

## AWARENESS OF THE SWACHH BHARAT ABHIYAN SCHEME AMONG HIGHER EDUCATION STUDENTS

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### Abstract:

*The Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, initiated by the Indian Government on October 2, 2014, embodies a transformative endeavor to revolutionize the nation's sanitation and hygiene landscape. This research paper aims to gauge the awareness of the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan Scheme among higher education students. Employing a descriptive research design, the study utilizes purposive sampling with a sample size of 45 from Karnatak University in Dharwad. Findings provide valuable insights into awareness levels, with high recognition (97.78%) reflecting national impact, predominantly through the media (46.67%). Notably, over 60% of respondents acknowledge Gram Panchayat amenities, spotlighting grassroots impact. Addressing facility gaps (37.58%) and open defecation (62.22%) remains vital. Positive rural impact (91.11%) aligns with improved living conditions. The study underscores successful awareness dissemination, varied information sources, potential gender inclusivity, and hygiene perception impact among higher education students.*

**Keywords:** Awareness, Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, Students, Perception, Hygiene Initiatives.

### Introduction

The Swachh Bharat Abhiyan (Clean India Mission) initiated on October 2, 2014, by the Government of India, represents a monumental and visionary effort aimed at a comprehensive transformation of the nation's sanitation and hygiene landscape. Rooted in the fundamental principles of cleanliness and hygiene advocated by Mahatma Gandhi,

this mission is designed to address the deeply entrenched issue of open defecation, promote extensive sanitation practices, and foster a culture of cleanliness and health consciousness across the country. The initiative's holistic framework extends well beyond mere infrastructural enhancements, encompassing intricate elements such as

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behavioural modification, active community engagement, and the dissemination of public awareness. In a nation characterized by its vast and diverse demographic, the effectiveness of the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan is intricately tied to the collective understanding and commitment of all segments of society. Consequently, comprehending the levels of awareness and the complex fabric of perceptions woven around this initiative assumes paramount significance. Of particular emphasis is the resonance of the initiative among the youth, a demographic that constitutes a significant segment within the sphere of higher education. Within the dynamic precincts of higher education institutions, students are exposed to a diverse array of ideas, experiences, and socio-cultural dynamics. These institutions inherently serve as catalysts for shaping students' attitudes, influencing behaviors, and fostering awareness pertaining to critical national endeavours, such as the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan. Thus, probing the levels of awareness, knowledge, and viewpoints held by higher education students concerning this initiative assumes a compelling role as a source of valuable insights. These insights, in turn, unveil the initiative's efficacy in making inroads within the youth demographic, thereby significantly shaping the outlooks and actions of the upcoming generation with regard to the pivotal domains of sanitation and hygiene. With this in mind, this research article embarks on a journey of

exploration into the intricate fabric of awareness and perception surrounding the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, specifically within the dynamic sphere of higher education students.

## METHODOLOGY

The present study examined the awareness of the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan Scheme among higher education students. Employing a descriptive research design, the study adopts the purposive sampling method with a sample size of 45 participants. The research was conducted at Karnatak University in Dharwad, with responses garnered from various departments. The outcomes of this study contribute significantly to comprehending the extent of awareness surrounding the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan Scheme within the higher education student community.

The table-1 presents demographic characteristics and corresponding respondent data. Age distribution reveals 51.11% in the 15-25 range, 44.44% aged 26-35, and 4.44% between 36-45. Gender split is 53.33% male and 46.67% female. Religion-wise, 97.78% identify as Hindu, 2.22% as Muslim. Marital status: 93.33% married, 6.67% unmarried. Education: 48.89% have an undergraduate (UG) degree, 42.22% hold a postgraduate (PG) degree, and 8.89% fall under "Others." These insights aid in understanding respondent demographics and potential correlations with study responses.

