

Knowledge, Attitude and Practices of Hygiene Among the Kanwar Tribe of Chhattisgarh, India

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Abstract

Hygiene refers to conditions and practices that help to maintain health and prevent the spread of diseases (WHO). The main purpose of the present work is to study the general awareness of self and surrounding hygiene among the Kanwar tribe of Chhattisgarh. Kanwar is one of the largest tribal groups of Chhattisgarh, residing mainly in Raigarh, Surguja, Korba, Janjgir-Champa, Bilaspur, Dhamtari, Mahasamund, Korea, Raipur and Kabirdham districts of Chhattisgarh.

Total 181 Kanwar individuals of age group 30-70 yrs have been selected through random sampling from Korba district of Chhattisgarh. In the present study, several hygienic practices such as location of cattle shed, frequency of cleaning cattleshed, disposal of waste, frequency of regular bathing, regular brushing of teeth, awareness regarding hand wash after toilet and before meal, frequency of changing clothes and undergarments and so on, are taken into consideration.

Among the Kanwar individuals, 96.6 % responded to cleanliness of home surrounding as the main concept of hygiene. Most of them (55.24%) have their cattle shed outside the houses and they used to clean it, once in every couple of days(68.5 %). More than half of the respondents (51.38 %) throw the garbages in dig. They are found well aware regarding hand wash after toilet(98.3 %) and before meal(71.2 %). Most of the Kanwar people (67.90 %) depend on well for drinking water throughout the year.

In the light of above findings, it is quite clear that they have sufficient knowledge regarding hygienic practices and also, they are well aware of the cleanliness, which, in turn, reflects their good hygienic condition. It is suggested that atleast one pump house should be there in the village, so that their dependency on well as a source of drinking water could be reduced.

Keywords: Hygiene, Health, Knowledge, Attitude, Practice, Kanwar Tribe, Chhattisgarh

Introduction

The human body can provide places for disease-causing germs and parasites to grow and multiply. These places include the skin and in and around the openings to the body. It is less likely that germs and parasites will get inside the body if people have good personal hygiene habits.

Hygiene is a concept related to cleanliness, health and medicine. It is as well related to personal and professional care practices. In medicine and everyday life settings, hygiene practices are employed as preventative measures to reduce the incidence and spreading of disease (Driebelbis,2013)

Hygiene practices vary, and what is considered acceptable in one culture might not be acceptable in another. In the manufacturing of food, pharmaceutical (Curtis, 2009).

The terms cleanliness and hygiene are often used interchangeably, which can cause confusion. In general, hygiene refers to practices that prevent spread of disease-causing organisms. Cleaning processes (e.g., handwashing) remove infectious microbes as well as dirt and soil, and are thus often the means to achieve hygiene (Reddy, 2016)

Other uses of the term appear in phrases including *body hygiene*, *personal hygiene*, *sleep hygiene*, *mental hygiene*, *dental hygiene*, and *occupational hygiene*, used in connection with public health. *Hygiene* is also the name of a branch of science that deals with the promotion and preservation of health (Negi, 2018).

The Kanwar is one of the largest tribal communities of Chhattisgarh state of India. They mostly reside in Mahasamund, Bilaspur, Korba, Korea, Surguja, Raigarh, Jashpur and Raipur districts of Chhattisgarh state of India. According to census of India (2001), total population of Kanwar tribe is 7,60,298 which is 11.49% of the tribal population of Chhattisgarh out of which total male and female population is 378,687 and 381,611 respectively. Literacy rate of Kanwar tribe is 61% of which 45.6% are of females. They show similarities with the Dravidian group. According to Dutton "Kanwar are dark, coarse featured, broad nosed, wide mouthed and thick race... decidedly ugly but are taller." The Kanwar tribe is divided into five sub tribal groups: Tanwar, Rathia, Painkra, Cherwa and Dudh Kanwar. The different clans of Kanwar tribe are Badhwa, Bichhi, Bilwa, Bokra, Chandrama, Chanwar, Cheetah, Champa, Dhanguru, Darpan, Gobra, Jata, Kothi, Khumri, Lodha, Suwa, Phulbandhiya, Gangakacchar, Sonwani, Majhi, Naahna, Bhainsa, Kodia, Dudh, Adil, Sonpaakhar, Juari, Bhandari, Sikuta, Udaria. Their main occupation is agriculture and they speak Chhattisgarhi dialect.

In the Kanwar families, the oldest member is considered as the head of the family. The patriarchal families exist there and they follow patrilineal system. They worship *Dulha dev*, *Thakur dev*, *Shikaar dev*, *Sarvamangla devi*, *Kosgai devi*, *Budha dev*, *raksha*, *Malin devi*, *Banjari devi*, *Surajbhumi*, *Naag*, *Baghdev* and trees.

