

Full Length Research Paper

Effective awareness generation methods for rural sanitation campaign: A study from a village in Haryana

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Accepted 27 February, 2013

For quite a long time planners have been engaged in making villages clean and hygienic with all the facilities of health and hygiene. Efforts in this direction have helped to achieve most of the targets but with very little satisfaction and accomplishment. The reason for this may be the lack of acknowledgment of the importance of various social indicators like gender and education in devising any awareness creating methods. This study tries to explore the role of educational level and gender of rural population when it comes to the creation of any awareness creating method for them.

Key words: Sanitation, strategy, gender, education, Haryana.

INTRODUCTION

Individual health and hygiene is supreme in everything and it largely depends on the environment one is living in. Consumption of unsafe drinking water, improper disposal of human excreta, improper environmental sanitation and lack of personal hygiene have been found to be the major cause of many diseases like diarrhoea, dysentery etc. in India. India is a country of villages with the majority of the population living in rural areas and provision of sanitation facility in the rural areas is one of the biggest concerns of public health planners. According to the Census of 2001, only 21.9 percent of the rural population in India had access to latrines and UNICEF (2011) in a report mentions only 21 percent of rural and 54 percent of urban population of India having sanitation facilities. India has the lowest sanitation facilities in rural areas among South Asian countries like Nepal, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Afghanistan etc. (Figure 1a). According to Spears (2012), 15 percent of people in the world openly defecate without any toilet or latrine; 60 percent of these live in India. The global impact of poor sanitation on infant and child death and health is profound.

The Indian Government has been continuously

providing a massive budgetary allocation and priority to the issue, as it can be seen in Figure 1b, that from an allocation of INR 202 crores (2.02 Billion) in 2003-04 to INR 1200 crore (12 Billion) in the year 2008-09, comparatively an allocation of INR 1410 crore (14.10 Billion) for 10th plan has increased to 7816 crore (78.16 Billion) for 11th plan, thereby showing an increase of more than 550 percent (Census, 2001).

Although addressing this issue has been on the agenda of the India Government since the early eighties, in this direction a Central rural sanitation programme in 1986 was launched. Constructing toilets were given a special priority under the programme. Compared to only 9.3 million toilets constructed during 1999-2004, country has seen an increase of 400 percent with 10.2 million toilets constructed during 2007-08 (Implementation, 2007 - 08) which can be clearly seen in Figure 1c.

Component of Information, Education and communication (IEC) received a prime focus in Total Sanitation Campaign (TSC) in order to generate felt demand for sanitation facilities through awareness creation and health education. Under this component, a number of

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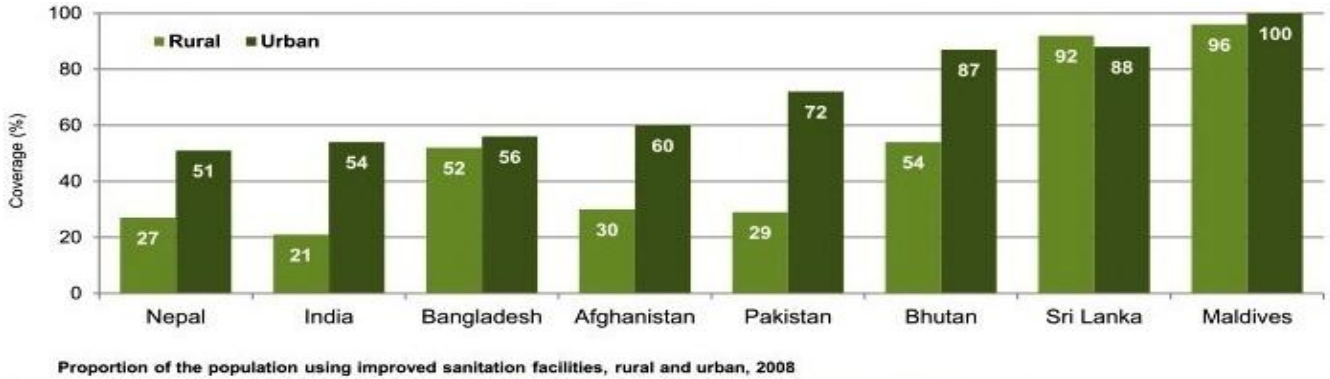


Figure 1a. Inequalities between urban and rural areas. Source: Snap shot of sanitation in South Asia (WHO/UNICEF, 2011).

