

# Sanitation Behaviour: Regarding to Gender & Religion in Bishnupur District of Manipur

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**Abstract:** *The research paper will discuss the gender differences of sanitation behaviour in the district of Bishnupur. Gender refers to distinction between men and women which creates inequality in their sanitation behaviour as well. Religion is a cultural system of designate behaviours and practices. In the study sanitation practices of Hindu & Sanamahi, Muslim and Christian & TRC are analysed in their personal, household, and community dimensions Sanitation behaviour refers to acts of individuals, households and community, oriented to efficient disposal of any kind of disease-causing substance; namely, human waste (excreta, urine, sweating, nails, etc), animal excreta and carcasses, garbage, wreckage, dirt, spit, stagnant water, etc so as to get clean and disease-free living and health protection. A discussion on the disposal practices in each of these dimensions is being undertaken to understand the sanitation behaviour of the respondents.*

**Keywords:** Gender, Religion and Sanitation Behaviour etc.

## 1. Objectives of the Study

The following were the objectives of the study:

- To understand the sanitation behaviour among the people at gender, religion and community levels.
- To appreciate gender difference of sanitation behaviour between women and men in the context of socio-cultural variations (rural-urban residence, religious and social category) at personal, household and community levels

## 2. Research Methodology

The present research work is primarily used of primary data collection by using an interview schedule from the residents of Bishnupur district, Manipur. Data have been collected from 343 respondents from different social strata.

## 3. Introduction

### 3.1 The Personal Dimension of Sanitation Behavior

Personal sanitation behaviour includes the acts such as individual's sanitary habits and practices of clearing of

bowels, proper urinating, bathing ,washing clothes, teeth-cleaning, paring nails ,etc which affect the state of one's own living and health immediately and as well as of those who come in contact with him/ her. The patterns of personal sanitation among the respondents are hereunder.

### 3.2 The Bowel Clearing Practices

Against the belief that open defecating, harm little when done in the areas of low population, forest or camping it is now well known that it spreads diseases and even most of rapes in India occur when girls go out alone in secluded places to urinate or defecate. In the study the households of all the respondents have latrines as open defecation is not allowed in the district, all the respondents urban and rural use these toilets. Clearing of bowels daily depends mostly on individual's eating habit, health condition and illness but regular and appropriate clearing of bowels is a good sanitary habit for a person and maintenance of environmental sanitation as well. The following table shows the frequency of cleaning bowels in a day among the respondents:

**Table 1 (A):** Frequency of Clearing Bowels among the Respondents by Gender & Religion (Percentage in Parentheses)

Frequency of clearing bowel in a day	Hindu & Sanamahi			Muslim			Christian & TRC			Grand Total (%)		
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
Once	98 (86.73)	97 (91.51)	195 (89.04)	27 (87.10)	25 (92.59)	52 (89.66)	27 (84.38)	30 (88.24)	57 (86.36)	152 (86.36)	152 (91.02)	304 (88.63)
Twice	15 (13.27)	8 (7.55)	23 (10.50)	3 (9.68)	1 (3.70)	4 (6.90)	3 (9.38)	2 (5.88)	5 (7.58)	21 (11.93)	11 (6.59)	32 (9.33)
Thrice	--	--	--	1 (3.23)	--	1 (1.72)	--	--	--	1 (0.57)	--	1 (0.58)
No time (Irregular)	--	1 (0.94%)	1 (0.46)	--	1 (3.70)	1 (1.72)	2 (6.25)	2 (5.88)	4 (6.06)	2 (1.14)	4 (1.80)	6 (1.46)
Total (%)	113 (100)	106 (100)	219 (100)	31 (100)	27 (100)	58 (100)	32 (100)	34 (100)	66 (100)	176 (100)	167 (100)	343 (100)

The table shows that most (88.63%) of the respondents clearing bowels once a day, followed by twice (9.33%), irregularly (1.46%) and thrice (0.58%). Comparatively, more females (92.59%) clear bowels once a day only and irregularly than males (87.50%). By religion, most (89.04%) of the Hindu & Sanamahi respondents clear bowels once a day, followed by twice a day (10.50%) and irregularly (0.46%). Most of the Muslim, respondents (89.66%) clear bowels once a day, followed by twice (6.90%) and thrice a day and irregularly (1.72%) each, while most of the Christian & TRC respondents (86.36%) clear bowels once a day, followed by twice a day (7.58%) and irregularly (6.06%). Thus, most of the respondent clear bowels once a day. More females than males go for one time and irregular clearing of bowels. The Hindu and Sanamahi respondent

seems to be more regular and frequent in clearing of bowels than the Muslim and the Christian & TRC respondents. The gender and religious differences of bowel clearing seem to be insignificant. The difference is mainly due to irregular eating habits, poor health condition and illness etc among the respondents.

