

Awareness and adoption of menstrual cups, a more cost-effective period product, at an academic center

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Background

Menstrual products are a necessity for approximately half of the population, yet there is still a lot of stigma and silence surrounding menstruation and menstrual products remain understudied. Menstrual cups have been identified as a more eco-friendly and cost-effective alternative to traditional menstrual products. However, adoption of menstrual cups has been slow and awareness does not always translate to adoption. Our study aimed to understand awareness and adoption of menstrual cups and pain points in current period products among menstruating individuals.

Objective

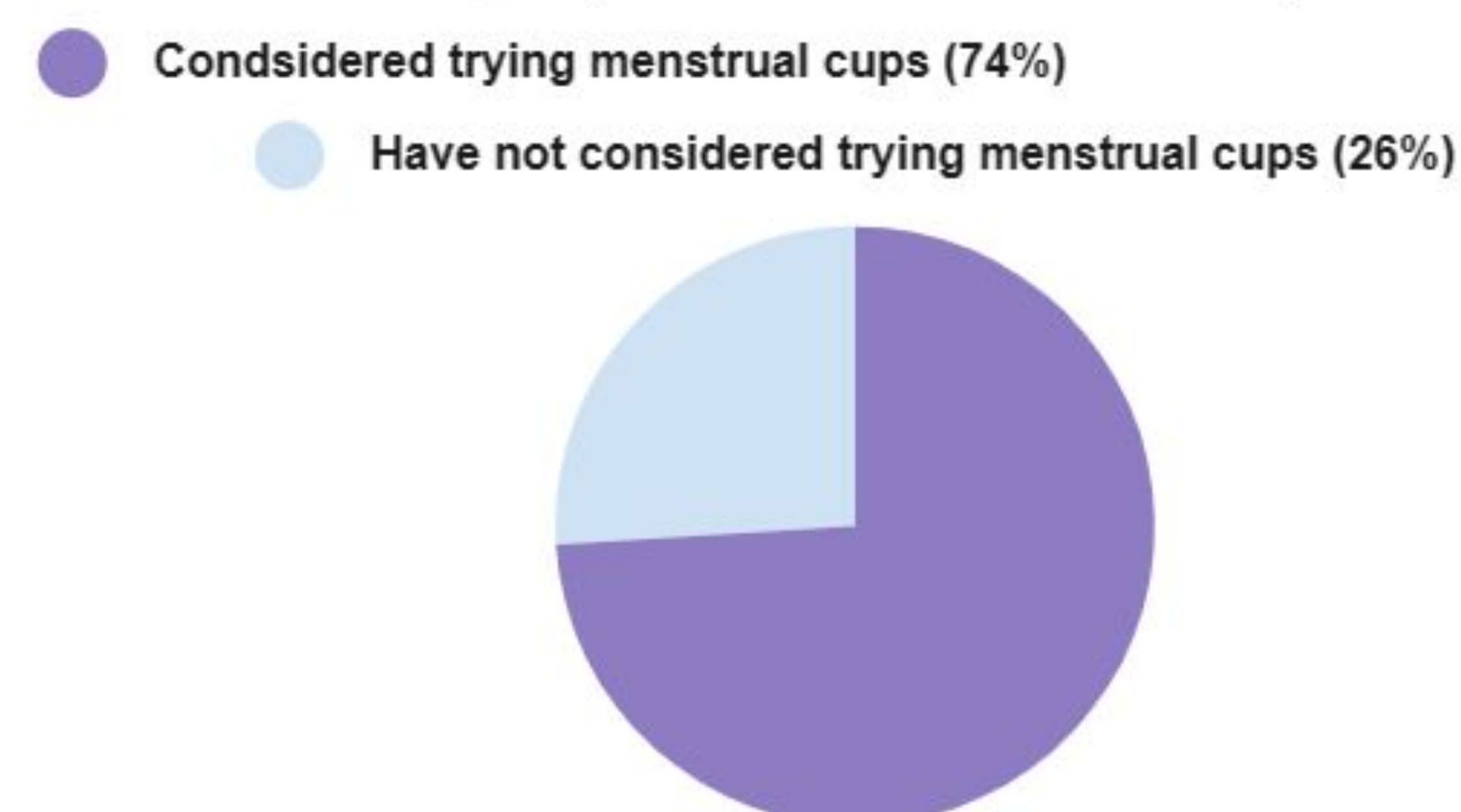
Assess the awareness and adoption of menstrual cups among menstruating individuals and to understand the pain points in current period products.

Methods

We conducted a study at Johns Hopkins University campuses by sending out a mass email to students and staff, inviting them to participate in an interview about menstruation and menstrual products. We interviewed adult menstruating individuals and asked about their awareness and adoption of menstrual cups, pain points in current period products, and their education on menstruation.

