



IMPACT OF SANITATION PROGRAMS IN ENHANCING RURAL HEALTH IN INDIA

Health Science

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ABSTRACT

Sanitation problem is receiving considerable attention worldwide, all the countries are struggling to achieve universal sanitation i.e. access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation services. This has been identified as one of the key targets by Millennium Development Goals, (UN 2000). Further, the control of all those factors in man which harms the physical environment needs to be given more emphasis to bring about health, alleviating poverty, enhancing quality of life and rising productivity, all of which are essential for sustainable development (WHO 1992). It's estimated that 833 million people continue to live in rural India (Census 2011). In a developing country like India where millions lack access to basic water and sanitation services introduction of integrated rural sanitation strategy has become indisputably part of the development agenda of sanitation programs. Poor sanitation, hygiene, quality and quantity of water form some of the reasons behind more than 80% of reported cases of infectious diseases in India. In this paper we analyze various sanitation programs that are impacting people's health. It's evident that the impact of poor sanitation is enormous and the illumination of this paper will suggest certain policy implications for effective sanitation efforts, in order to redeem losses incurred due to insanitation.

KEYWORDS

Sanitation programs, Rural Sanitation, Rural Health.

1.0. INTRODUCTION

The prime minister of India in 2014 retrieved a statement by Mahatma Gandhi that, sanitation is more important than independence. Sanitation if neglected in a society, many number of diseases appears. Sanitation is mostly associated with cleanliness of oneself society, instruction, monetary and social improvement of a general public. Lack of proper sanitation and hygiene always brings problems and monetary expenses. The control of factors which harms the physical environment needs to be given a priority to enhance human healthy thus ensuring quality of life and rising productivity and sustainable development as a whole (WHO 1992). [3, 7]

To combat diseases and environmental sustainability are among the goals in MDGs, which are related to sanitation and hygiene. It was noted that improvement of sanitation, hygiene and safe drinking water can enable achieve the set targets of terms of target set by MDG. [6]

As defined by WHO sanitation enhances availability of facilities and services for disposal of human waste. Monitoring of water supply and sanitation is done jointly thus making it easy to hygienically separate human excreta from human contact and hence reduce health risks to humans. This act has a barrier to prevent the transmission of disease agents. [8, 3]

In order to accelerate sanitation coverage throughout the country, particularly rural areas, the Indian government introduced the Total Sanitation Campaign in 1999. For effective implementation of the program the state governments have created special unit at the state and district levels. The primary aim of these institutional arrangements is regular monitoring and supervision of various sanitation programs. [2, 15]

Poor sanitation, hygiene, quality and quantity of water are some of the main reasons behind more than 80% of reported cases of infectious diseases in India. Achievements have been found through various initiatives by all stakeholders. In this paper we show the impact of sanitation programs in enhancing rural health in India. Further, a study brings out certain policy implications for effective sanitation efforts [3, 14]

2.0 Review of literature

Meenakshisundaram (2008) on a study initiated by Wash Alliance International (WAI), an independent qualitative assessment, of the Government of India under Total Sanitation Campaign (TSC) said that, TSC has been the most significant reform initiative in the rural sanitation sector in India so far and has the potential to transform the

sanitation scenario in the rural areas of the country resulting in positive public health outcomes. It further explored that Central Rural Sanitation Program (CRSP) implemented in India during 1986-1998 made it clear that, subsidy for toilet construction does not automatically result in desired sanitation coverage and the anticipated public health benefits.

Mara (2010) on Sanitation and Hygiene status there is a direct impact on environment and people's health, this happens all over the world especially in developing countries. As its known "prevention is better than cure" this is true because, diseases do not just exist miraculously there is always a cause for each malady in the life of human beings. Lack of sanitation leads to disease, as it was first noted scientifically in 1842 in Chadwick's seminar

Kumar (2014) conducted a study on awareness and practices of rural districts of Tamil Nadu. The study majored on open defecation with a main objective of identifying health problems and finding out awareness level among the rural households. Awareness is necessary for ensuring success of government programs to enhance health of the public.

UN (2015) Basic sanitation resources and access to clean sources of water are a basic human rights However, 1.8 billion people globally use a source of drinking water that is contaminated with fecal, and 2.4 billion people lack access to basic sanitation facilities like toilets, Lack of these facilities is what causes approximately 1000 children daily die from diarrhea which can be prevented from better water and sanitation infrastructures.

