

# WOMEN COMMUTERS & PUBLIC SANITATION FACILITIES – INDIAN SCENARIO

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## *Abstract*

Indian Women are playing multifaceted role. Their contribution is significant in developing the family and the state. The women attitude is strong and it is ready to undergo the struggles to keep themselves as the real role players in the world. Women are taking up the official roles in different sectors. Women are very good in prioritizing the family needs and keeping their individual need as the last preferred one. This trait makes the women to squeeze her and get adjusted with all sorts of inconveniences and push herself to the maximum level at the cost of her health. India is a developing country where sanitation is the prime area to be focused. The women commuters are facing the problem of not having adequate public hygiene sanitation facilities that will have great impact on women health, affecting the family and finally the country.

**Keywords:** Women, sanitation, commuter, health, challenges

## **I. Introduction**

Women empowerment has evolved them to play significant role in different walks of life. They are taking up all challenges in a brave manner and trying to accomplish them with maximum effort. The multifaceted role of women is pushing them to various parts of the world. Women is commuting and using the public amenities. Today's women are easily exposed to infections and their health is deteriorating. Women are the base for a family and she is the creator of happiness. When the base is affected with infections, it will be reflected in the growth of the nation. The role of Government is important in providing the basic sanitary amenities and to pave way for healthy dignified women whose contribution is incredible.

## **II. Reviews:**

- According to the World Health Organisation and UNICEF, India continues to have the highest number of people defecating in the open. Census 2011 had revealed that only 32.7 percent of rural population has access to toilets. Open defecation has been linked to serious health consequences and loss of wages due to illnesses. For women and girls, the consequences of inadequate sanitation go beyond ill health. Apart from the humiliation of relieving oneself in the open, there is also the fear of being harassed, experiencing violence and the psychosocial stress that comes with it.
- Creating safe sanitation for women and girls, published in the journal WIREs Water authored by Kathleen O'Reilly throws light on the issues that women are facing due to the lack of inadequate sanitation in India and also about having access to a public toilet which is unusable or unsafe.
- According to Nipun Vinayak, Harda is a district in Madhya Pradesh which has been declared ODF (Open defecation free) . A district where Ganesh Mishra, ex-CEO, zilla panchayat (ZP), has started the campaign says that there are five things such as healthy supportive mindset of leadership, people involvement as it is people programme, doing without hesitancy, innovative designing and prioritization for sanitation are required for a district to become ODF
- According to Manu Moudgil, 35 percent of the households having a functional toilet in Haryana has proved at least one member defecating in the open. Many respond that defecating in the open offers an opportunity to take a morning walk, see their fields, and take in the fresh air.
- According to Aditi Ananthanarayanan, Poor sanitation affects the people health and also the development of the nation. In fact, women are most affected by the hazards of lack of proper sanitation. For instance, in India majority of the girls drop out of school because of lack of toilets. Only 22% of them manage to even complete class 10.

## **III. Need for Hygiene Public Sanitation**

Sanitation is an important factor for Public health. The country's development is based on its healthy people. Prime improved sanitation influences the human health and well-being, especially for girls and women. The competitive world is pushing the women

to take up all tasks and they are bound to travel long distances for official purposes. The lack of adequate public sanitation facilities has a serious impact on health and social development of women. The biological structure of a woman is prone to contract highly health hazard infections very easily. The Government has to focus on providing the basic and adequate hygiene sanitation facilities to safeguard the women against life threatening infectious diseases.

#### **IV. Aim & scope of the study**

The aim of this article is to throw light on the prime difficulties faced by the women commuters using the public transports and gatherings where women is facing embarrassing situation to urinate due to lack of adequate urinals and toilet facilities. The basic sanitation has to be provided in trains, buses, railway stations, bus terminuses etc. The regular commuters are controlling themselves against the biological need & requirement. This will affect the women health in a bad manner

#### **V. Real situation**

People are regularly travelling for official and education reasons. They are commuting on an average of 120-200 k.m per day and are depending on the public transports (sub – urban trains, local buses etc.) It is an inconvenience for all people irrespective of the gender but women are facing it in the worst condition. The diabetic problem is a common health issue faced by the majority. Imbalanced sugar levels are associated with frequent urination. Majority of the women employees who are appointed in the Public and private sectors are commuting to the office using the above services. The travelling time is minimum 1hr and maximum 3hrs where the toilet facility is not provided. The public toilets at Railway stations, bus terminuses are not adequate and appropriate to the population size. Even the available facilities are lacking with basic hygiene and it is in unusable condition. In order to control urination she is drinking less water which is not advisable. The structure of women is very delicate and complicated. She is undergoing lot of hormonal changes and it is reflected in her physical strength. The attitude of women is always broader and flexible where she squeezes herself according to the family need and requirement. She pulls herself and controls the biological system that leads to greater health complications in the future.

#### **VI. Responsibility**

The Government has to be aggressive in executing the Public Sanitation operation. It is the prime responsibility of the respective Government to improve access to sanitation to reduce the impact of infections. This measure will enhance the safety, dignity and self esteem of an individual and creates healthy physical environment. When it comes to women and children, it gains more significance, since they are to be secured in the hands of the society.

Women commuters are also using public transports to a greater extent. The sub urban trains, buses and public places need to be provided with adequate hygiene toilet facilities so as to make their travel more comfortable. The Government has to prioritize the fund allocation to improve the public sanitation. Some innovative techniques can be used to design the toilet facilities for the benefit of healthy India.

#### **VII. Citizenship Behavior**

The social objectives are attainable only with the society's consensus. The society is run by the Government for the benefit of the people. Any Government's success is based on the people willingness to follow. When the Government is providing the sanitary facility, it is the individual's responsibility in using the facility properly. The citizenship behavior has to be promoted in safeguarding the cleanliness and healthy environment. More awareness is needed on health hazards. The individual has to consider the public facility as his own property and maintain with utmost cleanliness.

#### **VIII. Conclusion**

The awareness on sanitation and hygiene has to be enrooted into the individual mindset and self realization has to happen. The behavior change is slow in process requiring repeated interventions. The effective communication is the best tool to convince the people and educate them to follow the hygiene process.

Above all the Government has to sensitize this as the most important threat for women health and has to take appropriate measures in handling the situation. The population size and the availability of the toilets, urinals, water facility has to be surveyed. Funding for these projects has to be prioritized. The public participation can be utilized in raising the public utilities. The construction can be managed by the responsible regular commuter or beneficiary, where accountability and commitment will be maximum.

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