

Assessment Study on Environmental Sanitation Related Knowledge amongst Tribal Communities

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Abstract

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines 'Environmental Sanitation' as "the control of all those factors in man's physical environment which may exercise a deleterious effect on his physical development, health and survival." Indian Tribes form very important part of our total population. It shows the essence of our culture and civilization. Tribes live close to the areas of forests. They have managed and conserved it since long time. Tribal people highly depend on the nature as their day to day life practices are closely associated with the environment. Thus, the present study puts emphasis between Environmental Sanitation and Tribal people. The present study was undertaken to understand the Overall Knowledge and Practices of selected men and Women of selected four Tribal Villages of Jambughoda Block, Panchmahal District, Gujarat. The study had Descriptive survey design and it was conducted in four selected tribal villages, namely Dhanpuri, Sadada, Katkoi and Kharedivav of Jambughoda Block, Panchmahal District, Gujarat. 120 tribal men and women were selected by using purposive sampling technique. Data was collected by structured Interview Scheduled. The major finding of the Study was that nearly majority of the respondents tribal men and women had low knowledge bad practices of environmental sanitation.

Keywords: Tribal, Environmental Sanitation, Knowledge

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I. INTRODUCTION

Indian tribal people play a key part in constructing the cultural heritage of India. They occupy a major part in the history of India as they are considered as the true habitants of India. The tribal people are scattered in different parts of India and they form a considerable number of the population of India. The traditional and cultural distinction of each tribal community has made them distinguishable from each other and their cultural and traditional heritage add colour and variation to the Indian culture as a whole and form a compact culture. Tribal people are comparatively remote from larger cultural influences; they have a relative cultural homogeneity. Tribal people believe in spirits, magic and witchcraft. They have their own social taboos in which they believe and follow. Tribes highly believe in animism also. Xaxa (2001) specified that, "Tribes differ widely among themselves in respect to the regions they live in, languages they speak, physical features they display, geographical terrain they inhabit, modes in which they make their living, levels of development at which they are placed and size of community they represent." Tribal people live close to the forests and they have managed and conserved it since long time. Tribal people highly depend on the nature as their day to day life practices are closely associated with the environment. They utilize natural resources for many purposes in their routine. Also they believe the natural resources as the Almighty and worship them. At the times of illness and injury, they use environmental resources as medicinal purposes. They have environmental protection awareness too. Hence, they have great intimacy with the environment. Environmental sanitation is the major issue for them to be concerned. The World Health Organization (WHO) defines 'Environmental Sanitation' as "The control of all those factors in man's physical environment which exercise a deleterious effect on his physical development, health and survival."

II. RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

Health conditions in tribal areas of India have been described as incomplete in hygienic conditions, personal hygiene, and health education. Tribal areas are in worst situation even today. Because of low level of literacy they do not have basic awareness and knowledge regarding environmental sanitation. Poverty is also a

major issue for the backwardness of them. Such people do not have an idea that what is the hygiene, sanitation and why is it important to survive in better way. Lack of personal hygiene leads to the infectious diseases. Diarrhea, malaria, dengue, cholera and other diseases occur for the lack of the personal hygiene. Poor growths, lower confidence level, lack of skills are also major responsible factors for it. Indian poor tribal people do not have awareness or knowledge for handling water and food wisely. Tribal practices are still dominated by culture and rituals. In some cases they follow poor environmental handling practices. Contamination and pollution of water, air, land and noise is one of them.

It is said that the indigenous and ethnic tribal people have learnt to live in most adverse environmental conditions in this universe. The most interesting feature is that they are closely associated with the environment. Tribal people live in localities, which are enormously rich in biodiversity. These people have played a vital role in conservation of environmental management. It has been noticed that these communities know how to live with harmony in nature.

Tribal people live close to the areas near the forests and they have managed and conserved it since long time. Tribal take shelter from forest and utilize its plants as edible purposes. They are living in forests since many ages and they have developed a kind of intimacy with the nature.

Hence, environment has close relationship with the tribal people and their day to day life is closely associated with the practices of environment. Not only for edible and usage purposes, many plants and animals conserved by them due to religious belief that they are habitation of god and goddess. Many tribal believe this and worship the environment with immense spirituality.