Results

Participants Who Have Considered Trying Menstrual Cups (n=27 total interviews)

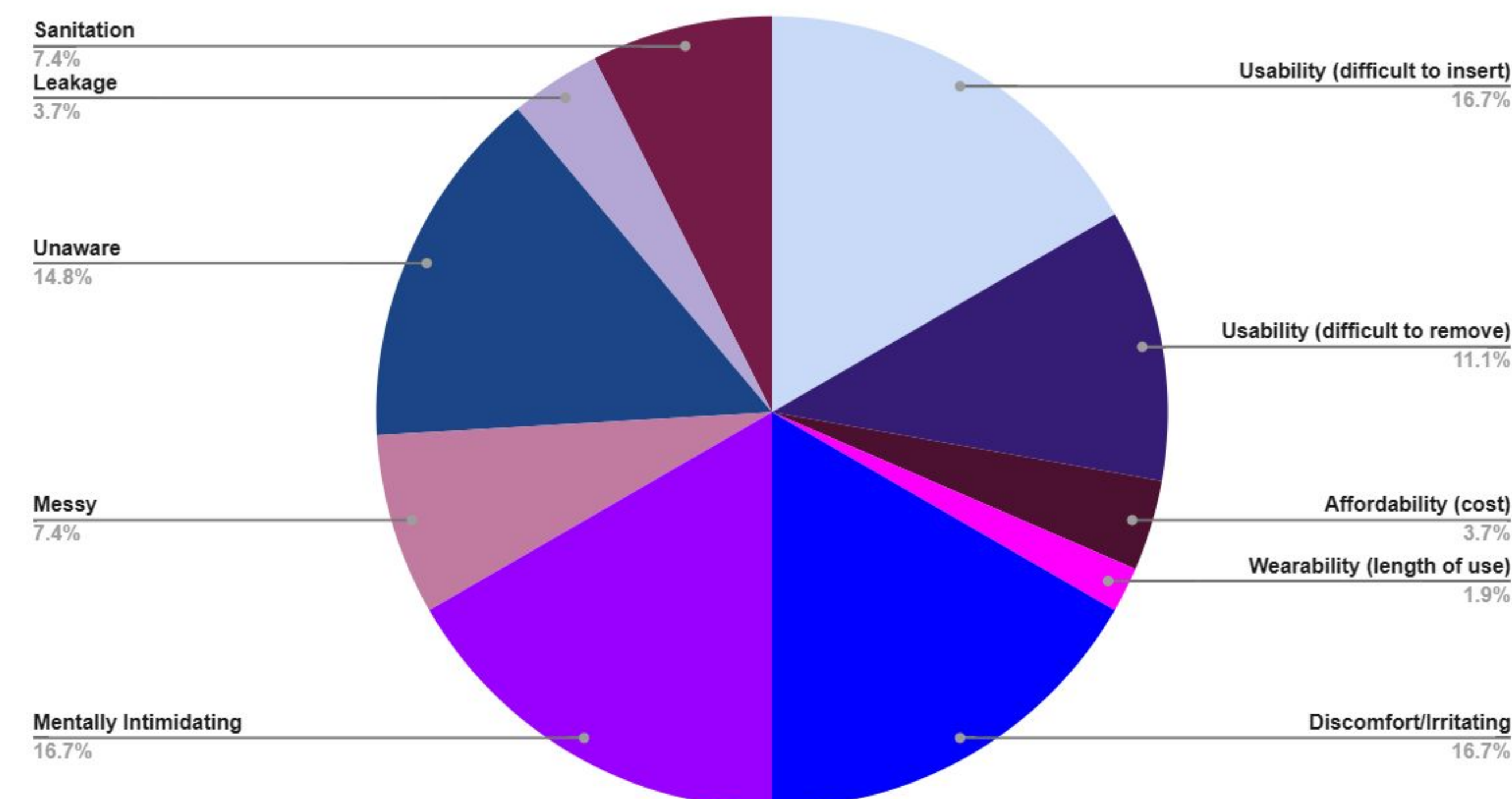


Results Continued

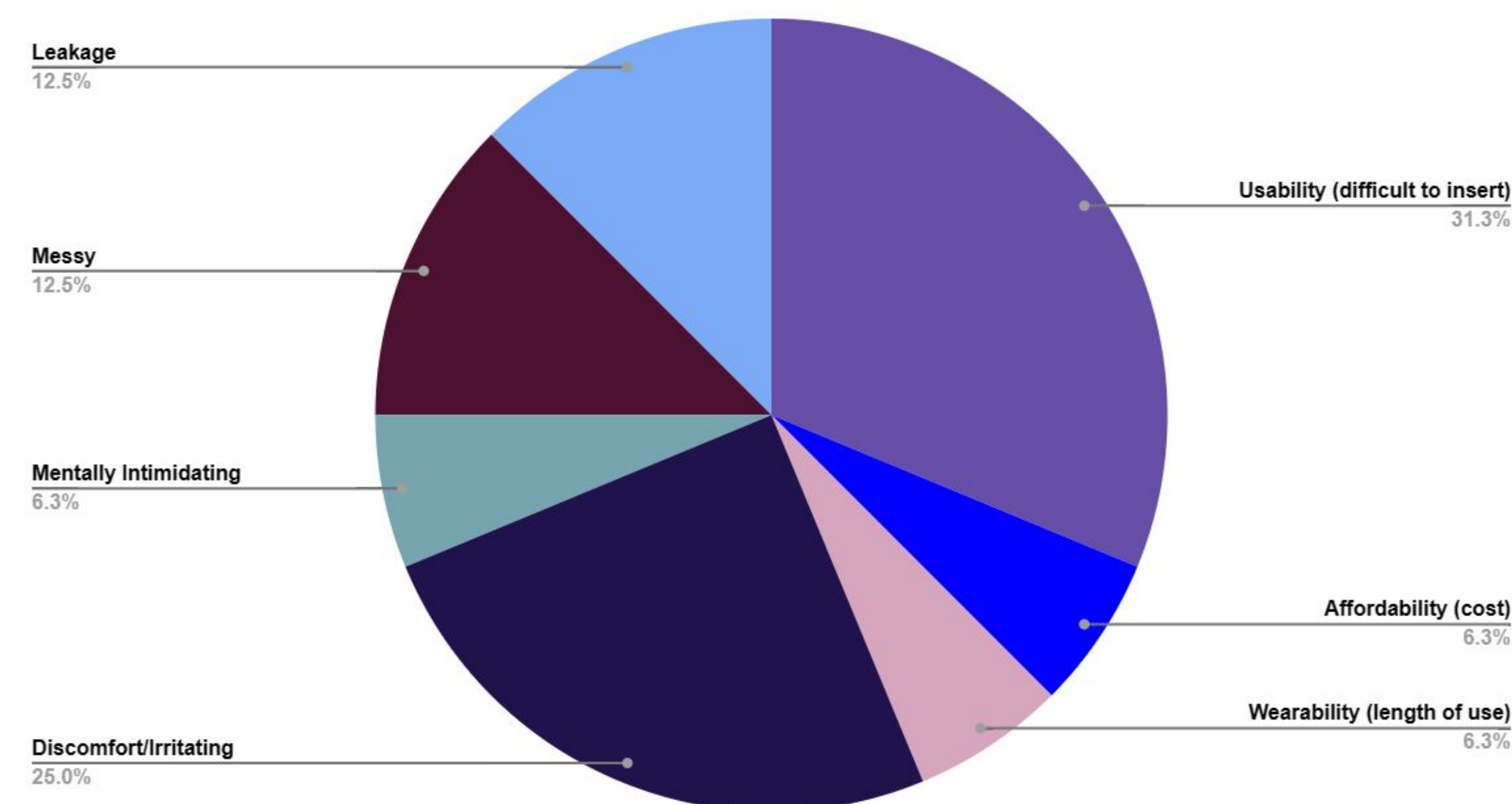
Participants Who Have Tried Menstrual Cups (n=27 total interviews)



What Makes You Hesitant About Using Menstrual Cups?



What Do You Dislike About Your Menstrual Cup?



Summary of Results

- All 27 or 100% of participants from Hopkins were aware of a menstrual cup
- 74% of students have considered trying menstrual cups
- Only 26% of students had tried a menstrual cup before
- The leading factors for being hesitant about menstrual cup use were usability (27.8% for either difficult to insert or difficult to remove), mental intimidation (16.7%), concern for discomfort/irritation (16.7%), and lack of knowledge about menstrual cups (14.6%).
- For participants who had used menstrual cups before, top dislikes about menstrual cups were usability (31.3%), discomfort/irritation (25.0%), leakage (12.5%), and messy (12.5%).

Conclusions

Our study highlights the need for increased education on menstruation and menstrual products. Despite the high awareness of menstrual cups, the adoption of menstrual cups was low due to concerns about comfort, ease-of-use, and convenience. Addressing these concerns could lead to an increase in adoption of menstrual cups and ultimately reduce the costs of care to patients. Menstrual cups are a more cost-effective and eco-friendly alternative to traditional menstrual products, and an increase in adoption could lead to a reduction in healthcare costs related to menstruation.

Implications

Our study has important clinical implications, as increased adoption of menstrual cups could lead to a reduction in healthcare costs related to menstruation. Menstrual cups are a more cost-effective and eco-friendly alternative to traditional menstrual products, and an increase in adoption could lead to a reduction in healthcare costs related to menstruation. By addressing the concerns towards adoption of menstrual cups, healthcare providers can promote the use of menstrual cups and ultimately improve the quality and safety of patient care and the patient experience.