

Wash environment at school: A vision of clean India

Deivam M

Ph.D Scholar, Dept. of Education, Gandhigram Rural Institute, Deemed University, Gandhigram, Dindigul district, Tamil Nadu, India

Abstract

“Educating girls is my priority. I have noticed that girls drop out of schools by the time they reach class 3rd or 4th just because schools don't have separate toilets for them. They don't feel comfortable. There should be toilets for boys and girls in all schools. We should concentrate on girl students not quitting schools.”

-Shri Narendra Modi, Prime Minister, Teachers' Day, September 5, 2014

UN has recognised “The Right to Safe and Clean Drinking Water and Sanitation as a Human Right”. India voted in favour of this. No country never come forward without developing human resource, so human resources must be used in a proper way. Every individual is wealth of this country, they may contribute to develop our nation. The provision of safe water, sanitation and hygiene (WaSH) in schools has been established to improve better health, boost educational achievement among students, and promote gender equity which has a positive impact on the society. Water and toilet facilities are essential in schools if both things are good in school, that is WaSH enabled campus. Healthy student only achieve high scores in exams compare with unhealthy students. Earlier dropout rate increased especially among girl students due to lack of toilet facilities at school. Now this problem is rectified with the cooperation of state and central government, toilet facilities increase at school because central government honorable Prime Minister Narandra Modi launched Swachh Bharat Mission, main goal of this program in that every house hold must built toilet within 2019. In this paper discussed the author WaSh environment at School, Importance of water supply, sanitation and health, Checklist for Minimum Standards for School, and Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen).

Keywords: Water, Sanitation, Health, School

Introduction

The challenges of water supply, sanitation, and hygiene (WaSH) practices in communities of developing countries are becoming alarming due to incessant reported cases of water related illnesses, which continues to be one of the major health challenges in many communities of these nations. According to a report by UNICEF and WHO, inadequate water, sanitation, and hygiene issues account for a large part of the burden of illness and death in developing countries. With incessant reported cases of water related diseases in the hospitals and primary health care centers, which is a clear indication of drinking water contamination, poor sanitation, and abysmal hygiene practices, it was imperative to find an alternative on how the communities could be reached to proffer solution to the looming danger on public health. The teacher-student-parent-community approach on WaSH practices has been stressed to be a route by which the message of good and acceptable hygiene and sustainable practices can be entrenched. This is because; schools occupy the pride of place in the total community sanitation campaign. It has also been established that safe WaSH in schools can improve health, boost education accomplishment, promote gender fairness and have a constructive influence on communities. Schools are recognized to be the principal place of education for students who have a central place in the community. School sanitation and hygiene education have been given prominence and the effective implementation of plans on physical infrastructure, hygiene education and monitoring at school will result in a change in schools children's behavior that will afterward impact on the community. Total Sanitation Campaign identifies the position of children in comprehending

and popularizing novel ideas which could be useful to the community (David O. Olukanni, Joel J. Ducoste, Tayo O. George, 2014).

Schools, after the family, have a vital role to play for the cognitive development of children. School is a socializing institution and stimulates learning environment and positive changes. They are equally important places to address the health issues of children provided that necessary infrastructure is available. Improved health and quality learning are not possible in schools as long as basic hygiene is lacking or sanitary facilities and water supply are missing. And is children do not have the basic knowledge, attitude and habit of good hygiene or cannot practice them. Education is neither complete nor effective even worse, safe school environment may damage their health especially girl children, who are more vulnerability to malnutrition in most of the cases leading to low environment and high dropout incidence.

Importance of water supply, sanitation and Health

The children of today will be the adults of tomorrow. By focusing on children today, by giving those tools and knowledge to change behaviour, future generations can be stronger and healthier. Schools being the ideal setting for promoting learning and the health of children can serve as a community model for health and environmental care. Every child has a right to grow in a healthy & clean environment. School sanitation & health education stimulates a change in health behaviour and attitude towards adoption of good habit during childhood. What children learn is likely to be applied within their families and will further lead to community development. The provision of safe water & sanitation

facilities as well as good hygiene education will improve the health of children and may result in lower dropout rate, especially among girl children. For many children, the school may be their first encounter with working toilets, running water, well ventilated classrooms and clean surroundings. This can have a powerful impact on their vision of what is possible in their world and even in their own communities. The primary and upper primary education system in India is one of the largest in the world with over six lakh primary and upper primary schools, over 30 lakh teachers and students strength exceeding 100 million children (1991-1992). This huge network of schools offer a readymade infrastructure to be mobilized and used as a resource to influence the parents and hence the community. The school teacher is held in high esteem by the students and is respected not only within the school but in the community as well. The student can develop hygienic habits by emulating the teacher as a model. Also, the school teacher can influence parents and community members on issues related to sanitation. The school can also serve as a demonstration center for the adoption of the water & sanitation package by the households and by the community at large.