Life style and food habit mainly affect digestion and bowel movement. A regular bowel clearing during the time appropriate in a daily routine contributes to sanitation in different dimensions of one's life. Time of clearing bowels of an individual depends upon the sanitary habit of the person, as well as types and amount of meal taken in a day. Time of clearing bowels in a day among the respondents by gender & religion is given in the following table:

**Table 1 (B): Time for Bowel Clearing among the Respondents by Gender & Religion (Percentage in Parentheses)**

Time of Clearing Bowel in a Day	Hindu & Sanamahi			Muslim			Christian & TRC			Grand Total (%)		
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
Morning	95 (84.07)	98 (92.45)	193 (88.13)	29 (93.54)	26 (96.30)	55 (94.83)	25 (78.13)	29 (85.29)	54 (81.82)	149 (84.66)	153 (91.62)	302 (88.05)
Afternoon	7 (6.19)	3 (2.83)	10 (4.57)	1 (3.23)	--	1 (1.72)	2 (6.25)	--	2 (3.03)	10 (5.68)	3 (1.80)	13 (3.79)
Evening	--	--	--	--	--	--	1 (3.12)	1 (2.94)	2 (3.03)	1 (0.57)	1 (0.60)	2 (0.58)
Morning + evening	11 (9.73)	5 (4.72)	16 (7.31)	1 (3.23)	--	1 (1.72)	4 (12.5)	3 (8.83)	7 (10.61)	16 (9.09)	8 (4.79)	24 (7)
No Time	--	--	--	--	1 (3.70)	1 (1.72)	--	1 (2.94)	1 (1.51)	--	2 (1.19)	2 (0.58)
Total (%)	113 (100)	106 (100)	219 (100)	31 (100)	27 (100)	58 (100)	32 (100)	34 (100)	66 (100)	176 (100)	167 (100)	343 (100)

The table shows that most of the total respondents, (88.05%) clear their bowels in the morning followed by morning as well as evening (7%), afternoon (3.79%) and irregularly (0.58%). By and large a common pattern of time for clearing bowels is observed across the gender and religious groups. More females than the males clear bowels in the morning only. The females generally all kinds of household as well as livelihood activities from early morning to late night and they may not get toilet facility outside home. On the other hand the males the males have comparatively less engagement in household and child care activities and, besides, they face less problem of using toilets outside home as well. Thus most of the respondents specially, females clear their bowels in the morning. A few clear their bowels

in the morning as well as evening. This means that the respondents, across the gender and religious categories have a habit of clearing bowel in the morning in the given social situation.

Sometimes people need to respond to the call of nature at odd hours like in the night time public place etc. An individual has to decide in such a time as what action is to be taken when a toilet may or may not be available immediately or it may be located at place inconvenient for immediate use. Response to call of nature at odd hours among the respondents by gender religion is given in the following table:

**Table 1 (C): Types of Response to Call of Nature at Odd Hours among the Respondents by Gender & Religion (Percentage in Parentheses)**

Response to call of nature at odd hours	Hindu & Sanamahi			Muslim			Christian & TRC			Grand Total (%)		
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
Hold back until access to Toilet	112 (99.12)	106 (100)	218 (99.54)	31 (100)	27 (100)	58 (100)	32 (100)	34 (100)	66 (100)	175 (99.43)	167 (100)	342 (99.71)
Use open space	1 (0.88)	--	1 (0.46)	--	--	--	--	--	--	1 (0.57)	--	1 (0.29)
Total (%)	113 (100)	106 (100)	219 (100)	31 (100)	27 (100)	58 (100)	32 (100)	34 (100)	66 (100)	176 (100)	167 (100)	343 (100)

As the table tells almost all the respondents hold on a call of nature until they have access to a toilet. Only one respondent (Hindu) goes for open defecation to respond to a call of nature and emergent situations. As he always suffer from loose motion and could not hold the call of nature for long hours.

