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"Impact of Awareness Campaign in Implementation of Sanitation Programmes"

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Abstract

Defecation practices in India are guided by the idea of profanity and sacredness. Defecating in the open is a common practice that pervades across the states of India. The government has been trying to change this behaviour of the people in the country by providing several infrastructural facilities. It took several decades to achieve the target of providing the infrastructure, but changing the behaviour still continues to be a daunting task to the government. This paper explores the trajectory of India becoming a country free of Open Defecation and the need for an Information and Education Campaign to achieve the target. The paper lists several programmes initiated by the Government of India for the past few decades and investigates how the investment in Information and Education Campaign influenced upon the effectiveness of the programme. Several data collected from various sources are compared to arrive at a conclusion which throws light on the methods to sharpen the effectiveness of these policies.

Open Defecation (OD) and Sanitation have been a major problem in India for a very long time. According to the Joint Monitoring Program for Water Supply and Sanitation of WHO and UNICEF, open defecation is when human feces are disposed of in the fields, forests, bushes, open bodies of water, beaches and other open spaces (Sanitation, n.d.). According to WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Report 2012, based on the data up to 2010, 626 million people in India practice open defecation, which accounts for 90 per cent of people in South Asia who practice open defecation and 59 per cent of people in the world who practice open defecation (Progress on Drinking Water and Sanitation 2012 Update, 2012)

In India, especially villages, OD is a socially accepted and commonly practiced norm. Several social reformers including Gandhiji have propounded the idea of cleanliness and hygiene for a very long time, however the condition in the country

did not see a transformational change.

The government of the country also considered OD as a major problem and sanitation as its priority and implemented several policies to improve the situation. The ministry has launched several Information and Education Campaigns (IEC) to educate the people to adopt the new behaviour.

Literature Review

To motivate the target group to perform a desired task, the five factors namely force, direction, mechanism, adequacy and compatibility and the distance must be appropriately used. Thereby, it will be possible to sell ideas like any other physical products (Weibe, Winter 1951).

In Social Marketing, the elements of marketing mix can be used to design the process of implementation and execution of programs that are intended to influence social ideas and achieve the desired objectives (Kotler & Zaltman, 1971).

Social marketing can be called so only when it uses commercial marketing ideas to bring voluntary behavioural changes among individuals, families or society as a whole for their own good without benefiting the sponsors (Andreasen, Spring 1994).

Social marketing is where marketing principles are used to bring change in individual and social actions to enable a sustained social transformation. It is argued that social good is of priority over individual good (Saunders, Barrington, & Sridharan, 2015).

Several researches were also conducted to test the nature of appeal that can make social marketing effective.

Emotional appeals are more effective than rational appeals. Females respond strongly to negative emotional appeals as compared to their male counterparts whereas there is no significant difference to positive emotional or rational ad appeals between male and female respondents. In social advertising, unlike commercial advertising, ad likeability cannot be considered as a valid measure for ad effectiveness (Noble, Pomeroy, & Johnson, 2014).

Culture and ethnicity of the target group plays an important role in deciding the appeal that can be used to instigate behaviour among the target audience. It was also identified that emotional appeals were more successful in bringing the desired behavioural change more than control ads did. It was also identified that shaming was more effective for those individuals with interdependent self-concept (Ferre, Muralidharan, & Kim, 2019).

Governments can achieve social change when they are able to bring suitable interventions like regulation, legislation, taxation etc when the group may not be in a position to make rational decisions (Kennedy & Parsons, 2012).

A study on the Let's Move campaign identifies that to make an ad effective it is more important to convey how to take an action than simply telling the target audience what to do (Georgiadis, 2013).

Research Gap

While the existing study concentrates on the statistics pertaining to one year or one programme, this paper explores the trajectory of India becoming a country free of Open Defecation across years. The paper lists several programmes initiated by the

Government of India for the past decades and investigates how the investment in IEC influenced upon the effectiveness of the programme.

Statement of the Problem

Every year the government announces numerous policies directing investments into various fields to overcome several social issues. Mere allocation of funds does not result in its success. To make a policy achieve its target, it is important to educate and create awareness among the target group. A fairly large portion of the funds allocated to the policy is usually dedicated to the IEC. Public Service Advertisement (PSA), as a part of IEC, plays an important role in educating the target group to bring desired change in their behaviour.

