

**Sanitation and Its Impact on Health**

**K. Shanthamma**

Assistant Prof. of Sociology, Govt. First Grade College, Malur, Kolar District, Karnataka

**Introduction**

Sanitation refers to public health conditions related to clean drinking water and adequate treatment and disposal of human excreta and sewage. Preventing human contact with feces is part of sanitation, as is hand washing with soap. Sanitation systems aim to protect human health by providing a clean environment that will stop the transmission of disease, especially through the fecal-oral route. For example, diarrhea, a main cause of malnutrition and stunted growth in children, can be reduced through sanitation. There are many other diseases which are easily transmitted in communities that have low levels of sanitation, such as ascariasis (a type of intestinal worm infection or helminthiasis), cholera, hepatitis, polio, schistosomiasis, trachoma, to name just a few.

A range of sanitation technologies and approaches exists. Some examples are community-led total sanitation, container-based sanitation, ecological sanitation, emergency sanitation, environmental sanitation, onsite sanitation and sustainable sanitation. A sanitation system includes the capture, storage, transport, treatment and disposal or reuse of human excreta and wastewater. Re-use activities within the sanitation system may focus on the nutrients, water, energy or organic matter contained in excreta and wastewater. This is referred to as the "sanitation value chain" or "sanitation economy."

**Definition**

The World Health Organization defines the term "sanitation" as referring to the provision of facilities and services for the safe disposal of human urine and feces. The word 'sanitation' also refers to the maintenance of hygienic conditions, through services such as garbage collection and wastewater disposal." Sanitation includes all four of these engineering infrastructure items (even though often only the first one is strongly associated with the term "sanitation"): Excreta management systems, wastewater management systems (included here are wastewater treatment plants), solid waste management systems, drainage systems for rainwater, also called storm water drainage.

There are some variations on the use of the term "sanitation" between countries. For example, hygiene promotion is seen by some as an integral part of sanitation. For this reason, the Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council defines sanitation as "The collection, transport, treatment and disposal or reuse of human excreta, domestic wastewater and solid waste, and associated hygiene promotion." Despite the fact that sanitation includes wastewater treatment, the two terms are often used side by side as "sanitation and wastewater management".

**Types of Sanitation**

- Basic Sanitation
- Container-based Sanitation
- Community-led total Sanitation
- Dry Sanitation
- Ecological Sanitation
- Emergency Sanitation
- Improved and unimproved Sanitation
- Lack of Sanitation
- Onsite Sanitation
- Safely managed Sanitation
- Sustainable Sanitation
- Environmental Sanitation

## **Health**

Health is the level of functional and metabolic efficiency of a living organism. The World Health Organization (WHO) defined human health in its broader sense in its 1948 constitution as "a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. Alex Jadad "health" has been conceptualized as the ability to adapt and self manage when individuals and communities face physical, mental or social challenges.

## **Definition**

The definition of health has evolved over time. In keeping with the **biomedical** perspective, early definitions of health focused on the theme of the body's ability to function health was seen as a state of normal function that could be disrupted from time to time by disease. An example of such a definition of health is "a state characterized by anatomic, physiologic, and psychological integrity; ability to perform personally valued family, work, and community roles; ability to deal with physical, biological, psychological, and social stress". Then, in 1948, in a radical departure from previous definitions, the World Health Organization (WHO) proposed a definition that aimed higher: linking health to well-being, in terms of "physical, mental, and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease and infirmity.

The WHO played a leading role when it fostered the development of the health promotion movement in the 1980s. This brought in a new conception of health, not as a state, but in dynamic terms of resiliency, in other words, as "a resource for living". 1984 WHO revised the definition of health defined it as "the extent to which an individual or group is able to realize aspirations and satisfy needs and to change or cope with the environment. Health is a resource for everyday life, not the objective of living; it is a positive concept, emphasizing social and personal resources, as well as physical capacities". Thus, health referred to the ability to maintain homeostasis and recover from insults. Mental, intellectual, emotional, and social health referred to a person's ability to handle stress, to acquire skills, to maintain relationships, all of which form resources for resiliency and independent living.

## **Determinants**

Generally, the context in which an individual lives is of great importance for both his health status and quality of their life. It is increasingly recognized that health is maintained and improved not only through the advancement and application of health science, but also through the efforts and intelligent lifestyle choices of the individual and society. According to the World Health

Organization, the main determinants of health include the social and economic environment, the physical environment, and the person's individual characteristics and behaviors.

