

# Economic Impact of Women's Participation in Sanitation Campaign: A study in the Reference of Bhavnagar District

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**Abstract**—Sanitation is vital for health, child development and social and economic progress. Universal access to adequate and safe sanitation is a basic requirement. Sanitation is a human right. The main objective of the present study is to know the amount of knowledge of sanitation campaign among women in rural areas of Bhavnagar district and also to know the attitude of sanitation awareness among women and to know the condition and system of sanitation in relation to solid waste disposal. The present paper has been studied on the basis of primary and secondary data sources. Data Collection Primary data has been collected through interview questionnaire from 234 female respondents of rural area of Bhavnagar district through stratified sampling and snowball sampling. At the end of the present study it is concluded that rural women are aware of the working of sanitation scheme. Women who have less level of education and whose household income of female respondent is less than Rs.10,000 have less consciousness about hygiene. Although Swachhta Abhiyan is a nationwide movement, there is a need for more effective management of waste disposal in rural areas.

**Index Terms**—Women Hygiene, Awareness, Hygiene habits

## I. INTRODUCTION

Everyone is entitled to sanitation services that are affordable and accessible and provide privacy, dignity and safety. This not only improves the health of the society but also accelerates economic and social development. Cleanliness is closely related to health and environment. Domestic as well as public hygiene is directly related to health and wellness. Hygiene depends on things like people's habits, mindset, awareness, education, importance of hygiene and

health. Public sanitation in the rural areas of the district depends on the Gram Panchayat system. However, Gram Panchayat also have a role in domestic sanitation and citizens also have a role in public sanitation.

Sanitation is an important component of public health and is an essential service that is crucial to maintaining healthy communities. Women in Sanitation is an essential initiative that believes in promoting gender equality in the sanitation sector. Although it is everyone's responsibility to cultivate cleanliness and follow hygiene, if the habit of hygiene is cultivated among women, the members of the house-family can be taught to keep the habit of cleanliness. This is why women's participation in the sanitation sector is a basic condition for domestic hygiene, if the level of hygiene awareness among women is high, significant progress in the level of domestic hygiene and community hygiene is possible.

The Swachh Bharat Abhiyan is a mission of the Government of India that has gained the support of people across the country. Although everyone participated in various sanitation campaigns, the role of women was commendable. Women are considered a very important part of the society, so they are definitely more effective than others. Since women handle most of the household chores, the current sanitation campaign mentions the leading role of women in sanitation operations to improve the level of sanitation. Women's self-help groups play an effective role in creating awareness among local communities and promoting sanitation in rural areas. Women play an important role in promoting activities such as mass education, sanitation, health through organized self-help groups in rural areas. To make the Swachh Bharat

Mission a success, 8 lakh women Swachtagrahis have been appointed by the government.

## II. BRIEF INTRODUCTION OF BHAVNAGAR DISTRICT

Bhavnagar district has been selected for the present research study. The total area of Bhavnagar district is 6647 sq. km. Bhavnagar is a district with 10 districts and 686 villages. Bhavnagar district accounts for 3.97% of the state's population. According to the 2011 census of Bhavnagar district, out of the total population of 24,01,917 the rural population is 13,70,260 i.e. 57.05%. While the urban population is 10,31,657 i.e. 42.95%. (Socio Economic Review , 2025)

Although Bhavnagar district is located on the coast, the overall rainfall in the district is moderate. The ground water revenue in the district is mainly from rainfall, canals, ponds and wells etc. In summer most of the areas in Bhavnagar district face shortage of cultivable, drinking and usable water.

The Suez treatment plant for the treatment of polluted sewage water in Bhavnagar city was commissioned during the royal period by inviting an engineer from Germany. The first such plant was established in Bhavnagar before independence but later due to the negligence of the local system this plant was closed. Bhavnagar city was one of the earliest cities in Gujarat to have underground sewerage facility. Also, Bhavnagar was the first city in Gujarat to have a water purification plant. At the time when Krishnakumarsinhji established the water purification plant, this plant was the largest in Asia. (Government of Gujarat, 2022)