A WASH-Friendly School is a school that ...

- It is clean and safe
- It has adequate, well maintained toilets or latrines for girls and boys and for teachers, with water, paper, or other material for anal cleansing
- It has a place to wash hands with soap/ash and running water after using the toilets
- It has enough treated, safely stored drinking water for the school community

A WASH-Friendly School is a school where...

- The teachers give lessons on good hygiene practices in the classroom
- Students participate actively in making and keeping their school WASH-friendly
- Teachers, students, parents, and the whole community work together to promote good hygiene by ensuring that there are facilities and conditions for practicing improved hygiene in school and at home
- More girls will remain in school because they have separate, private, and clean sanitation facilities and don't have to leave school when menstruation begins

Checklist for Minimum Standards for School Sanitation and Hygiene Facilities

- Separate latrines for boys and girls
- "Child-friendly" facilities
- Latrines for male and female teachers
- 1 latrine per 25 girls and 1 for female staff
- 1 latrine + 1 urinal per 50 boys and 1 for male staff
- Hand washing stations next to latrines

Latrines should have

- Walls and roof
- Ventilation
- Doors that lock from the inside, not the outside
- Washable slabs
- Anal cleansing material (paper, leaves, water)
- Wastebasket for used wiping material

- A place to wash hands after use
- Cleaning items such as broom, scrub brush, etc.

Hand washing stations should have (at least)

- Basin
- Source of running water for rinsing (tap, jug)
- Soap, ash, clean sand, or mud
- Soak pit to avoid standing water

See: Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Standards for Schools in Low-cost Settings (WHO, UNICEF 2009)

Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen)

Department of Drinking Water Supply (DDWS) was created in the Ministry of Rural Development in 1999, which was subsequently renamed as the Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation in 2010. Keeping in view the significance of rural water supply and Sanitation, the Government of India created and noticed the Ministry of Drinking water and Sanitation as a separate Ministry on 13th July, 2011. The Ministry of Drinking water and Sanitation is the nodal Ministry for the overall policy, planning, funding and coordination of the flagship programmes of the Government for rural drinking water viz. the National Rural Drinking Water Programme and for Sanitation, the Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen) SBM (G) in the country. There are three programme divisions namely Water, Water Quality and Sanitation to carry out the functions of the ministry. The ministry thus have two very clear cut works, the one which relates to the rural water supply & the other is for Sanitation. On the Sanitation side the issue are addressed through the SBM (G) and on the water side through NRDWP. The Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen) has been launched on 2nd October, 2014, which aims at attaining a 100% open Defecation Free India by 2019.

Construction of Toilets with separate girls' toilets

Under SSA, the requirement of school infrastructure facilities including toilets and drinking water are worked out by the state based on need at school/village/block and district level, and reflected in their Annual Work Plans & Budgets. All new schools sanctioned under SSA are composite schools with facilities for girls and boys toilets. In existing rural schools, facilities for toilets & drinking water are provided in convergence with the schemes of the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation.

The provision of toilets is one of the important provisions prescribed in the Schedule to RTE Act to be provided in all schools. Total of 9.18 lakh toilets have been sanctioned under SSA so far, of which 4.49 lakh girl's toilets are. Under SSA annual maintenance grant @` 5000 per school for schools with three classrooms and Rs. 10000 with schools more than three classrooms, for the maintenance and repair of exiting school infrastructure including toilets, is provided annually. In addition to this school grant is also provided @ 5000 per primary school per year and @7000 per upper primary school per year. Several States are utilizing these funds for maintenance and cleaning of toilets.

As per U DISE 2013-14 a total of 2.44 lakhs schools still do not have toilet facilities. The Prime Minister in his Independence Day speech on 15th August, 2014 gave a call for education of girls and made a commitment to the Nation that every school will have toilet within one year with a

separate girls' toilet, so that girls are not compelled to leave the schools mid-way. The Prime Minister also gave a call to the Parliamentarians to use their MPLAD fund for construction of toilets. He also called upon the corporate sector to use their corporate social responsibility (CSR) funds this National endeavour.

