

**“KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICES REGARDING ENVIRONMENTAL SANITATION
AMONGST TRIBAL MEN AND WOMEN OF SELECTED FOUR TRIBAL VILLAGES OF
JAMBUGHODA BLOCK, PANCHMAHAL DISTRICT, GUJARAT.”**

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Abstract: The World Health Organization 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 tribal men and women had low knowledge and bad practices of Environmental Sanitation.

Key words: Environmental Sanitation, Knowledge, Practices, Tribal

Introduction: According to the Census 2011, tribal people constitute 8.61% of the total population of India, numbering 104.28 million and cover about 15% of the country’s area. There are a number of tribes in India, spread over different parts at different levels of socio economic development. There are over 5 million tribal communities existing in Gujarat. The population of Gujarat in 2011 Census of India was 6, 04, 39,692 of this 8,917,174 persons belong to one of the Scheduled Tribes (STs) constituting 14.75 per cent of the total population of the state. There is no huge difference is seen in the occupation patterns of Gujarat’s tribal people, as most of the tribal group is highly dependent on the environment. They largely follow the occupation of farming and animal husbandry. In Gujarat, Tribal people live close to the forests and they have played great role to manage and conserve it since long time. Hence, environment has close relationship with the tribal people and their day to day life is closely associated with the environmental practices like, maintaining the hygiene and sanitation of their families and communities, practices related to the waste disposal, conservation and management of water, personal hygiene and sanitation.

Environmental sanitation and its Importance: Environmental sanitation includes all the activities aim to improve or maintain the standard of basic environmental conditions affecting the wellbeing of people. These conditions include Clean and safe water, Clean and safe air, Effective and safe animal, human, and industrial waste disposal, Security of food from biological and chemical contaminants, and proper housing in clean and safe surroundings. Safe

drinking water, hygiene, and sanitation play very important part in maintaining health of human beings. **Health, air and water** are basic necessity, and important resources for maintaining life. Polluted water causes many dangerous water-borne diseases. Open defecation is similar to no sanitation. It degrades the environment, and spreads diseases. Because of the explosion of industries, the level of pollution in environment is increasing day by day. Pollution spoils the quality of environment as well as it is responsible for many dangerous diseases. Extreme poverty and lack of sanitation are two sides of a coin. Absence of environmental sanitation, directly affects to the health.

Environmental sanitation is very major issue. It needs to be solved thoroughly. The health and sanitation status of India’s tribal communities is in need of special attention. Because of many reasons tribal people suffer from the environmental sanitation problems. Main factors affecting to the Environmental Sanitation in tribal areas are such as, illiteracy, less employment, social taboos, poverty, health issues and many other.

Rationale of the Study: It is the most difficult task to provide safe environmental sanitation in a developing country like India. Though India has developed very much by new technologies and other facilities, but still when we are thinking about environmental sanitation of India, there is a big question mark. India stands second amongst the worst places in the world for sanitation (India water portal). People cannot enjoy a healthy life without hygienic environment. Tribal live close to the areas of forests and they have managed and conserved it since

long time. Hence, environment has close relationship with the tribal people. Their day to day life is closely associated with the practices of environment. Through this study researcher wants to study that whether the tribal people can teach the world and world should learn from them, that how to handle the environment? As they have best knowledge and practices. Or the world should teach them for handling environment effectively.

Objectives of the study: To prepare the profile of the four selected Tribal villages and selected Tribal men and women of selected four villages of Jambughoda Block, Panchmahal District, Gujarat, To study the overall knowledge level and overall practices regarding Environmental Sanitation of selected Tribal men and women, To study the overall knowledge level and overall practices regarding environmental sanitation of selected Tribal men and women, in relation to the variables namely, Age, sex, Marital status, Type of family, Income, Educational Qualification and Occupation, To study the knowledge level and practices regarding Environmental Sanitation of selected Tribal men and women, in relation to the following aspects namely, Infectious diseases, Waste disposal and Pollution, personal hygiene, Water and Sanitation, Food safety and household sanitation, Toilet facility and to study the differences in the aspect wise knowledge level and practices regarding selected aspects of Environmental Sanitation selected Tribal men and women, in relation to the selected variables.