Chhattisgarh located in central India, has been carved out of Madhya Pradesh on 1st November, 2000 to become the 26th state of the Indian union. It is endowed with huge mineral deposits and forest resources. Chhattisgarh also has the largest concentration of scheduled tribes in the country. There are total 42 tribal communities in Chhattisgarh, principal among them being the Gond tribe. Besides, a large population of Kanwar. Binjhar, Bhaina, Bhatra, Uraon, Munda, Kamar, Halba, Baiga, Sawra, Korwa, Bharia, Nageshia, Manghar, Kharia and Dhanwar are also found in the state. Chhattisgarh has total 27 districts among which Korba is the one. Korba district was accorded the status of a fully fledged revenue district with effect from 25 May, 1998. Korba is the power capital of the newly formed state Chhattisgarh. It comes under Bilaspur division and is inhabited mainly by tribals such as Hill Korwa, Gond, Kanwar, Binjhar etc. It is often referred as the industrial hub of Chhattisgarh as various large companies and plants such as BALCO (Bharat Aluminum Corporation), SECL (South-Eastern Coal field Limited), CSEB (Chhattisgarh State Electricity Board) etc. are operating here. Korba district falls under the hot and temperate climatic zone and it is situated on the banks of the river Hasdeo and Ahran.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1. To evaluate the knowledge and attitude towards personal and surrounding hygienic practices among the Kanwar tribe of Chhattisgarh.

- To suggest some ideas to implement public health awareness programs among the studied tribal group.

METHODOLOGY

Total 181 Kanwar individuals of age group 30-70 years were selected through simple random sampling among which maximum were the head of the family. Selection of area is done on the basis of high concentration of Kanwar tribe. Both males and females have been considered for the present study. Pretested interview cum schedule in the structured form are used for the collection of data and facts and for the cross-verification of the data, qualitative research tools like non-participant observation and focused group discussion are used

Community Selection (Kanwar tribe): This particular tribal group is selected on account of their high proportion in the Korba district of Chhattisgarh.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

TABLE 1 Concept of hygiene among the Kanwar individuals

S.no	Concept	No.of respondents (n)	percentage % (n=181)
1	Cleanliness of home surrounding	175	96.6 %
2	Cleanliness of cattle shed	148	81.76 %
3	Self-cleanliness	146	80.66 %
4	Proper drainage to water supply	65	35.91 %
5	All of the above	59	32.59 %

Table 1 reveals the cultural concept of hygiene among the Kanwar people. Among them, 96.6 % responded to cleanliness of home surroundings which is followed by cleanliness of cattleshed (81.76 %) as most of the Kanwar people were dependent mainly on cattle for agriculture. About 80.66 % responded to self-cleanliness and some individuals i.e., 35.91 % to proper drainage of water. As per the observation, their hygienic condition was good as they have sufficient knowledge regarding hygienic practices.

TABLE 2 Location of cattle shed in Kanwar houses

S.no	Location	No.of respondents (n)	percentage % (n=181)
1	Inside the house	79	43.64 %
2	Outside the house	102	56.35 %

Table 2 shows the location of cattle shed in Kanwar houses. The location of the cattle shed reflects the hygienic condition of the house. As about 55.24 % Kanwar families have their cattle shed outside the house, it shows that they are well aware about the hygienic practices, on the other hand, 41.4 % are having their cattle shed inside the house. In some of the houses, it is quite close to the kitchen while in others, it is far away from the kitchen.

TABLE 3 Frequency of cleaning cattle shed

S.no	Frequency	No. of respondents (n)	percentage % (n=181)
1	Daily	57	31.49 %
2	Once in a couple of days	124	68.51 %
3	Once in a week	0	0 %
4	Occasionally	0	0 %

Table 3 reflects the information regarding the frequency of cleanliness of cattle shed among the Kanwar families. Maximum (68.5%) Kanwar respondents used to clean their cattle shed once in a couple of days and about 31% used to clean it daily. This shows that they are quite good in maintaining the surrounding hygiene.

TABLE 4 Location of Waste deposition in Kanwar houses

S. no	Location	No. of respondents (n)	percentage % (n=181)
1	Fence	0	00.00 %
2	Far away	41	22.65%
3	In pit	93	51.38%
4	Behind home	47	25.96%

Table 4 states about the location of disposal of waste in the Kanwar houses and it is found that more than half of the Kanwar people (51.38%) throw their wastes in pit, 25 % used to throw their garbage behind home and 22 % used to throw far away from the house. Surprisingly, no one was found to throw it in the fence which shows their good hygienic practice.