## III. LITERATURE REVIEW

Access to water and sanitation services is a human right and despite its basic recognition, today 2.1 billion people globally do not have access to adequate drinking water and 1 billion people still defecate in the open indicating that women lack these basic health services, security, and tackles mental vulnerabilities (Indian Society, 2021). In many parts of India, women still face serious problems due to lack of clean water and sanitation services despite the implementation of specific measures aimed at improving sanitation. Women feel insecure due to lack of toilets and related

crimes and sexual exploitation of women are seen daily. Waiting to use the bathroom exposes women to several health risks that are harmful (Burra, Patel, & Kers, 2003). Lack of clean water is fatal for mothers and newborns, so providing safe water and sanitation services can drastically reduce maternal and infant mortality. For girls, especially during menstruation, due to inadequate sanitation facilities in schools, studies have to be left incomplete, so women in the society will feel safe if the focus is on solving the problems experienced in this regard by emphasizing the needs of women and girls (Murari & Parashar, 2020).

Along with this, Asha workers have also made a unique contribution in inculcating hygiene habits under the National Rural Health Mission and Swachhta Abhiyan in India. More than 10 lakh Asha workers work in India. Asha workers mobilize communities for universal immunization and construction of household toilets for reproductive and health care programmes. ASHA workers do a commendable job of addressing the challenges faced in women and children's health services. Asha workers provide information to the community on nutrition, basic hygiene, health services, healthy living, and the need to effectively utilize health and family welfare services. The role of Anganwadi workers and Asha workers has been crucial in implementing the objectives of Swachh Bharat Gramin but it should be universal in all villages. There is an acute shortage of skilled workers in Anganwadis in rural areas which indicates inefficiency in terms of management (Dutta, 2017). Also, in villages with low level of education, people's participation in sanitation is low. As the literacy rate improves, there will be positive trends in attitudes towards hygiene. Hence there is a need for guidance in this regard. For this health center, school, village panchayat, all officers and employees, can encourage rural people to cultivate hygiene (Chauhan, 2014).

## IV. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The main objective of the present study is to know the level of awareness of the current working sanitation campaign among the women of Bhavnagar district, to know the trend of sanitation awareness among women and to know the status and system of sanitation in relation to solid waste disposal.

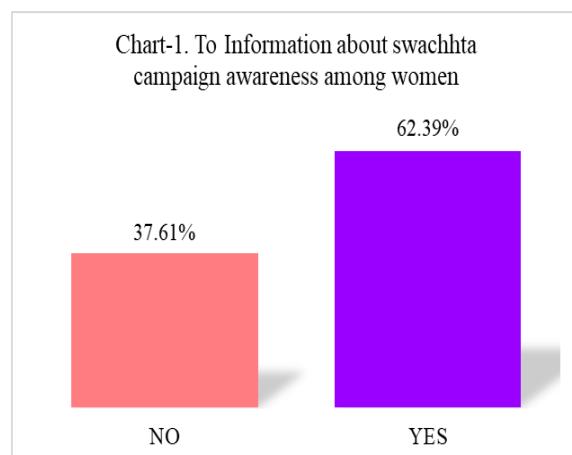
#### V. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study is done with the objective of knowing the status of Bhavnagar district. Water, uses of sanitary equipment, garbage, hygiene habits etc. are covered in the study which are of special importance in sanitation. What kinds of attitudes people have in everyday action is known through important sources of primary data. Data collection through stratified sampling and snowball sampling, general information, knowledge of working campaign, habit of using sanitation facility, waste disposal information was collected from 234 women of Bhavnagar district through interview questionnaire method.

#### VI. MAJOR FINDINGS

Based on the representative data obtained from the female respondents of Bhavnagar district, the important findings obtained from the analysis are summarized in the form of conclusion.

48.72 percent women are in the age group of 18 to 45 years while 51.28 percent women are in the age group of 46 to 61 years or above. 31.64 per cent illiteracy rate and only 5.13 per cent women have higher education. 63.23 percent women have education from primary to higher secondary. Illiteracy rate is highest among women aged 46 to 61 years or above. The number of members in the house-family is 5 or more is 61.11 percent which shows the intensity of joint family in rural areas. 31.62 percent class included in the survey earns Rs.10000 or less and 57.69 percent class having an income earns Rs. 10,001 to Rs. 30,000. 10.68 percent female respondents have household income of Rs. 30,001 to Rs.50,000 or more.