Null Hypotheses of the study: There will be no significant differences in knowledge level and practices regarding Environmental Sanitation of Tribal Men and Women of four selected villages in relation to the selected Variables.

Delimitations of the study: This study is delimited to the knowledge and practices regarding Environmental Sanitation of selected men and women of the four selected Tribal Villages of Jambughoda Block, Panchmahal District, Gujarat.

Assumptions of the study: Selected tribal men and women will have knowledge and practices regarding Environmental Sanitation, and the Knowledge and Practices regarding Environmental Sanitation will vary according to the selected variables.

Review of Literature: Dwivedi and Sharma, (2007), conducted a study on Environmental Sanitation, Sanitary Habits and Personal Hygiene among the Baigas of Samnapur Block of Dindori District, Madhya Pradesh. A total of 100 households comprising of 494 persons have been studied for this purpose on a random sampling basis, by using pre tested, structured schedules, through semi-participant method. The findings of the study revealed that, the maximum number of households

disposes their garbage nearby the house or behind the house, and Most of the Baigas go to open fields for defecation purpose. This practice also leads to frequent prevalence of certain diseases. Baigas do not wash their hands after defecation; even many of them do not take water with them while going for defecation. It is a general belief among the Baigas that washing their hands after latrine will bring to them harm.

Swaminathan (2014) in an article Taking healthcare to India's remote tribes mentioned that health problems prevalent in tribal areas include endemic infectious diseases like malaria, tuberculosis, and diarrheal diseases. Author also stressed out that 75 per cent of India's tribal population defecates in the open and 33 per cent does not have access to a clean source of drinking water. Insanitary conditions, ignorance, lack of health education and poor access to healthcare facilities are the main factors responsible for the poor health of tribal. Thus, from the reviewed studies it was observed that Environmental Sanitation is basic problem of Indian tribal areas. Majority of the tribal areas are lacking with proper awareness and practices of environmental sanitation.

Operational Definition: In the present Study, Environmental Sanitation refers to the aspects namely; Infectious Diseases, Water and Sanitation, Toilet and Sanitation, Waste Disposal, Pollution, Food Safety, Household Sanitation and Personal Hygiene to maintain the hygiene and sanitary conditions of Tribal People.

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.

Major Findings of the Study: Nearly majority of the respondents had low knowledge and bad practices of environmental sanitation. The reason behind this finding may be that the respondents may have low level of education and very less exposure to media as well as their beliefs and superstition towards environment are such that they easily do not adopt favorable practices. On the other hand, the respondents had low knowledge and bad practices of infectious diseases, Toilet and sanitation, waste disposal, pollution and personal hygiene as aspects of Environmental Sanitation whereas the knowledge being low, practices were good in water and sanitation and food safety and household

surroundings. A very high majority of female, married respondents who lived in nuclear family had high knowledge of Environmental Sanitation as they have less household responsibilities so they may access more facilities and gain more information regarding the same. It may also be a reason for female married respondents for their high knowledge that they may have a direct relation with environment as compared to men because of performing day-to-day activities such as- cleaning the house, washing clothes, cleaning utensils, etc. whereas high majority of the old, illiterate respondents who were engaged in laborious activities with monthly family income less than five thousand had low knowledge of Environmental Sanitation. On the other hand, a very high majority of married respondents who were engaged in non-laborious activities with monthly family income less than five thousand had bad practices of Environmental Sanitation as they may

not avail more facilities to handle Environment effectively and majority of literate, female respondents living in nuclear family had good practices of Environmental Sanitation. There were no significant differences in Knowledge and Practices regarding Environmental Sanitation amongst selected Men and Women in relation to the all selected variables and aspects. Thus, null hypothesis of the study was accepted.

Conclusion: From the findings of the present study, it can be concluded that despite of having Environment as their habitat, the overall knowledge of the Tribal people regarding Environmental Sanitation was poor as well as their practices were bad. Thus, the present study may help in further implementation of awareness generating projects on various aspects of Environmental Sanitation for the Tribal Men and Women.

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