective method for collecting menstrual blood due to their ability to reduce fishy odor and the risk of infection, irritation, and rashes (Rusdiana & Fauzi, 2022). Compared to disposable sanitary napkins, menstrual cups are safer to use, with minimal leakage and virtually no allergic reactions, irritation, or rashes. Quoting from the halodoc website, menstrual cups can be used by all women who menstruate.

However, menstrual cup use among Indonesian women remains low. This is despite the fact that menstrual cups are considered a practical and hygienic menstrual hygiene product due to their ease of use and maintenance. Over 90% of users reported that maintaining menstrual cup hygiene was very easy from the second use onward (C. et al., 2022). Based on the data collected, 62% of respondents cited the most common reasons given when asked "Why not use a menstrual cup?" as a reason for fear of inserting the cup into the vagina and comfort.

This project was designed to spark interest among Indonesian women in switching to menstrual cups as a practical and hygienic menstrual hygiene product. The target audience is women of productive age. Productive age is defined as the age at which individuals can work and support themselves, encompassing the age range of 15–64 years (Delfina et al., 2021). Adolescence is also a time of heightened curiosity about various things. This is because adolescents tend to absorb new values, are always inquisitive, and are always eager to try new things (Lukman et al., 2022). To focus the target audience for this project, women of productive age, aged 15–18, were selected.

Based on data obtained from a questionnaire with a total of 100 respondents, 99% of women use disposable sanitary pads. Meanwhile, only 1% have switched to using menstrual cups. This demonstrates the opportunity and urgency of designing an educational campaign to encourage Indonesian women to switch to using menstrual cups instead of the disposable menstrual hygiene products they commonly use.

Forty percent of the 100 respondents listed "fear" as their reason for not using menstrual cups. This fear was accompanied by minor reasons such as "fear of inserting a foreign object into the genitals," "lack of information about menstrual cups," and "social taboos." 89% of the 100 respondents were familiar with menstrual cups. Eighty-nine percent stated they were unaware of menstrual cups, and three percent stated they might be familiar with them. The data obtained indicates that urban Indonesian women have a basic understanding of menstrual cups.

The social media platform to be used to disseminate the educational campaign design is Instagram. According to the questionnaire data obtained, 98% reported learning about menstrual cups from various social media platforms, and 24% of women specifically mentioned Instagram. Instagram has a broad user base and offers a variety of upload options, including photos, videos, reels, and Instagram stories.

Therefore, the design of this visual communication media aims to generate and encourage interest among Indonesian women in menstrual cups as a practical and ergonomic menstrual hygiene product. The media design is an educational campaign for Indonesian women and the general public that is easily accessible anywhere. With this visual communication media, it is hoped that the target audience will understand and be motivated to disseminate information about using menstrual cups as a suitable menstrual hygiene product for high school girls.

1.2 Identification of Problems

From this background, the identification of problems in this research object is:

1. Based on questionnaire data obtained, the majority of women aged 15-18 still use disposable menstrual hygiene products, at 99%.
2. When using disposable pads, 64% of women complained about their use being environmentally unfriendly.
3. When using disposable pads, 76% of women complained about leakage.
4. When using disposable pads, 56% of women reported developing a rash.
5. 40% of respondents stated their reluctance to use menstrual cups due to fear of inserting a foreign object into the vagina, citing comfort as a reason.

1.3 Formulation of The Problem

Based on this background, the problem formulation of this design is how to design a campaign strategy about menstrual cups as an alternative menstrual sanitation product for women aged 15-18 years that is educational and provides a safe space for the target audience.

1.4 Scope of Problem

The problem definition addressed in this design is to create an educational campaign aimed at Indonesian adolescent girls. To define the problem, the following points were used:

1. The educational campaign design for menstrual cups as an alternative menstrual hygiene device is aimed at girls aged 15-18.
2. This design focuses on discussing menstrual cups as an alternative menstrual hygiene product to sanitary napkins, so that girls aged 15-18 can consider menstrual cups as a menstrual hygiene product option.
3. This design was created to foster positive understanding and attitudes among adolescent girls toward menstrual cups and reduce taboos or fears regarding menstrual hygiene products.
4. This design is aimed at adolescent girls and the general Indonesian public to break down the stigma associated with menstrual cup use. Therefore, appealing and targeted visual communication media are needed to educate and raise awareness about other options for women's menstrual hygiene needs.