In terms of awareness regarding sanitation, as per chart-1 the main difference is that 62.39 percent of women have information about the currently operational Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, 25.21 percent of women have benefited from the operational sanitation campaign, which mainly includes construction of toilets and sewage facilities in the sense of disposal of other waste water at home.

10.68 percent of illiterate women have the habit of cleaning their hands with unsafe substances like mud or ash before eating/after ablution. In the rural areas of Bhavnagar district, the monthly income category below Rs.10,000 has a hand cleaning habit with 31.08 percent clay and ash for hand cleaning. 65.93 percent of the income group of Rs.10,001 to Rs.30,000 or more have the habit of washing their hands with soap before eating or after going to toilet.

A total of 15.80 percent of female respondents' households do not adopt any process of water purification before drinking water consumption. 33.78 percent households with monthly income less than Rs.10,000 and 31.08 percent households with 5 or more members do not use any method of water purification before drinking water. In 44.86 percent households with income between Rs.10,001 to Rs.30,000, drinking water is filtered through plain cloth and in 5.98 percent households, drinking water is boiled.

Among the female respondents in the rural areas of the district are not in the habit of segregating the household waste into dry waste and solid waste. 50.34 percent of the women respondents covered in the study dispose of the household waste generated in the open and 25.86 percent of the women dispose of the waste in vehicles collected by the Gram Panchayat. 18.28 percent of illiterate women's households and 15.52 percent of households earning less than Rs.10,000 monthly waste are disposed of in the open. 19.66 percent of households with monthly income of Rs.10,000 to Rs.30,000 or more dispose of waste in a vehicle collected by the Gram Panchayat. It is learned from the female respondent of Bhavnagar district that as waste collection vehicles do not come to their rural areas, waste is disposed of in the open, in public ditches, drains, wells or by burning.

## VII. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

From the point of view of cleanliness, the overall condition of Bhavnagar district cannot be considered commendable. There is a need for the administration and citizens to be more vigilant regarding domestic hygiene and public hygiene. In rural areas 31.63 percent of women are illiterate, so naturally these households are relatively negative in terms of sanitation. In this situation, at the village level women should be made literate through intensive education and the attitude towards sanitation should be made more positive. Since hygiene habits and education are inter-related, there is a need for more emphasis on education to bring significant improvement in the level of hygiene.

36.32 percent rural women do not have the habit of daily cleaning of tire, kunda tip at home. Awareness can be created in various ways by the government through slogans, pictures, educational institutions, awareness rallies in the local area, songs-rhymes-jokes in the form of awareness from moving vehicles like auto rickshaws. In which awareness can be created in the form of always cleaning hands while cooking, sitting down to eat with clean hands, regularly cleaning the water table etc. Apart from this, people can be sensitized to be careful about keeping garbage bags at home, keeping dry and green waste separate, using toilets and bathrooms and cleaning them regularly, bathing daily, washing hands after defecation and before eating or coming home. A special point to be made here is that this type of care has special health benefits. Which keeps the person fit and healthy and also reduces health expenditure.

While 43.04 percent of the households in the study area use water distributed by the Gram Panchayat for drinking purposes, the water distributed by the Gram Panchayat must be potable. For this, the administration should create a system to distribute only potable water. Apart from this 56.96 percent of the households use drinking water from other sources like wells, bore wells, river-lakes which also need to be verified by the administration whether it is potable.

More than half of people in rural areas dispose of waste in the open. It is natural that this waste harms the environment and hygiene. It was found out from the rural women that the garbage collection vehicle does not come to their area, so it is very important to strengthen such system to reach every house and street

regularly for waste disposal system. 23.79 percent women dispose of waste in public ditches, burning, drains or ditches. Thus, arranging the waste disposal system properly can be considered as a very important matter.

48.29 percent of the women believe that as a result of the implementation of the cleanliness campaign, there has been an improvement in cleanliness, while this type of cleanliness campaign should be accelerated so that awareness can be increased and a better condition can be achieved in terms of cleanliness. Apart from this, efforts were intensified to increase the awareness of cleanliness among the people through media like TV, newspapers, mobiles.

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