Sekar (2015) on a study stated that, there are three reasons that impact negatively people living in any environment are unsafe drinking water, un-managed solid wastes and inadequate sanitation services.

WHO/UNICEF (2017) 4.5 billion people which are more than half of the world's population lack access well managed sanitation services. Moreover, 340,000 thousand children under five years of age die due to lack of safe water and sanitation. This is an alarming situation which needs to be treated as an emergency to steer-up sustainable development [11]

3.0. Sanitary Programs at a Glance:

(WHO) defines health, as a fundamental human right of physical, mental and social well-being and not merely absence of disease or infirmity?

Health depends largely on availability of drinking water and sanitation which is the core reason why Central Rural Sanitation Program (C.R.S.P) in 1986 was started. In the early days sanitation was limited to just disposal of human excreta, but today is a vast amalgamation of components like solid and liquid waste, personal and food hygiene, domestic and environment sanitation, safe drinking water and overall sanitation.

Later it became Total Sanitation Campaign (TSC) which embarked on demand approach, where implementation and sanitary services were given based on the need. For this reason TSC dwelled in giving Information, Education and Communication (IEC). Further Human Resource Development was part of the agenda which was to enhance people's awareness level and increase their interest on demand for health impacting infrastructures lead by the community. The following are programs launched by the Indian government:

4.1 Rural Sanitary Marts program

This is a one stop-commercial shop which is social sensitive; it possesses all necessary sanitation and hygiene for the community and family can be found.

4.2 Building of Individual Household Latrine program

These are individual toilets, which are subsidized and constructed or sometimes build for free by the government of India, to ensure that all individual families have a toilet of their own, within their reach.

4.3 Water Sanitation Campaign program

This aims at helping in enhancing of sanitation services, hence water and sanitation are inseparable twins, where one depends on another. Not only for sanitary and hygiene purpose it's also essential for drinking purpose to have safe water without contamination.

4.4 School Sanitation program

When information is imparted on the young minds, it's expected that in the long run, families especially whose children are studying should be impacted. This will create felt need especially when they are at home where such facilities in school, are not available.

5.0 Impact of Sanitation

i.Improve Rural People status

Health is directly related to quality of life they play major roles in educational and economic outcomes. Children are always forced to miss going to school, increase in illness levels among the community, and they are exposed to difficult of using open spaces to relieve themselves. Girls have the additional burden of inconvenience, lack of safety, and inadequate arrangements for their special needs especially during menstruation.

ii.Increase sanitation coverage

Increased sanitation infrastructures, has improved through various government programs that have been conducted. For instance in 2001 the government of Tamil Nadu decided to construct Integrated Sanitary Complexes for men and women in all the 12,618 Village Panchayats in the state, at a unit cost of 2.25 lakhs.

The government targets to be fully sanitized by October 2nd 2019 especially as far as OD is concerned. Sanitation has made it possible to have more individual and community toilets in rural areas; it has improved toilet access and usage among the people. It also encourages those who do not have toilets in households to use toilet facilities to use community sanitary complex as a substitute. [11]

iii.Enhancing the health of people.

It has ensured health of people as well as that of the environment is improved and sustainable. The failure or success of a community health is determined by the capacity to close all the sources of germs, which if not prevented can be disastrous to the people and the environment as a whole.

iv.Improve hygiene behavior

Behavior in terms of hygiene has been boosted due to availability of facilities for disposal of waste like human fecal, urine, and availability of safe drinking water. Moreover facilities like hand washing, clothing even bathing habits are encouraged. Availability of proper drainage system among the people is essential for disposing liquid waste. Proper infrastructure for disposing waste and recycling of waste behavior's are also promoted. [11]

v.Improve access to safe water

The government has ensured availability of safe drinking water for the villagers through panchayat administrators. It has benefited people by minimizing water bone diseases and improved their dignity. [13]

6.0 CONCLUSION

A society burdened with basic health issues must behaving sanitary deformities in the first place. This implies a close link between sanitation and health. Therefore it's evident from various available literatures that, sanitation plays a vital role in promoting health of the society. We have discussed the positive impact of these sanitation programs and its factual that, if the efforts are triggered further by the state and central government of India, more achievements are to be realized in future.

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