1.5 Designing Purposes

The objectives of designing an educational campaign promoting menstrual cups as an alternative menstrual hygiene product suitable for high school girls are as follows:

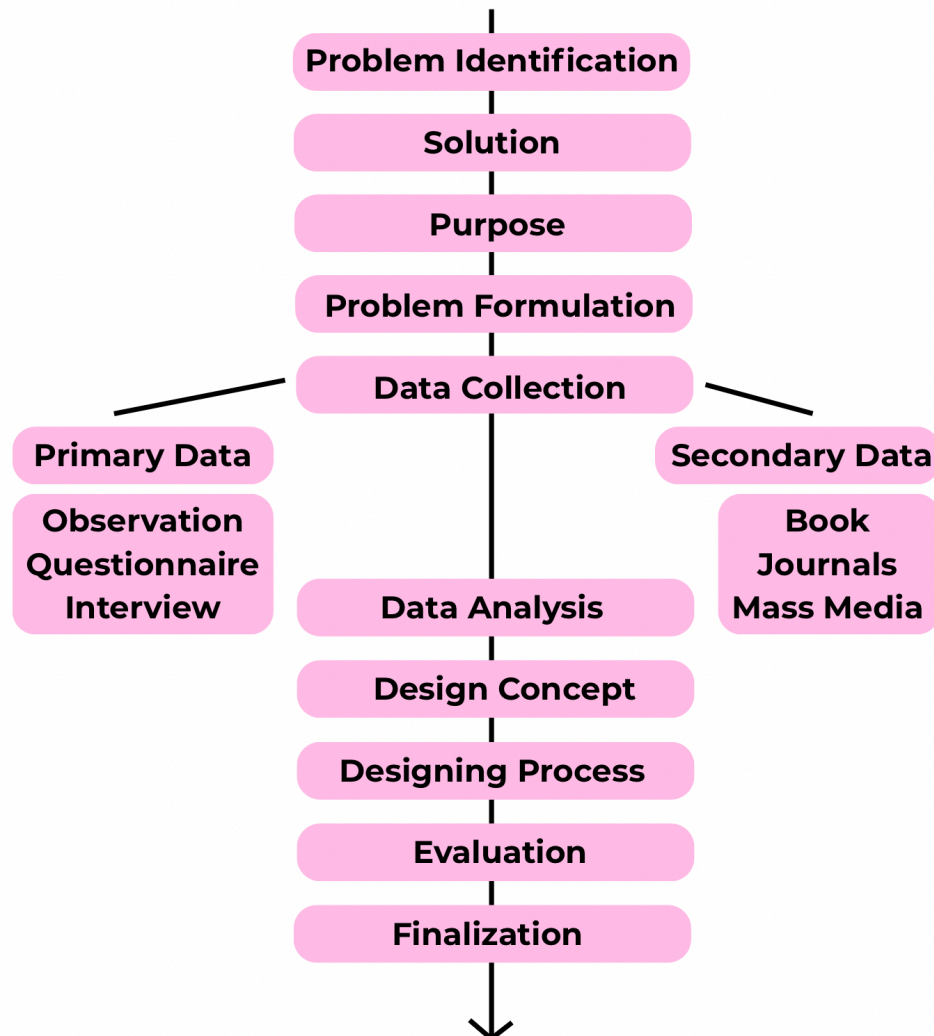
1. To raise and raise awareness of women's need for practical menstrual hygiene products, particularly among women of reproductive age between the ages of 15 and 18.
2. To provide information and education to women and the general public about the side effects of using disposable menstrual hygiene products for users and the surrounding environment.
3. To introduce menstrual cups as a superior choice compared to other menstrual hygiene products so that the target audience will switch and recommend menstrual cups to their community.

1.6 Benefits of Research

The objectives of designing an educational campaign promoting menstrual cups as a suitable menstrual hygiene product for high school girls are as follows:

1. To raise awareness among high school girls about the importance of understanding and choosing more practical, suitable, and environmentally friendly menstrual hygiene products.
2. To provide information and education to girls and the general public about the negative impacts of using disposable menstrual hygiene products, both on user health and the environment.
3. To introduce menstrual cups as an alternative menstrual hygiene product that excels in efficiency, hygiene, and environmental sustainability, thereby encouraging the target audience to be more open and consider their use.

1.7 Design Framework



Picture 1.1 Design Framework, 2024
(Source: personal documents)