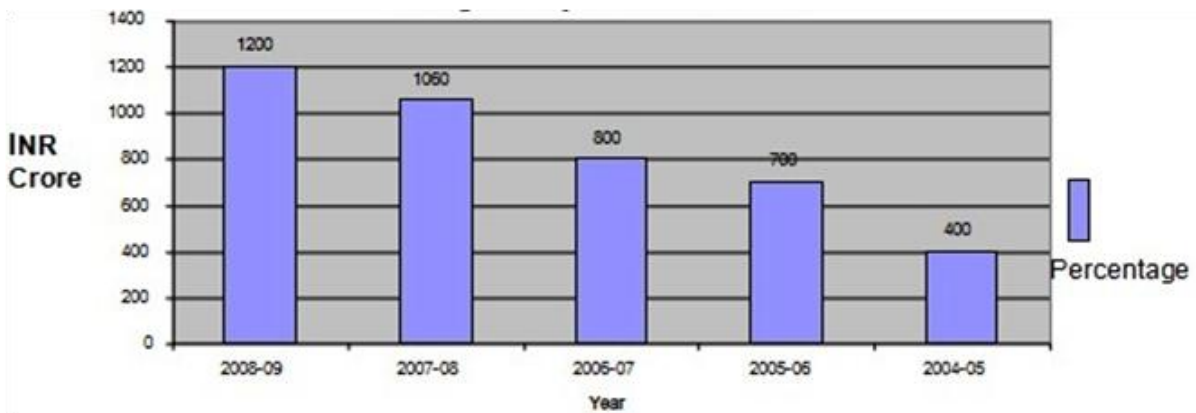


Figure 1b. Budget outlays for rural sanitation. Source: Four years of implementation of rural development programmes (2004- 2008), Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India, New Delhi, 2008.

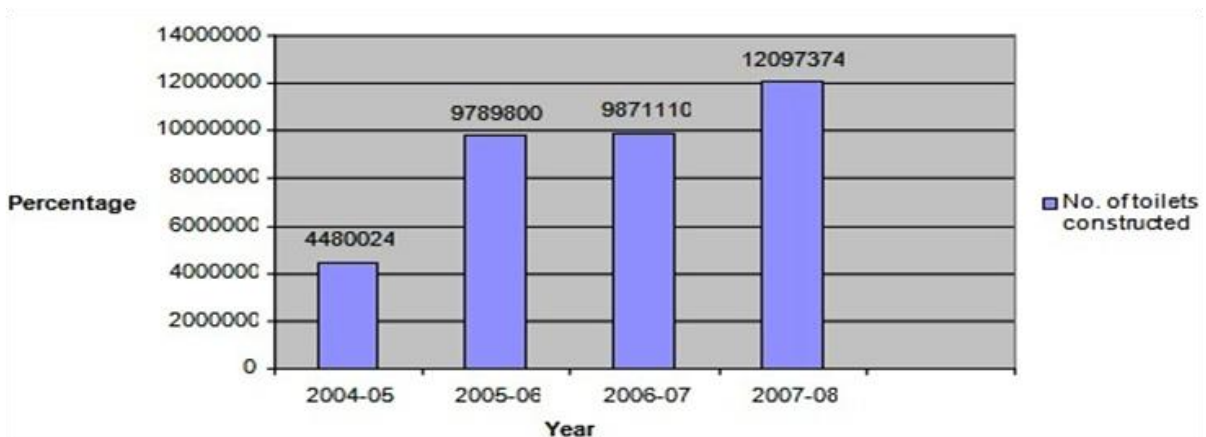


Figure 1c. Construction of house hold toilets in TSC programme. Source: Ibid.

programmes were taken up to sensitize the people about the insanitation problem but still not much has been achieved. The result may be because of lot of influencing factors like, inappropriateness of the scheme, wrong

method adopted for creating awareness etc. The state and civil societies are employing every method to create awareness among the masses about the hazards of insanitation and unhygienic but nothing big could be

achieved as most of the methods for creating awareness do not hold value when it comes to their effectiveness.