This study is an effort to understand the importance of IEC in making the policies effective.

Objectives

The objectives of the study are:

- To study the various policies relating to Sanitation and their IEC activities
- To study the progress in achieving Open Defecation Free (ODF) status
- To suggest corrective measures for implementation of policies in the future

Methodology

The paper is review based one. It is based on secondary data collected from the websites of the relevant ministries, audit reports, reports from various institutions and articles from newspapers.

Schemes

Sanitation Programmes (1947-1986)

Since the first five-year plan, sanitation is an area where the government has been investing its funds regularly. In this plan, the government allotted Rs 140 crores for the purpose of health and sanitation apart from which a special grant of Rs 24 crores was provided to the state. Ten thousand villages were identified where the facilities had to be implemented and 250 urban sanitation projects were also taken up across 16 states. However, by the end of the first five-year plan, only a hundred villages and 32 urban sanitation projects could be implemented during this time.

Despite the hindrance in the first five-year plan, the government allotted 53 crores for urban water supply and sanitation and 28 crores for rural water supply and sanitation during the second five-year plan. A special grant of 10 crores was also allotted for urban areas with Municipal corporations. The performance during this period was comparatively better than the previous one with 1200 villages getting sanitation facilities. The budget allotted for the purpose thereafter was comparatively lower when compared to the first two five-year plans (Dutta, India@70: Two Decades And The Five Year Plans Which Focused On Sanitation, 2017).

In 1974, sanitation was identified as a basic need and included in the Minimum Needs Programme which was a part of the fifth five-year plan. One of the objectives of the program was to achieve total sanitation by the year 2000 which was a very long-term objective. Though the government spent Rs 170 crores between 1974 -

79 the sanitation coverage was just 2 per cent in rural areas and 20 per cent in urban areas (Dutta, India@70: 1974 Saw Adoption Of A Programme TO Provide Sanitation For All In 30 Years, 2017).

Central Rural Sanitation Programme

After the UN declared the period 1981-90 as the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade, India also adopted its objectives and launched a full-fledged Central Rural Sanitation Programme (CRSP) in 1986.

CRSP aimed at improving the quality of life of the rural masses by construction of sanitary latrines and thereby avoiding manual scavenging. The programme provided financial assistance through subsidies to the SC/ST and BPL families to construct toilets for the households, funds were also provided to construct public toilets, toilets in schools and anganwadis. Rural sanitation increased to 9.7 per cent by 1991. During 1986-1997, over 43 lakh toilets were constructed by spending 757 crores (Dutta, India@70: 1981's Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Programme Altered India's Sanitation Scene, 2017).

Though numerous toilets were constructed under CRSP, it was identified that many of them were not used efficiently because of various reasons. Some of them were poorly maintained while the others had poor waste management systems that made them dysfunctional. Lack of education and motivation for behavioural change to avoid open defecation was also an important reason for the failure of CRSP.

Total Sanitation Campaign (TSC)

To overcome the poor performance of CRSP, the Government of India restructured the program and launched the new programme TSC in 1999. The objective of this program was to achieve 100 per cent access to toilets in rural areas by 2012 and bring about an improvement in the general quality of life among the people. Appropriate solid and liquid waste management and awareness creation, health education and motivation were also a part of this campaign. Upto 15 per cent of the budget allotted was allowed to be used for IEC. The scheme also provided cash prizes to those villages which achieved the target of hundred percent sanitation (TSC Guidelines, 2010).

Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan (NBA)

In 2012, TSC was restructured yet again and relaunched itself as Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan. The objective of the programme was to achieve total sanitation by 2022, appropriate solid waste management and creating health awareness and motivation (Guidelines Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan, 2012).

Swachh Bharat Mission- Gramin

On 2nd October 2014 the Government of India launched Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) under the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation with an objective to improve the sanitation within the country and make the country Open Defecation Free (ODF) by 2nd October 2019 which also marks 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.