Many plants of environment conserved by the tribal and utilized as medicinal herbs. These things of environment are also considered for them at the times of snakes or scorpion bites. Tribal people mostly follow the agricultural occupation. They are highly connected with them, this feature is also shows their environmental integration. They have environmental rights and they have major role in the protection of environment as well.

Thus, tribal people are closely connected to the environment and they are in direct touch of the nature actively or passively. Hence, we can assume that tribal people many have the best knowledge and most favorable practices to handle the environment effectively. There is a need of an hour to identify the environmental sanitation related knowledge and practices of tribal people, whether they are handling environment effectively or not? Through this study researcher aims to identify the status of knowledge and practices of tribal people regarding environmental sanitation. Through this study researcher also wants to explore that whether the tribal people can teach the world and world should learn from them, the wise ways of handling environment, as they have best knowledge and practices. Or the world should teach them the ways of handling environment effectively. Hence, the researcher decided to contribute in the development of nation by explaining the knowledge and practices of tribal people related to the various aspects of environmental sanitation. By this research the role of tribal people in managing environmental sanitation may be highlighted.

III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To prepare the profile of the four selected Tribal villages of Jambughoda Block, Panchmahal District, Gujarat,
- To prepare the profile of selected Tribal men and women of selected four villages of Jambughoda Block, Panchmahal District, Gujarat,
- To study the overall knowledge level regarding environmental sanitation of selected Tribal men and women of selected four villages of Jambughoda Block, Panchmahal District, Gujarat,
- To study the overall knowledge level regarding environmental sanitation, of selected Tribal men and women of selected four villages of Jambughoda Block, Panchmahal District, Gujarat, in relation to the variables namely, Age, Sex, Marital status, Educational qualification, Income, Family occupation, Type of family,
- To study the knowledge level regarding environmental sanitation of selected Tribal men and women of selected four villages of Jambughoda Block, Panchmahal District, Gujarat, in related to the aspects namely, Toilet and sanitation, Water and sanitation, and Waste disposal and pollution,
- To study the differences in the knowledge level regarding selected aspects of environmental sanitation of selected Tribal men and women of selected four villages of Jambughoda Block, Panchmahal District, Gujarat, in relation to the selected variables.

IV. METHODOLOGY

The population of the study consisted of the Selected Tribal Men and Women from selected Tribal People residing in the four Tribal Villages of Jambughoda Block, Panchmahal District, Gujarat. The sample of the study consisted of total hundred and twenty Tribal Men and Women from the selected four Tribal villages i.e. Dhanpuri, Katkoi, Kharedivav and Sadada of Jambughoda Block, Panchmahal District, Gujarat, in the academic year 2016-17. Sample selection technique was purposive and data was collected through structured interview schedule.

Description of the Research Tool

Sections	Content	Tools	Response system
I.	Village profile	Checklist, Open ended	Two point response system
II.	Respondents information	Checklist and Open ended	Two point response system
III.	Aspect wise Statements regarding knowledge and practices	Checklist and Interval scale	Two and three point response system

Categorization of Variables

Sr. No.	Variables	Basis	Category
1.	Age	<= 25 years (below mean)	• Young
		Above 25 years (mean and above mean)	• Old
2.	Gender	-	• Male
			• Female
3.	Marital status	Married	• Married
		Unmarried	• Unmarried
4.	Educational qualification	Literate	• Literate
		Illiterate	• Illiterate
5.	Income	Below mean	• <=5000
		Mean and above mean	• >5001
6.	Occupation	Labour, agriculture, service	• Labourers
		House wife	• Housewives
7.	Type of family	-	• Nuclear
			• Extended
			• Joint

Scoring and Categorization of Profile of the Respondents:

Sr. No.	Items	Basis	Category
4.	Total no of children	-	• <2 or 2
			• >2
5.	Type of family	-	• Extended
			• Nuclear
			• Joint
6.	Type of house	Kuchha	• Kuchha
		Semi pucca and Pucca	• Pucca
7.	Animal power owned	-	• Animal power owned
			• Animal power not owned

Categorization of Overall Knowledge level regarding Environmental Sanitation

Item	Basis	Category
Overall Knowledge level of the respondents	Below mean	Lower level of knowledge
	Mean and above mean	Higher level of knowledge