Review of secondary data

The day every one of us gets a toilet to use I shall know that our country has reached the pinnacle of progress (Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India).

Government of India in 1999 announced a program with title, Total Sanitation Campaign (TSC). This program was one among seven national flagship programs that the Government of India announced. Building latrines to stop open defecation started in 2001 which was taken as the beginning of the program. The design of the TSC incorporated lessons from the poor record of India's earlier centrally sponsored Rural Sanitation Programme, launched in 1985 with a focus on construction of relatively expensive latrines (Black and Fawcett, 2008).

The TSC gives emphasis on Information, Education and Communication (IEC) for demand generation of sanitation facilities. It also lays emphasis on school sanitation and hygiene education for bringing about attitudinal and behavioural changes in relevant sanitation and hygiene practices from a young age. Mass media sanitation promotion includes radio advertisements, printed leaflets, painting walls, newspapers etc; participatory sanitation promotion activities include community activities, social mapping, defecation and contamination mapping, group discussions etc; institutional incentives are financial awards for stopping open defecation, bans on open defecation etc; targeted hygiene messages such as household delivery of locally appropriate messages on basic hygiene practices such as hand washing, food and water hygiene (GOI, 2007).

In a study, it was revealed that more focus on women in India regarding sanitation awareness has yielded considerable success; women are acutely aware of the need for improved sanitation and hygiene behaviour and use of existing facilities. However, this gender specific focus results in the communication not targeting males as responsible members of families and communities. This assumes significance as open defecation is more popular among male members owning household toilets and also that the male member controls the finances of the household. So important methods of communication should focus on male and female both to get the necessary results. Not many states in India have adopted necessary tools for creating awareness to people about sanitation (GOI, 2006).

Hypothesis

Any method of creating the awareness among the rural population with respect to sanitation campaign can be

effective, irrespective of their gender, age and educational qualification.

Objective

The main objective of this study was to find out the relationship, if any, that exists between awareness creating method to be adopted by the rural population based on their age, educational level and gender and to find out the most effective method for creating awareness among the rural population regarding sanitation.

METHODOLOGY

In order to achieve the above cited objectives, the present study was carried out in Kasandi village of Gohana block in Sonapat District of Haryana. Sample comprised 160 respondents, of both male and female inhabitants above 18 years in equal proportion. Qualitative approach was used to satisfy the goals of the study. Stratified random sampling method was used to approach the respondents and interview schedule was used as a tool for data collection. The emphasis remained on educational level and gender. In addition to the primary data, secondary data were collected from books, journals, newspapers and internet sites and government reports. The data collected were scrutinized and coded; Statistical Package of Social Science (IBM SPSS) version 20 was used to perform normalcy, frequency and cross-tabulation test.

RESULTS

The data in Table 1 shows that both male and female respondents are in equal proportions. Majority of the respondents (63.1 percent) fall between 18 to 27 years while only 36.9 percents of them are above 28 years respectively.

Further the table shows that almost half of the respondents (55 percent) belongs to nuclear families whereas 45 percent of respondents belong to Joint families.

The education status of respondents in this table reveals that 25 percent of respondents were high school graduate. 23.8 percent of respondents were illiterate and same percent were primary school leavers. However 16.2 percent of respondents were middle school leavers and only 11.2 percent of respondents were graduates. It reveals that almost 1/4th of respondents are illiterate.