Information and Education Campaigns

Unlike many other schemes, the sanitation scheme is one such where the target audience are given benefit when they refrain from their normal OD practice and avail the benefit on construction of latrines in their households. IEC plays a dual role in this scenario. The first one is to establish a new behaviour among the target group and the second one is to inform them about the facilities provided by the government.

IEC was given due importance from the time TSC was launched. 15 per cent of the total funds allocated was reserved for the purpose. The allotted funds were used mostly for interpersonal communication at the block and gram panchayat levels. People were appointed and trained as motivators for the purpose. Television, radio and newspapers also played their role in creating awareness through PSA.

NBA also continued to allot 15 per cent funds to IEC, along with the existing practices, PSA were popularised with celebrity endorsers. These PSA aimed to educate the target audience using two different appeals, rational appeal to educate about issues of OD and shame appeal aiming at the construction of latrines. Health, hygiene and dignity of women were the themes for these PSA.

Once the SBM was launched, PSA for it was popularised like never before. With the Prime Minister himself endorsing the scheme, the idea of hygiene and cleanliness were popularised. The PSA that came later used shame appeal. It also questioned the social acceptability of those who practiced OD.

Data Discussion

Several targets were set to attain the goal of ODF by the government before it was finally achieved in 2019. Sikkim was the first state to declare itself as Open Defecation Free in 2008. The achievement was a combined effort of several campaigns, culture and practice among the people, incentives and regulations of the state (Dutta, Sikkim: India's First ODF State Even Before Swachh Bharat Was Launched, 2017).

Kerala was the state to have toilets in 94.4 per cent households in 2014 (SBM Dashboard, 2021), much higher than any other state in the country, but they could not declare themselves as an ODF state till 2016, the third in the country after Sikkim and Himachal Pradesh. This shows that mere infrastructural advancement is not sufficient to achieve success in implementation of a public policy.

The guidelines of TSC and NBA campaign had allotted 15 per cent of the funds to IEC activities but the audit reports stated that the funds allocated for the purpose of IEC under these schemes have always been underutilised.

Table 1 Funds allotted for the sanitation programme and funds spent on IEC for TSC and NBA

| Year | Amount available for the sanitation programme (Rupees in crores) ¹ | Amount spent on IEC (Rupees in lakhs) ² | Percentage of funds used for IEC |
|---------|---|--|----------------------------------|
| 2010-11 | 1580 | 12012.94 | 7.6 |
| 2011-12 | 1500 | 11760.27 | 7.8 |

| | | | |
|---------|------|----------|------|
| 2012-13 | 2500 | 15881.44 | 6.4 |
| 2013-14 | 2300 | 26609.18 | 11.6 |

Source:

1. Kapur, A., & Iyer, S. (2015, February). *Briefs and Reports*. Retrieved from cprindia.org: <https://cprindia.org/research/reports/budget-brief-2015-16-swachh-bharat-mission>
2. *Performance Audit Report*. (2015). Retrieved April 2021, from Comptroller and Auditor General of India: https://www.ircwash.org/sites/default/files/cag_audit_india_total_sanitation_campaign.pdf)

Table 1 shows that, though 15 per cent of the funds is allotted for IEC, the target was never met. It was only in the FY 2013-14, the IEC expenses were 11.6 per cent of the total funds allotted, otherwise the amount spent was consistently below 8 per cent of the total funds allotted for sanitation programme.

As per the reports by the National Planning Commission, only 21 per cent of the selected households were satisfied by the effectiveness of IEC activities of TSC. As reported in the evaluation study, at least one person in 73 households out of every 100 households still practiced OD. 66 of them practiced due to unavailability of toilets, one due to shortage and six practiced OD in spite of having toilets (Programme Evaluation Studies, 2013).

According to a survey conducted by NSSO, 44 per cent of the people who practiced OD said it was their personal choice, while not having infrastructure and malfunctioning of the existing latrines remained other reasons. At the same time, it is also important to note that only 48 per cent of the amount allotted to IEC has been spent for the purpose (Kapur & Iyer, Briefs and Reports, 2015).

