

Role of Awareness Camps in Improving Knowledge of Rural Women in Environmental Sanitation

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INTRODUCTION

To minimize the losses on account of the disease and environmental sanitation, a project "Integrated Sanitation, Water And Community Health" (ISWACH) was started in the Rajasthan state in 1986. It is implemented by the Rajasthan Govt. with support from UNICEF and financial assistance from SIAD (Swedish International Development Authority). One of the important activities of the project is to organise awareness camps in health and sanitation for rural women, since number of environmental sanitation camps have been organised, it was considered worthwhile to study the impact of these camps. Therefore, the present study was conducted with specific objective to study the impact of awareness camps on knowledge of rural women in selected components of environmental sanitation.

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in five Panchayat Samities namely Girwa, Gogunda, Kherwada, Badgoan and Jhadol of Udaipur district of Rajasthan State, where women awareness camps on environmental sanitation have been organised.

Ex-Post facto research design was used. The sample for present study consisted of 99 participants (those rural women who have attended the environmental sanitation camps during the period August, 1988 to February, 1989) and 70 non-participants (those women who were not exposed to any camp). Personal interview technique was used to collect the required information. 'Z' test was used to find out significance of difference in knowledge between participants and non-participants.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Majority of the respondents were illiterate, married, belonged to lower caste group, having nuclear families of less than five members. The group represented all the age groups from younger to older.

Table 1, Indicates that there was a significant difference in the overall knowledge of participants and non-participants in environmental sanitation, as the 'Z' value was found to be significant at .01 percent level. Mean percent score of the participants (37.82 per cent) was higher than that of non-participants.

Further distribution of respondents in different categories of knowledge highlights

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Role of Awareness Camps...

Table 1 : Percentage distribution of the respondents in knowledge categories and mean scores of overall knowledge.

Sr. No.	Categories	Score Range	P (99)	NP (70)	Z-Value
1.	Very Poor	0-20	2.02	29.57	8.71**
2.	Poor	20-40	61.60	60.56	
3.	Fair	40-60	35.40	9.85	
4.	Good	60-80	1.02	0.00	
5.	Very Good	80-100	0.00	0.00	
Mean Per cent Score of Knowledge		-	37.82	25.17	

P - Participants, NP- Non-participants ** Significant at 0.01 per cent level.

that majority of the non-participants (90.1 per cent) were in the category of poor or very poor knowledge as compared to 63.3 per cent participants in this category. Similarly Number of participants having fair knowledge (35.40 per cent) was considerably larger than non participants (9.85 per cent)

The results are in confirmity with the results of a follow up study of awariness generation camp conducted in Coimbatore (1986), where the camp had made a

significant impact on knowledge of rural women in the area of health & hygiene.

Componentwise knowledge of the respondents (Table 2) also indicates that there was significant difference in the knowledge of participants and non-participants in all the components. The participants had comparatively better knowledge than the non participants. Review of mean scores in different components indicate that the

Table 2 : Knowledge of the participants and non-participants in different components of enviornmental sanitation.

Sr. No.	Components	Mean Percent Scores		'Z' Value
		N (99)	NP (70)	
1.	Safe drinking water	49.76	31.84	9.37**
2.	Use, care & Maintenance of handpump	45.23	40.00	2.57**
3.	Sanitation of surrounding of house and source of water	28.69	20.60	5.00**
4.	Diseases spread through flies and mosquitoes	37.82	24.57	7.80**
5.	Household cleanliness	38.63	30.25	8.85**
6.	Prevention from communicable diseases	29.53	14.83	7.21**
7.	Role of Panchayat in Maintaining cleanliness in village.	19.08	9.23	4.86

** Singificant at 0.01 per cent level

Figures in parantheses Indicate N.

Role of Awareness Camps...

participants had average knowledge in the components viz. safe drinking water and use, care & maintenance of handpump with MPS of 49.76 and 45.23 respectively, whereas non-participants had average knowledge in these components (MPS 31.84 & 40.00). Both the groups had very poor knowledge in the component "Role of Panchayat".

CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that participants had comparatively better knowledge than the non-participants in all the components of environmental sanitation, which implies that awareness camps had helped the rural women to enhance their knowledge in sanitation aspect.

REFERENCES

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- ❖ Friendship is like earthenware, once broken it can be mended; love is like a mirror, once broken that ends it
- JOSH BILLINGS
- ❖ When we do not know the truth of a matter, it is well that there should be a common error to fix the spirits of men
- PASCAL
- ❖ The tree which needs two arms to span its girth sprang from the tiniest shoot. You tower, nine stories high, rose from a little mound of earth. A journey of a thousand miles began with a single step.
-LAO-TSE