Categorization of Aspect wise Knowledge level regarding Environmental Sanitation

Aspects	Basis	Category
Toilet and sanitation	Below mean	Lower level of knowledge
	Mean and above mean	Higher level of knowledge
Water and sanitation	Below mean	Lower level of knowledge
	Mean and above mean	Higher level of knowledge
Waste disposal and pollution	Below mean	Lower level of knowledge
	Mean and above mean	Higher level of knowledge

Categorization of Overall Practices regarding Environmental Sanitation

Item	Basis	Category
Overall practices of the respondents	Below mean	Practices followed to less extent
	Mean and above mean	Practices followed to great extent

Categorization of aspect wise Practices regarding Environmental Sanitation

Aspects	Basis	Category
Toilet and sanitation	Below mean	Practices followed to less extent
	Mean and above mean	Practices followed to great extent
Water and sanitation	Below mean	Practices followed to less extent
	Mean and above mean	Practices followed to great extent
Waste disposal and pollution	Below mean	Practices followed to less extent
	Mean and above mean	Practices followed to great extent

Plan for Statistical Analysis

Sr. No	Purpose	Statistical Measure
1.	Village profile	-
2.	Respondent's profile	Percentages
3.	Overall knowledge level of selected tribal men and women regarding environmental sanitation	Percentages
4.	Aspect wise knowledge level of selected tribal men and women regarding environmental sanitation	Percentages
5.	Variable wise overall knowledge of selected tribal men and women regarding environmental sanitation	Percentages
6.	Differences in the knowledge level of selected Tribal men and women regarding environmental sanitation	t test
7.	Overall practices of selected tribal men and women regarding environmental sanitation	Percentages
8.	Aspect wise practices of selected tribal men and women regarding environmental sanitation	Percentages
9.	Variable wise overall practices of selected tribal men and women regarding environmental sanitation	Percentages
10.	Differences in the practices of selected Tribal men and women regarding environmental sanitation	t test

V. FINDINGS

- Nearly majority i.e. (59.2%) of selected respondents had lower level of knowledge, whereas less than half i.e. (40.8%) of the selected respondents had higher level of knowledge regarding Environmental Sanitation.
- Almost equal percentages young and old respondents had higher and lower level of knowledge of Environmental Sanitation. More than half i.e. (57.8%) of males had lower level of knowledge whereas, majority i.e.(61.2%) of females had higher level of knowledge. A very high majority i.e. (91.8%) of married respondents had higher level of knowledge whereas, little more than one tenth i.e. (12.7%) of unmarried respondents had lower level of knowledge. Little less than half i.e. (46.9%) of literate respondents had higher level of knowledge, whereas majority i.e. (59.2%) of illiterate respondents had lower level of knowledge. Majority of respondents i.e. (67.1%) with monthly family income less than five thousand had lower level of knowledge whereas; more than one fourth of the respondents i.e. (35.4%) with monthly family income more than five thousand had higher level of knowledge regarding Environmental Sanitation.
- Majority of the respondents had lower level of knowledge regarding all the selected aspects namely toilet and sanitation, water and sanitation, and waste disposal and pollution. However amongst these aspects, toilet and sanitation related knowledge was considerably low of the respondents in comparison to other aspects.
- Majority of old married illiterate respondents belonged to labour activities had lower level of knowledge of **toilet and sanitation**. Whereas, majority of female respondents who had family income of less than five thousand and who lived in nuclear family had higher level of knowledge of **toilet and sanitation**.
- More than half of the old illiterate respondents who had family income of less than five thousand belonged to labour activities had low level of knowledge of **water and sanitation**. Whereas, more than half married female respondents lived in joint families had high level of knowledge of **water and sanitation**.

- Majority of married respondents who belonged to labour activities and had family income of less than five thousand had lower level of knowledge of **waste disposal and pollution**. Whereas, more than half of the old female illiterate respondents who lived in nuclear family had higher level of knowledge of **waste disposal and pollution**.
- There were significant differences in the knowledge level of the respondents regarding Toilet and Sanitation as one of the Aspects of Environmental Sanitation in relation to occupation as one of the variables.
- There were no significant differences in the knowledge level of the respondents regarding Water and Sanitation, and Waste Disposal and Pollution as the aspects of Environmental Sanitation in relation to Age, Gender, Marital Status, Family Income, Type of Family, Educational Qualification and Occupation.

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