School toilets

An achievement made in construction of school toilet unit under SBM (Gramin) during last three years is as under:

Table 1

| Component | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 |
|-------------------|---------|-----------|-----------|
| Household toilets | 8798864 | 45,59,162 | 49,76,294 |
| School toilets | 122471 | 76,396 | 37,696 |

Acknowledge: Ministry of water and sanitation, 2015

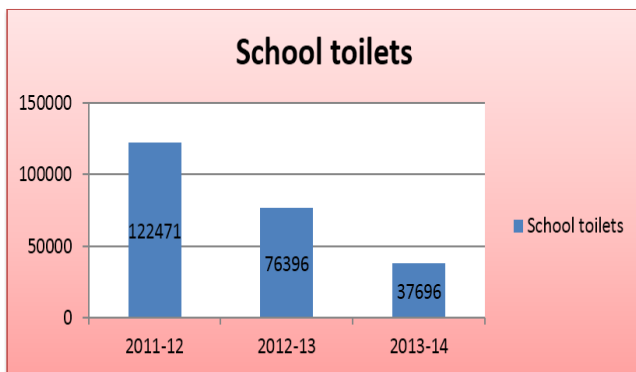


Fig 1

- The data reveal that 122471 school toilets were constructed across the country during the year 2011-2012.
- The data reveal that 76396 school toilets were constructed across the country during the year 2012-2013.

- The data reveal that 37696 school toilets were constructed across the country during the year 2013-2014.

Status of Girls Toilets in Schools

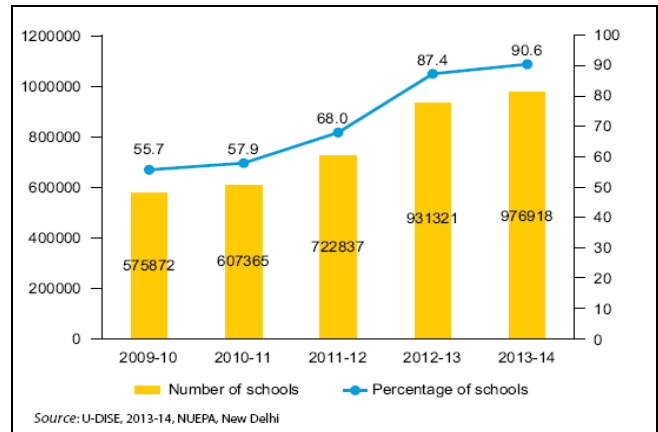


Fig 2: Status of Boys Toilet in Schools

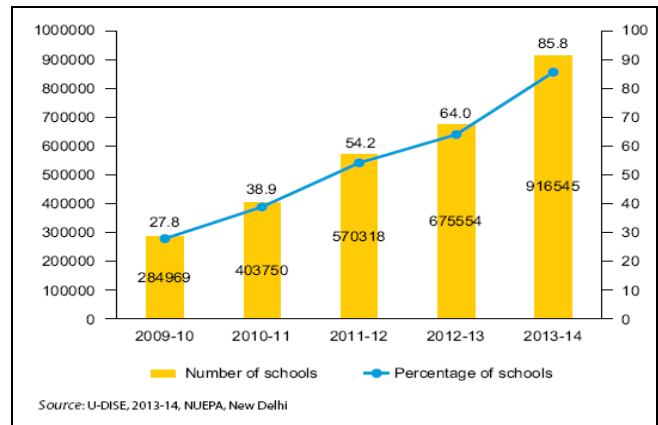


Fig 3: State-wise Functionality of Sanitation Facilities in Schools in India

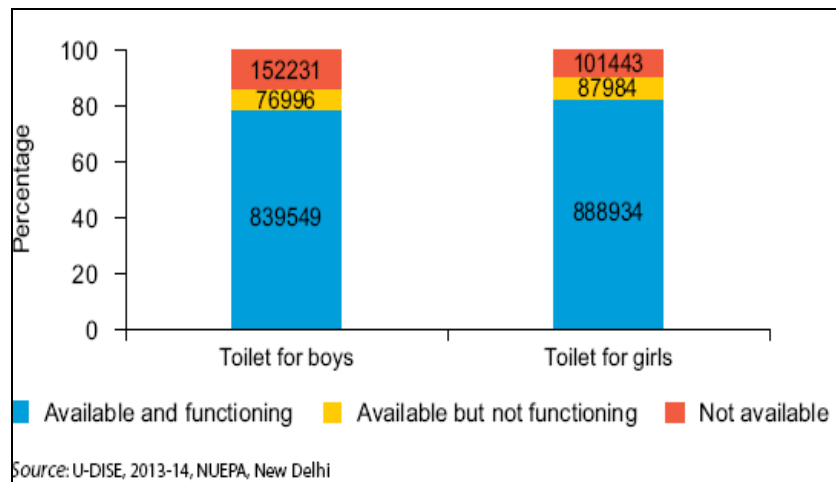


Fig 4

The data reveals that, 839549 boys toilets available and functioning and 888934 girls toilets available and functioning. The data reveals that, 76996 boy toilets available but not functioning and 87984 girls toilets available but not functioning.