TABLE 5 Frequency of bathing among the Kanwar tribe

S. no	Season	Frequency	No. of respondents (n)	percentage % (n=181)
1	Summer	Once a day	99	54.60 %
		Twice a day	60	33.14%
		Thrice a day	22	12.15%
2	Winter	Daily	91	50.27%
		Once in a couple of days	76	41.90%
		Not sure	14	07.73%

Table 5 reveals the frequency of bathing among the Kanwar tribe. More than half of the studied families prefer daily bathing in both summer and winter seasons.

TABLE 6 Awareness regarding hand wash after toilet, before meal and washing of fruits and vegetables

S. no	Awareness	No. of respondents (n)	percentage % (n=181)
1	Wash hands after toilet		
	Yes	178	98.30%
	No	3	01.65%
2	If yes, then		
	Soap	154	85.08 %
	Detergent	87	48.06 %
	Ash	54	29.83 %
	Soil	35	19.33 %
3	Wash hands before meal		
	Yes	129	71.20 %
	No	52	28.70 %
4	Washing of fruits & vegetables before intake		
	Yes	136	75.14 %
	No	45	24.86%

Table 6 points out the habit of washing hands after toilet and before meal, which is one of the most essential concepts of hygiene. 100 % Kanwar families responded to hand wash but the important thing to be noticed was the material used for cleaning purposes. It has been found that, 85.08 % families use soaps, 48.06 % responded to detergent powder and ash and soil are used by 29.83 % and 19.33 % respectively. About 3/4th (75.14%) of the studied people used to wash fruits and vegetables before intake. Rest 24.86% is not aware of it.

TABLE 7 Awareness regarding cleaning of teeth

S. no	Awareness	No. of respondents (n)	percentage % (n=181)
1	Regular brushing of teeth		
	Yes	181	100.00%
	No	0	00.00%
2	Material used for cleaning		
	Tooth brush	120	66.29%
	Datun	61	33.70%

Table 7 reveals the awareness regarding cleanliness of teeth among the Kanwar families. 100 % families used to clean their teeth regularly which indicate their good hygienic condition and awareness about self-cleanliness. About 66.29 % families use datun for cleaning purpose because of its easy availability and 33.7 % prefer tooth brush.

TABLE 8: Sources of drinking water among the Kanwar tribe

S. no	Season	Sources of drinking water	No. of respondents (n)	percentage % (n=181)
1	Rainy	Well	124	68.50%
		Pond	0	0 %
		Boring	57	31.49%
2	Summer	Well	155	85.63%
		Pond	0	0 %
		Boring	16	08.83%
		Tap Water	10	05.52%
	Throughout the year	Well	123	67.90%
		Pond	0	0 %
		Boring	54	29.80%
		Tap Water	4	02.20%

Table 8 deals with the sources of drinking water during different seasons. As, well is common in most of the households, it is used as the main source of drinking water throughout the year as compared to boring and tap water. They prefer ponds for washing purpose only.

TABLE 9: Frequency of changing clothes and undergarments among the studied Kanwar Tribe

S. no	Frequency	No. of respondents (n)	percentage % (n=181)
1	Changing clothes		
	Regularly	55	30.38 %
	Once in a couple of days	126	69.61%
	Occasionally	0	0%
	Once in a week	0	0%
2	Changing Undergarments		
	Regularly	175	96.68%
	Once in a couple of days	6	03.31%
	Occasionally	0	0%

Table 9 reflects the frequency of changing clothes and undergarments among the studied Kanwar people. It has been found from the study that most of the studied Kanwar individuals (69.61%) used to change their clothes once in every couple of days but regular changing of undergarments is observed in most of the cases (96.68%).

Conclusion

The present study is undertaken to understand the awareness, knowledge and practices of Kanwar people with respect to overall sanitation, hygiene and drinking water. From the study, it is revealed that, cleanliness is the main concept of hygiene among the Kanwar. Most of them have their cattleshed outside the house and they used to clean it once in every couple of days. Maximum of the individuals throw the wastes in pit and regarding hand wash after toilet and before meal, they are well aware. Most

of the Kanwar people depend on well for drinking water throughout the year. Among the people surveyed, most of them change their clothes once in couple of days but change their undergarments daily. According to them, excessive oil and spices are not that much harmful and cleanliness matters them a lot while cooking food.

Theoretical Perspective

In the light of above findings, it is quite clear that they have sufficient knowledge regarding hygienic practices and also, they are well aware of the cleanliness, which, in turn, reflects their good hygienic condition.

Suggestions

- It is suggested that at least one pump house should be there in the village, so that their dependency on well as a source of drinking water could be reduced.
- Proper access to sufficient quantities of safe water and facilities for a sanitary disposal should be provided.
- Some programs related to sound hygiene behavior should be organized in the tribal villages to create awareness regarding health and hygiene.

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