**2. Urinal Use Habits**

All the people use toilet/ urinal either at home or at community toilet to urinate. Toilets are of two types: in home toilet and community toilet. Usual place for urinating among the respondents by gender and religion is given in the following table:

**Table 1 (D): Usual Places for Urinating among the Respondents by Gender & Religion (Percentage in Parentheses)**

Place for Urinating	Hindu & Sanamahi			Muslim			Christian & TRC			Grand Total (%)		
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
Toilet/Latrine at home	113 (100)	105 (99.06)	218 (99.54)	31 (100)	27 (100)	58 (100)	32 (100)	33 (97.06)	65 (98.48)	175 (99.43)	166 (99.40)	341 (99.42)
Community toilet	--	1 (0.94)	1 (0.46)	--	--	--	--	1 (2.94)	1 (1.52)	1 (0.57)	1 (0.60)	2 (0.58)
Total(%)	113 (100)	106 (100)	219 (100)	31 (100)	27 (100)	58 (100)	32 (100)	34 (100)	66 (100)	176 (100)	167 (100)	343 (100)

From the data it appears that all but two (Hindu) respondents use toilets at home to urinate. The two respondents use community toilets, as they sell vegetables in market from early morning to 6 evening. Thus, the respondents, both, male and female have mostly the habit of using toilet for urination.

By holding a large amount of urine for long time one is exposed to potentially harmful bacteria increasing chances

of getting urinary tract infection (U T I) or bladder infection. If bladder is not emptied regularly the bacteria will multiply in the bladder. In the village the respondents who work at farm has to use places as behind trees, road side, and near a drain as there is no urinal. The reason for urinating in open space among the respondents by gender& religion are shown in the following table:

**Table 1(E): Reasons for Using Places Other than Urinal in Public Places among the Respondents by Gender & Religion (Percentage in Parentheses)**

Reason for using place other than Urinal	Hindu & Sanamahi			Muslim			Christian & TRC			Grand Total (%)		
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
Urinal not necessary	1 (0.88)	1 (0.94)	2 (0.91)	1 (3.23)	--	1 (1.72)	--	--	--	2 (1.14)	1 (0.60)	3 (0.87)
Cannot hold for long	112 (99.12)	105 (99.06)	217 (99.09)	30 (96.77)	27 (100)	57 (98.28)	32 (100)	34 (100)	66 (100)	174 (98.86)	166 (99.40)	340 (99.13)
Total (%)	113 (100)	106 (100)	219 (100)	31 (100)	27 (100)	58 (100)	32 (100)	34 (100)	66 (100)	176 (100)	167 (100)	343 (100)

From the data it appears that all the respondents can't hold urine for long hours and go to other places than a urinal in an urgent situation. The three respondents use other places because they do not consider the use of urinal necessary. The patterns are the same among the male and female respondents across the religious groups. Thus, lack of toilets in public places/ farms causes open urination.

Sometimes people hold urine for long hours when they are busy at work or not finding a urinal. The respondents from village engaged in agriculture work in group and sometimes especially female workers don't find a proper place for urination and they have to hold urine for long hours. Others have to go similar experience in market or other public places. The following table shows the reasons for holding urine for long hours among the respondents by gender and religion:

#### 4. Findings of the Study

In brief the patterns of personal dimension of sanitation behaviour among religious groups are as follows:

1. Most (88.63%) of the respondents clearing bowels once a day, followed by twice (9.33%), irregularly (1.46%) and thrice (0.58%).Comparatively, more females (92.59%) clear bowels once a day only and irregularly than males (87.50%). By religion, most (89.04%) of the Hindu & Sanamahi respondents clear bowels once a day, followed by twice a day (10.50%) and irregularly (0.46%). Most of the Muslim, respondents (89.66%) clear bowels once a day, followed by twice (6.90%) and thrice a day and irregularly (1.72%) each, while most of the Christian & TRC respondents

(86.36%) clear bowels once a day, followed by twice a day (7.58%) and irregularly (6.06%). Thus, most of the respondent clear bowels once a day .More females than males go for one time and irregular clearing of bowels. The Hindu and Sanamahi respondent seems to be more regular and frequent in clearing of bowels than the Muslim and the Christian & TRC respondents. The gender and religious differences of bowel clearing seem to be insignificant. The difference is mainly due to irregular eating habits, poor health condition and illness etc among the respondents.