The table-2 compiles survey results concerning the awareness and impact of

the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan scheme. It highlights that an overwhelming majority (97.78%) of respondents are aware of the scheme, with a minority (2.22%) lacking awareness. Primary information sources are media advertisements (46.67%), schools/colleges (28.89%), village officials (22.22%), and family/friends/neighbours (2.22%). Notably, 62.22% report obtaining facilities through the scheme, 51.11% have constructed toilets, and 62.22% acknowledge on going open defecation. An impressive 91.11% perceive quality of life improvement due to the scheme. While 80.89% acknowledge its role in rural development, 11.11% differ. The scheme significantly contributes to poor people's development, predominantly through toilet construction (73.33%), garbage disposal (15.56%), internal drainage (6.67%), and water conservation (4.44%). The table offers a comprehensive insight into respondents' awareness, experiences, and perceptions of the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan scheme, highlighting its accomplishments and potential areas for improvement.

The table-3 shows various facets of the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan scheme and its perceived impacts within the surveyed community. It reveals that the majority of respondents (64.44%) acknowledge its provision of unbiased facilities for women, advancing gender inclusivity and sanitation access. A promising 80% believe in women's empowerment potential, reflecting recognition of its role

in promoting gender equality and participation. Engagement strategies for cleanliness initiatives encompass Gram Panchayat meetings (33.33%), village assemblies (31.11%), individual engagement (20%), and Ward Sabha involvement (15.56%), showcasing diverse community decision-making approaches. An overwhelming 88.89% affirm active participation opportunities in shaping program initiatives, indicating positive community involvement. Significantly, 95.56% perceive the scheme's contribution to a healthier lifestyle, underlining sanitation's link with well-being. Furthermore, 88.89% observe positive impacts on social and economic district development, highlighting cleanliness's broader community benefits. The diverse responses on district changes, including rural development (40%), territorial shifts (24.44%), and social-economic progress (20%), underscore the scheme's multifaceted effects. In sum, the table provides valuable insights into perceptions and experiences of the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, revealing successes and potential areas for enhancement.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The first table provides research's demographic insights highlight key aspects of the respondent population. The Age Distribution reveals a diverse engagement, with the majority (51.11%) falling in the 15-25 years bracket, reflecting the involvement of a younger generation and their potential impact on

the research's outlook. The 26-35 years group constitutes 44.44%, while the 36-45 years cohort is smaller at 4.44%. The Gender Representation maintains balance, with 53.33% male and 46.67% female respondents, ensuring a comprehensive exploration of gender-related perspectives. Religious Affiliation showcases limited diversity, with 97.78% identifying as Hindu and 2.22% as Muslim. This distribution offers insights into these groups' perspectives on the research topic, considering the intersections of religion and sanitation. Marital Status is skewed towards married participants (93.33%), influencing variations in cleanliness practices due to household dynamics, while unmarried respondents (6.67%) add perspective diversity. The Educational Background is diverse: 48.89% possess undergraduate (UG) degrees, 42.22% pursue postgraduate (PG) studies, and 8.89% are categorized as "Others." This range enriches the study by capturing differing viewpoints arising from education's influence on sanitation perceptions. These findings collectively enhance the research's holistic comprehension and contextual significance.

The second table dataset's findings provide a comprehensive foundation for dissecting the awareness, impact, and implications of the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan scheme. The remarkable extent of awareness (97.78%) among participants underscores the scheme's successful penetration into the public psyche,

validating its status as a nationwide endeavour to advance sanitation and cleanliness. The diversified range of information sources, with media advertisements leading at 46.67%, underscores a systematic approach to disseminating information through various avenues, enhancing the initiative's visibility and outreach. Additionally, the data unveil the scheme's tangible outcomes. With over 60% of respondents reporting the acquisition of scheme-related amenities at their Gram Panchayat, the initiative's concrete effect on grassroots communities comes to the fore. Nonetheless, the substantial percentage (37.78%) indicating a dearth of such facilities raises concerns about potential implementation gaps and uneven access, warranting further investigation and focused interventions to ensure impartial benefits. Toilet construction within the scheme (51.11%) signals advancements in bolstering sanitation infrastructure and contributing to a decline in open defecation practices. The persistent prevalence of open defecation among 62.22% of respondents spotlights the ongoing challenge of uprooting this behaviour, advocating for sustained endeavours to reshape cultural norms and practices. One of the most striking discoveries is the overwhelmingly affirmative perception of the scheme's impact on rural quality of life (91.11%). This sentiment corroborates the scheme's role in elevating living conditions, possibly through enhanced sanitation,

