

Environmental Sanitation and Sanitary Habits Among the Semi-nomadic Lohar Gadiyas of Malthon Town of Sagar District, Madhya Pradesh

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KEY WORDS Environmental Sanitation. Lohar Gadiya. Madhya Pradesh. Sanitary Habits.

ABSTRACT The present paper reports, the environmental sanitation and sanitary habits among the semi-nomadic Lohar Gadiyas of Malthon town of Sagar District, Madhya Pradesh. The results of the study indicates that environmental sanitation and sanitary habits are not satisfactory and unhygiene among them, due to their unawareness about the scientific methods of environmental sanitation and sanitary habits.

INTRODUCTION

A number of physical, psychological and social aspects of human life come under the domain of environmental sanitation and sanitary habits. An attempt has been made in this paper to study these aspects of the Lohar Gadiyas.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The present study is conducted in Malthon town of Sagar District, Madhya Pradesh. The Lohar-Gadiyas are sedentized in nature, i.e., they are semi-nomadic and are in a phase of transition, between settlement and nomadism. They stay in Malthon town in a camp by making their tent like houses on wooden pillars by polythene roof from first week of July to second-third week of November and than from there, they migrate to different parts of Madhya Pradesh on their bullock carts and return to Malthon, on the same time next year. Their main occupation is blacksmith work, i.e., they prepared the iron articles by primitive techniques therefore they are pronounced by the name of Lohar-Gadiya in Bundelkhand region of Madhya Pradesh.

The entire population of 677 individuals distributed in 127 houses were covered in the study. The present study is based on interview of 127

households and conducted by random sampling and semi-participant method using pre-tested schedule. In interview the discussion is made in large to get indepth information.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The result of the present study are presented in the table 1. It is observed that all the respondents utilized the water available from any source viz., river, well, hand pump, tap, pond for washing the mouth, body, clothes, utensils, for

Table 1: Information regarding environmental sanitation and sanitary habits among Lohar Gadiyas

S. No.	Characteristics	Absolute Number	Per cent
<i>1. Source of Water</i>			
(a)	Tap	-	-
(b)	Well	-	-
(c)	Pond	-	-
(d)	River	-	-
(e)	Handpump	-	-
(f)	Tap/river/well/handpump/pond as per availability of water	127	100.00
<i>2. Methods used for purification of available water</i>			
(a)	Yes	-	-
(b)	No	127	100.00
<i>3. Type of utensil in which water stored</i>			
(a)	Pottery pots	98	77.16
(b)	Steel pots	21	16.54
(c)	Both steel and pottery pots	8	6.30
(d)	Plastic pots	-	-
<i>4. Type of houses</i>			
(a)	Tent like house made on wooden pillars by polythene roof	121	95.27
(b)	Bricked sidewalls house and roof of kuppar's or cemented lantern	7	4.73
<i>5. Number of rooms in house (including kitchen)</i>			
(a)	One room	121	95.27
(b)	Two room	2	1.59
(c)	Three room	-	-
(d)	Four room	4	3.15

Table 1: Contd.....

S. No.	Characteristics	Absolute Number	Per cent
6.	Frequency of cleaning house		
(a)	Daily once	-	-
(b)	Twice a day	127	100.00
(c)	More than three times a day	-	-
7.	Timing of cleaning the houses		
(a)	Morning	-	-
(b)	Afternoon	-	-
(c)	Evening	-	-
(d)	Morning and evening both	127	100.00
8.	Domestic animals are kept		
(a)	Inside the house	-	-
(b)	Outside the house in open	127	100.00
(c)	Outside the house in shelter	-	-
9.	Garbage of domestic animals disposed on		
(a)	On the backside of house	127	100.00
(b)	Near by their house	-	-
(c)	On the other side of National Highway number twenty six	-	-
(d)	In government dustbin	-	-
10.	Garbage of household items disposed on		
(a)	On the backside of house	-	-
(b)	Near by their houses	-	-
(c)	On the other side of National highway number twenty six	127	100.00
(d)	In governments dustbin	-	-
11.	Place of defecation		
(a)	Open field	127	100.00
(b)	Closed latrine	-	-

bathing and ablution and for drinking too. All the respondents are unaware about the use of any method for purification of water because they think water available from above mentioned sources are pure and doesn't need any further purification. About 77.16 respondents utilized the pottery pots for the storage of water for daily

use. All the Lohar Gadiyas have no system for the disposal of sullage water in their houses because it is observed that they wash their utensils, hand and feet outside their houses on a piece of stone. The Lohar Gadiya (95.27%) lives in tent like houses made on wooden pillars by polythene roof having only one room including kitchen. It is observed that all the respondents clean their houses twice a day in morning and evening. All the Lohar Gadiyas kept their bulls outside the houses on the road of their camp but none of them (100.00%) clean the garbage created by animals on the road because they think road is common for all and therefore it's cleaning should be done by all the members of camp. All the respondents dispose the garbage of their house on other side of national highway number twenty six in Malton town Kurra ghar. All the Lohar Gadiyas went for defecation purposes in a open field.

It may be concluded that sanitation for inhabitants is not satisfactory. Simultaneously, practice related to sanitation and sanitary habits are not very hygienic due to unawareness. The sanitation within the house observed clean and good from the hygienic point of view but poor around the residence. These sanitary habits and environmental sanitation had created many health problems among Lohar Gadiyas. It is suggested that local health authorities or non-governmental organizations should frame some programmes to uplift the awareness related to environmental sanitation and sanitary habits through health education etc. among them.