2. Most of the total respondents, (88.05%) clear their bowels in the morning followed by morning as well as evening (7%), afternoon (3.79%) and irregularly (0.58%). By and large a common pattern of time for clearing bowels is observed across the gender and religious groups. More females than the males clear bowels in the morning only. The females generally all kinds of household as well as livelihood activities from early morning to late night and they may not get toilet facility outside home. On the other hand the males the males have comparatively less engagement in household and child care activities and, besides, they face less problem of using toilets outside home as well. Thus most of the respondents specially, females clear their bowels in the morning. A few clear their bowels in the morning as well as evening .This means that the respondents across the gender and religious categories have a habit of clearing bowels in the morning in the given social situation.

3. As the table tells almost all the respondents hold on a call of nature until they have access to a toilet .Only one respondent (Hindu) goes for open defecation to respond to a

call of nature and emergent situations. As he always suffer from loose motion and could not hold the call of nature for long hours.

4. All but two (Hindu) respondents use toilets at home to urinate. The two respondents use community toilets, as they sell vegetables in market from early morning to 6 evening. Thus, the respondents, both, male and female have mostly the habit of using toilet for urination.

5. All the respondents can't hold urine for long hours and go to other places than a urinal in an urgent situation. The three respondents use other places because they do not consider the use of urinal necessary. The patterns are the same among the male and female respondents across the religious groups. Thus, lack of toilets in public places/ farms causes open urination.

6. Most of the Hindu and Sanamahi, Muslim, Christian & RTC respondent have to hold urine for long hours due to lack of urinal in market and other public places. Thus in public places the respondents have to hold urine for long hours in absence of proper urinal/toilet facilities. For example, Muslim culture needs to use water after urination.

7. Nearly half (48.40%) of the respondents have bathrooms in their homes, about one third (32.07%) take bath in a ponds at home and a small fraction (1.17%) takes bath in community bathrooms. About one third (32.65%) of the respondents take bath in open, public places like public pond and river. Thus a half (49.57%) of the respondents uses bathrooms, including public bathrooms. One third (35.23%) Of them take bath in pond at home or public pond. More males (25.23%) use public ponds and river to bathe. These patterns found similar across the religious groups are determined by cultural norms governing gender behaviour as well as the available facility in public and private places

8. Nearly three fourths (71.72%) of the respondents take bath once a day and over one fourth (26.82%) bath twice a day .Only a small fraction (1.46%) has no fixed time to take bath .More females take bath once a day while more males take bath twice a day. More Muslims followed by Christian, bath once in a day while more Hindus followed Muslim bath twice a day. Thus, gender related division of work results in some difference of bathing habit between the male and the female respondents. Similarly, Hindus seem to be having greater frequency of bathing due to religious concept of purity and worship.

9. Nearly two fifths (57.73%) of the respondents take bath in the morning and over one fifth (23.32%) take bath in the morning as well as evening, and some of them (15.45%) take bath in the afternoon and evening and only few (0.58%) take bath at night.

Majority of the Hindus (60.27%) and most of the Muslims (86.21%) take bath in the morning while over two fifths of the Christians take bath in the afternoon. Besides, nearly one third (30.14%) of the Hindus take bath in the morning and evening while about one fourth (24.24%) of the Christians take bath in the morning.

More Muslims (96.30%) and Hindu (64.5%) females take bath in the morning while more Christians (55.88%) females take bath in the afternoon, rest of the patterns are similar across the religious groups.

The figures indicate a difference of clearing bowels between the Hindus and Muslims on the one hand, and the Christians on the other hand. This difference reflects in the gender categories also. This means that the Hindus and Muslims constitute a group of similar culture and the Christians constitute the other group consisted of tribes. The two groups require bathing (purification) before worship. The Hindus and Muslim respondents worship/ pray in the morning and in the same cases in the evening also. Hence bathing in the morning in general and in the evening in particular cases is required. But the Christians pray in the morning and evening and therefore mostly take bath in the afternoon after work. According to culture Hindu & Sanamahi females needs to take bath early morning for warship and cooking meals for family members also for going to work as for males they can take bath before meals and going to work place. Muslim males and females according to culture need to take bath early in the morning if they have husband wife relationship at night, others they can wash face, hands feet properly for warship and cooking.

10. Almost all (99.13%) respondents use soap cake for bath and only three (Hindu male) respondents use liquid bath soap. Most male and female respondents have similar patterns using soap cake.

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