After analysing Table 2, it is revealed that 83.33 percent of male respondents between 18 – 22 years mentioned that street play is the best method of creating awareness. 16.66 percent of male respondents with same age mentioned that rally is the best method of creating awareness. 50 percent of female respondents between 18 – 22 years also mentioned that street play is the best method for generating awareness; however 50 percent of female respondents revealed that rally is the best method for generating awareness. 78.12 percent of

Table 1. Profile of the respondents.

Item	Frequency (N = 160)	Percentage
Gender		
Male	80	50.0
Female	80	50.0
Age		
18 – 22 years	48	30.0
23 – 27 years	53	33.1
28 – 35 years	39	24.4
Above 35 years	20	12.5
Family Type		
Nuclear	88	55.0
Joint family	72	45.0
Education qualification		
Illiterate	38	23.8
Primary	38	23.8
Middle	26	16.2
High school	40	25.0
Graduate	18	11.2

male respondents between 23 – 27 years mentioned that street play is a good method of creating awareness. 15.62 percent of male respondents between 23 – 27 years mentioned that public lectures are the best method for generating awareness; 6.25 percent of male respondents with same age mentioned that pamphlets are the best method for generating awareness. 80.95 percent of female respondents between 23 – 27 years revealed that street play is a good method for generating awareness. 19.05 percent of female respondents with same age mentioned that public lectures are the best method for generating awareness. 41.66 percent of male respondents between 28 – 35 years revealed that street play and public lectures respectively are the better method for generating awareness; 16.66 percent of male respondents with same age revealed that rally is a good method for generating awareness among general masses regarding sanitation issues. 11.11 percent of female respondents between 28 – 35 years revealed that street play is a good method for generating awareness; 59.25 percent of female respondents with same age mentioned public lectures are better for generating awareness; 29.62 percent of female respondents with same age mentioned that rally is the best method for generating awareness.

16.66 percent of male respondents above 35 years revealed that street play will be a good method for generating awareness; 33.33 percent of male respondents with same age mentioned that public lectures will prove good in generating awareness; 50 percent of male

respondents above 35 years mentioned that rally will prove good for generating awareness. 64.29 percent of female respondents above 35 years mentioned that street play will be a good method for generating awareness; 21.42 percent of female respondents with same age mentioned rally will be a good method for generating awareness; 28.58 percent of female respondents above 35 years revealed that pamphlets will be the best method for generating awareness among the general public regarding sanitation issues.

Table 3 revealed that majority, that is 63.16 percent (24) of male respondents, who are illiterate feel that street play is a good method for awareness generation while an equal percentage of 15.79 of illiterate feel that public lectures are the best method for creating awareness; 15.79 percent of male respondents who are illiterate feel that rally is a good method for creating awareness; 5.26 percent of male respondents who are illiterate feel that pamphlets can be good for creating awareness. Similarly all the male respondents (100 percent) with primary educational qualification feel that street play is a good method for generating awareness, while half (53.85 percent) of female respondents with primary school qualification mention that street play is a good method for generating awareness. 15.38 percent of female respondents with same qualification feel public lectures are the best method for generating awareness; 30.77 percent of female respondents with same qualification feel rally is a good method for generating awareness among people of rural areas about sanitation.

All male respondents with middle educational qualification revealed that rally is the best method for generating awareness among people regarding rural sanitation. 81.81 percent of female respondents with middle level educational qualification feel that street play is the best method for generating awareness among general public regarding sanitation issues in rural areas. 9.09 percent of female respondents mentioned that public lectures and rally respectively are the better methods for generating awareness among the general public regarding sanitation issues in rural areas.

95 percent of male respondents with educational qualification of High school mentioned that street play is a good method for generating awareness; however 5 percent of male respondents with same qualification mentioned public lectures are the best method for generating awareness. 5 Percent of female respondents with educational qualification of High school mentioned that street play is good method for generating awareness; 35 percent female respondents with same qualification mentioned public lecture is good method for generating awareness; 40 percent of female respondents with same qualification mentioned public lecture is a good method for generating awareness among the general public regarding sanitation issues in rural areas; 20 percent of such respondents mentioned that pamphlets are good method for generating awareness.