The number of households with toilets as per the census 2011 is different from the numbers given by the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation (Performance Audit Report, 2015). When the ministry accepts the difference of over 300 lakh toilets, it validates the fact that just framing of policies and allocation of funds will not result in the successful implementation of the policy to achieve desired result.

After the implementation of Swachh Bharat Abhiyan in October 2014, which was publicized on a large scale on the day of its inauguration with Prime Minister himself being the face of it. The initial expenses of advertising for the campaign were around 40 crores spent in a period of one month, which took a huge share of 23.5 per cent of the funds allocated to the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting for the purpose of advertising (Choudhary, 2014).

After the implementation of SBM, the allocation of budget towards sanitation from the funds available with the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation consistently increased. However, the percentage of funds allocated for IEC decreased in the SBM to 8 per cent from 15 per cent allocated by its predecessor. Just like its predecessor, the funds remained underutilised even here.

Table 2 Funds allotted for the sanitation programme and funds spent on IEC for SBM

| Year | Amount available for the sanitation programme (Rupees in crores) | Amount spent on IEC (Rupees in crores) | Percentage of funds used for IEC |
|---------|--|--|----------------------------------|
| 2014-15 | 2850 | 157 | 5.5 |
| 2015-16 | 6525 | 147 | 2.3 |
| 2016-17 | 10500 | 124 | 1.2 |
| 2017-18 | 16948 | 229* | 1.4* |

(*amount spent in first three quarters)

Source: Kapur, A., & Deshpande, D. (2018). *Briefs and Reports*. Retrieved from cprindia.org: <https://cprindia.org/research/reports/budget-brief-2018-19swachh-bharat-mission-gramin-sbm-g>

From the Table 2, it can be understood that the amount spent on IEC during SBM was also less than the amount allotted for the purpose. It was as low as 1.2 per cent in FY 2016-17, and the highest was 5.5 per cent in the FY 2014-15. Another important point to be noted here is that the fall in percentage is because of the increase in the total amount allotted for the programme.

In FY 2018-19, 4 per cent of funds allotted was used for IEC purpose. Out of the total expenditure on IEC, Haryana and Sikkim holds a major share. It is important to note the fact that these are the states that had already been declared as ODF.

To be called as an ODF village, the villages have to undergo a two-step verification process. But as on 2nd October 2019, 97 per cent of the villages had completed the first level verification, but the second level verification was conducted only in 25 per cent of the villages. A survey was conducted by National Annual Rural Sanitation Survey (NARSS) between November 2018 and February 2019 in 26 states and union territories that were declared ODF. In at least 6 per cent of the surveyed villages there were traces of OD in the spaces previously used for the purpose, open grounds and alongside roads. (Kapur & Malhotra, Budgets and Reports, 2020)

Conclusion

It took a huge budget spent over two decades for the villages in the country to achieve ODF status. Mere infrastructural development is not sufficient to achieve the target. If it is possible to create appropriate awareness among the target audience, then it is possible to achieve the target even with minimum infrastructure. Sikkim can be considered as an example for it. The state was declared ODF in 2008 itself but the dashboard of SBM shows that only 88.71 per cent households had toilets in 2014. It is the behaviour of the people who use public toilets that makes the change, while there are evidences where people practice OD inspite of having toilets in their households. In this regard, we can conclude that creating awareness is as important as creating the infrastructure. IEC needs to continue for a considerably longer period of time till the existing practice of OD becomes a taboo and the modified behaviour is irreversible.

Suggestions

Government should allot a prominent share of fund towards IEC. The funds available for IEC must be completely utilised for the purpose by the concerned authorities. It must be a combination of different promotional techniques. An action plan has to be prepared well in advance for the funds allotted for the purpose. All promotional techniques should be locally designed to suit the regional requirements. Equal importance should be given to non-personal and personal communication.

Non personal communication like PSA should use different appeals to grab the attention of different target groups. Market segmentation is essential based on the values and attitudes of the target audience and PSA needs to be created to suit their requirements.

For IEC through personal communication appropriate training is essential, not just to promote a policy but also to bring a sustained behavioural change. The students pursuing higher education should be educated to become the change agents. The IEC must continue for a long time, till it is found essential, even after the policy is completely implemented and suitable infrastructure is provided.

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