

Original Research Article

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Impact Assessment on Environmental Sanitation Knowledge of Rural Women

Poonam Choudhary¹, Dhriti Solanki¹ and Smita Bhatnagar^{2*}

¹College of Home- Science Udaipur (Raj.), India

²S.M.S, (Home-Sc.), Chomu, India

*Corresponding author

ABSTRACT

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The objective of the present study was to find out the knowledge of rural women about homestead technologies in Chittorgarh district. The study was conducted in *Bhadesar* and *Bassi* panchayat samities of Chittorgarh district of Rajasthan state. From each panchayat samiti, two villages where the homestead technologies have been promoted by the KVK since last five years were included in the study. The sample consisted of randomly selected 100 rural women, 25 from each village. Personal interview method was used for data collection. Mean per cent score were used for analysis of data. The knowledge of the respondents about environmental sanitation component revealed that majority of the respondents (58.48%) possessed average knowledge.

Introduction

A rural women hold on three fold responsibilities of home, farm and management of livestock. In home she devotes endless time in preparing food, washing clothes, procuring fuel from forest, bringing water, storing food grains, cleaning and maintaining house, looking after children and adults, participating in social and religious ceremonies and the list is never ending. Beside this, she does a lot of work in agriculture and animal husbandry. Adding to the plight of these, women use age old customary methods for performing all these tasks which make

their work more drudgery ridden, tedious and thorny.

Environmental sanitation covers conditions that affect the health of humans. Lack of adequate sanitation also forces households into the continued indignity of open defecation, which is an acute problem especially for women and young girls. Improving access to sanitation is therefore appropriately included in the Millennium Development Goals. Actions include ensuring a safe water supply, a safe air supply, safe methods of disposing of human waste, industrial waste and animal waste and the

protection of the food supply from contamination of chemical and biological threats.

Materials and Methods

The study was conducted in Chittorgarh district of Rajasthan state. The district has 11 panchayat samities out of these, two panchayat samities namely *Bhadesar* and *Bassi* were selected purposively where the homestead technologies have been promoted by the KVK since last five years (2009-2013). Total four villages from two selected panchayat samities were included in the study.

Sample for the study consisted of 100 rural women, 25 from each village. Personal interview method was used to collect the data from the respondents. Mean percent score were used for analysis of the data.

Results and Discussion

Background information of the respondents

More than 40 per cent respondents belonged to the age group of 18-30 years and 38 per cent were from 31-45 years of age. Majority of the respondents (60%) were under upper caste category. Regarding education, 29 per cent respondents were illiterate and 24 per cent were educated up to middle level. Only 15 per cent respondents were graduates. Farming was the main family occupation of 89 per cent respondents.

All the respondents were involved in some subsidiary occupations like farm labor, business and service. Majority (63%) belonged to nuclear family. More than 40 per cent respondents had small size family consisting of up to 4 members. Majority of the respondents (62%) were small and marginal farmers. Majority of the respondents (75%) were residing in *pucca* houses.

Knowledge of the respondents about environmental sanitation

Knowledge of the respondents about environmental sanitation. Critical examination of the knowledge score highlights that the respondents possessed average knowledge about environmental sanitation component (58.48MPS).

An in depth enquiry into knowledge of the respondents in different components was made to find out specific deficiencies in knowledge so that necessary efforts can be made to increase the knowledge of the rural women about homestead technologies.

Environmental sanitation

Data presented in Table 1.1 show knowledge of the respondents about environmental sanitation. Majority of the respondents knew that environmental sanitation is important for controlling insects and mosquitoes and for prevention from diseases. The respondents had knowledge that surroundings of a house can be kept clean by cleaning house everyday (100%), use of covered dustbin (83%) and outlet of drainage in soak pit/ kitchen garden (58%). Regarding proper disposal of household garbage, equal number of respondents (66%) knew about compost pit and burning of garbage however, only 13 per cent respondents had knowledge about dumping of garbage in a pit.

Looking to the importance of safe drinking water for human beings an effort was made to assess knowledge of the rural women about this aspect. Table 4.12 clearly indicates that majority of the respondents had knowledge that tap water is safe source of drinking water as it is cleaned and supplied from public water supply system. Similarly covered well was also considered as a safe source of water by more than half of the respondents (58%).

Table.1 Knowledge of the respondents about environmental sanitation

n=100

S. No.	Aspects	f / %
1.	Importance of environmental sanitation a) For controlling insects and mosquitoes b) To prevent diseases	100 78
2.	Ways to keep surroundings of a house clean a) By cleaning house everyday b) Use of covered dustbin c) Having smokeless <i>chulha</i> in kitchen d) Having outlet of drainage in soak pit/ kitchen garden	100 83 0 58
3.	Proper disposal of household garbage a) Compost pit b) Burning of garbage c) Dumping of garbage	66 66 13
4.	Safe sources of drinking water a) Tap b) Hand pump c) Covered well	100 17 58
5.	Water born diseases a) Jaundice b) Cholera c) Flurosis d) Diarrahoea	32 0 87 76
6.	Domestic methods of cleaning water a) Boiling b) Use of double layered filter cloth c) Use of alum	12 87 45
7.	Ways to keep drinking water clean a) Cleaning water container daily b) Keeping water covered c) Covering water container while brining it home from the source of water d) Using handled <i>laddle</i> e) Keeping water above the ground level	100 100 100 100 100
8.	Identification of dirty water a) Water is yellowish in color b) Gives bad odour c) Taste of water is not good	72 77 79
9.	Proper disposal of sullage a) Use of soak pit b) Towards kitchen garden	0 58

Only 17 per cent respondents had knowledge that hand pump is also a safe source of drinking water. Regarding the domestic methods of cleaning water, information presented in the table reveals that use of double layered filter cloth and alum was known to 87 and 45 per cent respondents, respectively whereas, only 12 per cent respondents knew about boiling method.

With respect to the precautions in handling and storage of water, all the respondents reported that water container should be cleaned daily, water should be kept covered, water container should be kept covered while bringing it home from the source of water, handled *laddle* should be used and water be kept above the ground level. Further with respect to identification of dirty water, majority of the respondents knew that taste of water is not good (79%), gives bad odour (77%) and water is yellowish in color (72%).

Nearly half of the respondents had knowledge about proper disposal of dirty water towards kitchen garden. None of the respondents had knowledge about use of soak pit.

Based on the findings it could be concluded that the respondents had average knowledge about environmental sanitation.

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