Table 2. Age and gender.

Which methods of awareness should be used to make people aware about sanitations in rural areas?			Age				Total
			18-22 years	23-27 years	28-35 years	Above 35	
Street play	Gender	Male	25	25	5	1	56
		Female	9	17	3	9	38
	Total		34	42	8	10	94
Public lectures	Gender	Male		5	5	2	12
		Female		4	16	0	20
	Total			9	21	2	32
Rally	Gender	Male	5		2	3	10
		Female	9		8	1	18
	Total		14		10	4	28
Pamphlet	Gender	Male		2		0	2
		Female		0		4	4
	Total			2		4	6

Table 3. Educational qualification and gender.

Which methods of awareness should be used to make people aware about sanitations in rural areas?			Educational qualification					Total
			Illiterate	Primary	Middle	High School	Graduate	
Street play	Gender	Male	24	12	0	19	1	56
		Female	0	14	18	1	5	38
	Total		24	26	18	20	6	94
Public lectures	Gender	Male	6	0	0	1	5	12
		Female	0	4	2	7	7	20
	Total		6	4	2	8	12	32
Rally	Gender	Male	6	0	4	0		10
		Female	0	8	2	8		18
	Total		6	8	6	8		28
Pamphlet	Gender	Male	2			0		2
		Female	0			4		4
	Total		2			4		6

16.66 percent of male respondents with the educational qualification level of graduation revealed that street play will be good to generate awareness among general public regarding sanitation issues in rural areas; 83.33 percent of male respondents with same qualification revealed that public lectures are better for generating awareness among the general masses regarding this issue. 41.66 percent of female respondents graduates revealed that street play is a good method for generating awareness among the public regarding sanitation issues; 58.33 percent of female respondents with same qualification feel public lectures will be more effective in

generating awareness among the general public about sanitation issues in rural areas in India.

Conclusion

It is worthwhile to mention here that though education has been a major thrust area of Indian planners since the inception of planned development in India, its impact is visible in every sphere of social life in India and it is the need of the hour that must be taken into consideration before finalizing any plan or strategy for the population

living in urban or rural areas of India. The present study shows that education and gender are very important factors and should be considered while designing any strategy. Education asks for different techniques to be adopted as per the level of education and gender changes the preferences for awareness methods. As a number of awareness techniques are used among the rural settings it becomes imperative to consider different socioeconomic indicators of the population. The survey findings clearly indicate that whatever strategy is designed may not be appropriate for all.

Policy implications

After analysing the results of the data we were able to understand that in rural areas people understand and prefer that increase in their basic understanding should be developed by performing street plays, folk shows etc. If this is to be believed government of the developing nations should consider these options to make any such programs which are related to public health successful. Awareness is the first step towards making programs successful. It has been seen, that many programmes launched by government finish unnoticed by the general public, though they are meant for the public. The reason is lack of proper tools of awareness, most of the awareness campaigns take with the help of electronic media; however, most of the rural population in India still does not have access to electronic media. If the findings of this research paper should be taken into consideration, the agencies associated with any sanitation programme should create awareness among the general masses in rural areas about sanitation schemes through street play, folk shows etc.

Major suggestions

1. The community participation should be ensured in devising any awareness strategy for them.
2. The educational level of the community members plays an important role. As it is evident from the study that respondents with different educational level ask for different techniques to be adopted for the awareness.
3. Multiple strategies for awareness should be used to complement the communities varied needs and appropriateness.
4. Non-governmental organizations have a great role to play in the awareness campaign as they can be engaged to conduct baseline surveys to determine the perception regarding a particular awareness generation method. The awareness strategy adopted if possible should be compartmentalized for different sections of the population according to their educational levels.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We would like to thank peer reviewers for reviewing this paper and providing us with their valuable inputs to make this paper better. We would like to thank all our respondents who participated in this research. We would like to thank the editorial team and editor for accepting this paper and providing their valuable suggestions from time to time for the improvement of this paper.

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