More specifically, key factors that have been found to influence whether people are healthy or unhealthy include the following:

- Income and social status
- Healthy Child Development
- Social support networks
- Biology and genetics
- Education and literacy
- Health care services
- Gender and Culture
- Social environments
- Social environments
- Personal health practices and coping skills
- Physical environments

## **Potential Issues**

There are many types of health issues common with many people across the globe. Disease is one of the most common. According to Global Issues organization, approximately 36 million people die each year from non-communicable (not contagious) disease including cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes and chronic lung disease etc. As regards communicable diseases, both viral and bacterial, AIDS/HIV, tuberculosis, and malaria are the most common also causing millions of deaths every year (2014).

Another health issue that causes death or contributes to other health problems is malnutrition majorly among children. One of the groups malnutrition affects most is young children. Approximately 7.5 million children under the age of 5 die from malnutrition, and it is usually brought on by not having the money to find or make food. Bodily injuries are also a common health issue worldwide. These injuries, including broken bones, fractures, and burns can reduce a person's quality of life or can cause fatalities including infections that resulted from the injury or the severity injury in general.

## **Mental Health**

The World Health Organization describes mental health as "a state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community". Mental Health is not just the absence of mental illness. Mental illness is described as 'the spectrum of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral conditions that interfere with social and emotional well-being and the lives and productivity of people. Having a mental illness can seriously impair, temporarily or permanently, the mental functioning of a person. Other terms include 'mental health problem', 'illness', 'disorder', 'dysfunction'

Many factors contribute to mental health problems, including:

- Biological factors, such as genes or brain chemistry
- Life experiences, such as trauma or abuse
- Family history of mental health problems

## **Maintaining Health**

Maintaining health is an ongoing process, shaped by both the evolution of health care knowledge and practices as well as personal strategies and organized interventions for staying healthy.

## **Exercises**

Physical exercise enhances or maintains physical fitness and overall health and wellness. It strengthens muscles and improves the cardiovascular system. According to the National Institute of Health (NIH) there are four types of exercise; Endurance, Strength, Flexibility, and Balance. Endurance exercises are those that will elevate your heart including; walking, jogging, running, hiking etc.

## **Sleep**

Sleep is an essential component to maintaining health. In children, sleep is also vital for growth and development. Ongoing sleep deprivation has been linked to an increased risk for some chronic health problems. In addition, sleep deprivation has been shown to correlate with both increased susceptibility to illness and slower recovery times from illness. In one study, people with chronic insufficient sleep, set as six hours of sleep a night or less, were found to be four times more likely to catch a cold compared to those who reported sleeping for seven hours or more a night. Due to the role of sleep in regulating metabolism, insufficient sleep may also play a role in weight gain or, conversely, in impeding weight loss. Additionally, in 2007, the International Agency for Research on Cancer, which is the cancer research agency for the World Health Organization, declared that "shift work that involves circadian disruption is probably carcinogenic to humans," speaking to the dangers of

long-term night time work due to its intrusion on sleep. In 2015, the National Sleep Foundation released updated recommendations for sleep duration requirements based on age and concluded "Individuals who habitually sleep outside the normal range may be exhibiting signs or symptoms of serious health problems or, if done volitionally, may be compromising their health and well-being."

### **Conclusion**

Sanitation is a complex topic, with links to health and to social and economic development. It affects many but is championed by few. From our analysis of the situation, we believe that three major strategies could achieve success in sanitation like Political leadership. The shift from centralized supply-led infrastructure provision to decentralized, full involvement of the health sector in sanitation. Health is wealth. The maintenance and promotion of health can be achieved to different combination of physical, mental and social well-being called as health triangle. Health is not just a state, but also a resource for everyday life, not the objective of living. Health is a positive concept emphasizing social and personal resources as well as physical capacities. Life styles, intake food, exercises, habits, water, sanitation, weather, etc. Influence on good health condition of the people.

### **References**

1. "Sanitation | Definition of sanitation in English by Oxford Dictionaries". Oxford Dictionaries | English. Retrieved 2017-11-17.
2. "Sanitation | JMP". *Washdata.org*. Retrieved 2017-11-17.
3. Sanitation". Health topics. World Health Organization.
4. Jump up World Health Organization. (2006). Constitution of the World Health Organization – Basic Documents, Forty-fifth edition, Supplement, October 2006.
5. **Jump up** Jadad AR, O'Grady L: *How should health be defined? (2008). "How should health be defined?". BMJ (Clinical research ed.)*
6. **Jump up** Callahan D. (1973). "The WHO definition of 'health'". *The Hastings Center Studies*. **1** (3): 77–87. doi:10.2307/3527467. JSTOR 3527467.
7. "A global conversation on defining health: Alex Jadad and Laura O'Grady – The BMJ". *blogs.bmj.com*. Retrieved 2018-01-20.