The data reveals that, 152231 toilets not available for boys and 101443 toilets not available for girls.

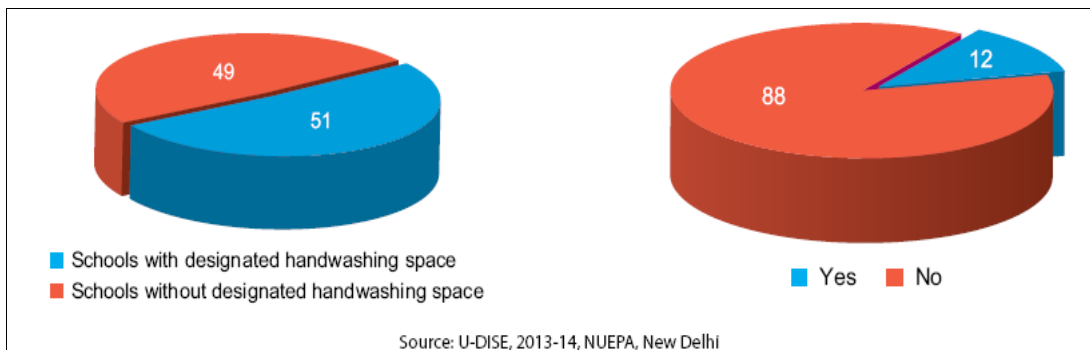


Fig 4: Percentage of Schools with a Designated Hand washing space

Fig 5: Percentage of Schools with Soap for Hand washing

Findings of an assessment conducted in 540 schools in nine states in India on Mid-Day Meal (MDM) Programme reveal that:

- Only (51%) of the schools have a designated hand washing space and in 44 per cent of the schools observed, the hand washing space was being used.
- Only close to one in ten (12%) of schools had soap/detergent available at the hand washing space.
- Nearly half (49%) of the students washed their hands using

only water. Only two out of five (42%) students use soap/detergent. (Source: Hygiene Practices in Schools during mid-day meals, UNICEF-India Study 2009).

- Survey conducted in 392 schools in seven states in India reveal that nearly one third (32%) of the children wash hands with soap before eating. (Source: PAHELI Survey by Pratham under United Joint Programme on Convergence (UNJPC), 2012).

Table 2: Tamil Nadu state – Schools without Girls and Boys and Dysfunctional of Toilets

| State Name | Total Schools | School without Girl’s Toilet(s) | Schools without boys Toilet(s) | School without Dysfunctional Girl’s Toilet(s) | Schools with Dysfunctional Boy’s Toilet(s) |
|------------|---------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| Tamil Nadu | 37002 | 1442 | 4278 | 958 | 1159 |

That data reveal that, 1442 schools without Girl’s Toilet(s), 4278 without boys toilet(s), 958 schools without dysfunctional girls toilets and 1159 schools with dysfunctional Boy’s toilet(s).

Suggestions

- Give training to teachers regarding WaSH program
- Appoint one specially trained teacher (WaSH) at each school
- Health checkup should arrange periodically
- Health and Hygiene education should be included in School and B.Ed. Curriculum
- Daily one message or famous quotes regarding WaSH should be read in morning assembly
- Conduct competition regarding water, sanitation and hygiene events like quiz, painting, debates, games, songs, slogan writing.
- Invite experts and arrange some demonstration
- Invite experts and give special lecture regarding health and sanitation
- Govt. can identify swachh schools and provide award in order to achieve the goals of swachh bharat.

Conclusion

School is miniature society where students can spend most of the time school and home. Teachers and parents are role model of children but teacher impact is most what teacher do or behave, it will be imitated by students at their home as should be. Teachers have to inculcate good health and hygiene activities among students. Young children minds are always ready to learn and practice at their home. From childhood

(Kindergarten to primary) onwards let them motivate children to practice in day to day activities. The Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen) helpful to construct toilets in schools, government also taking tremendous effort to achieve target of every house hold should built toilet within 2019. The Swachh Bharat Mission not only focuses society, it gives main importance to establish and increase toilet facilities at schools. Earlier don’t have adequate toilet facilities at schools so students have to use open toilets. Disease also spread through many ways and affect the students health. But present days gradually improve water and sanitation facilities at schools. Nowadays dropout rate also very less because toilets facilities improved in schools (separate toilet facilities both men and women); All these activities will create many Innovative cycle of opportunities to each the peak of Human excellence and global sustainable development.

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