hygiene, and infrastructural developments. Likewise, the substantial recognition (80.89%) of the scheme's contribution to rural development underscores its capacity to act as a catalyst for broader socioeconomic progress. The scheme's influence on underprivileged individuals is evident across distinct avenues such as toilet construction (73.33%), garbage disposal (15.56%), internal drainage (6.67%), and water conservation (4.44%). These revelations underscore the scheme's multifaceted nature, addressing diverse dimensions of rural development and well-being. Yet, despite its constructive impact, indications of areas demanding further attention, like addressing facility gaps and driving behavioral shifts concerning open defecation, warrant thoughtful deliberation.

The third table presented various dimensions associated with the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan scheme plan, shedding light on respondents' perspectives, involvement, and encounters. These insights collectively contribute to a thorough comprehension of the scheme's outcomes and implications. Notably, the data portrays a significant perception shift as 64.44% of respondents perceive the scheme as a source of impartial and equal facilities for women, underscoring its potential for promoting gender inclusiveness. Another striking aspect is the strong belief held by 80% of respondents in the scheme's capacity to empower women, hinting at its role in fostering gender parity and involving

women in sanitation initiatives. The diversity of engagement approaches revealed in the findings, such as participation in Gram Panchayat meetings, village assemblies, individual engagement, and Ward Sabha discussions (33.33%, 31.11%, 20%, and 15.56% respectively), highlights the necessity of adapting strategies to local contexts. The data also showcases a remarkable 88.89% consensus among respondents regarding the scheme's ability to engage citizens actively in shaping program activities, indicating a deliberate effort to encourage community participation and accountability. A substantial 95.56% of respondents connecting the scheme to a healthier lifestyle underscore the perceived link between improved sanitation and overall well-being. Furthermore, an overwhelming 88.89% of respondents recognizing the positive social and economic influence of the scheme on their districts mirror the belief that enhanced cleanliness and sanitation contribute to broader developmental strides. The data reveals a multifaceted impact at the district level, with changes attributed to rural development, territorial shifts, social and economic progress, and other factors, showcasing the scheme's diverse and far-reaching effects on the district's landscape.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion the awareness of the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan Scheme among higher education students offers significant insights. Findings highlight

successful scheme awareness penetration, evidenced by participants' familiarity. Various information sources emphasize systematic information dissemination, extending outreach. The study underscores scheme potential for gender inclusivity and women's empowerment, advocating tailored engagement strategies. These revelations enhance understanding of scheme implications and its impact on youth's hygiene perceptions. Insights can inform interventions and policies, enhancing the scheme's impact and inclusivity as India advances towards improved sanitation and well-being.

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## TABLES

**Table 1: Socio-Demographic details of Respondent**

Sl. No	Questions	Response	Respondents	Percentage
1.	Age of the respondent	15-25 years	23	51.11
		26-35 years	20	44.44
		36-45 years	02	04.44
2.	Gender	Male	24	53.33
		Female	21	46.67
3.	Religion	Hindu	44	97.78
		Muslim	01	02.22
4.	Marital Status	Married	03	93.33
		Unmarried	42	06.67
5.	Education of the respondent	UG	22	48.89
		PG	19	42.22
		Others	04	08.89

**Table 2: Awareness of the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan Scheme**

Sl. No	Questions	Responses	Respondents	%
1.	Are you aware of the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan scheme?	Yes	44	97.78
		No	01	02.22
2.	From which source have you gathered information about the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan scheme?	Media advertisements	21	46.67
		Schools or colleges,	13	28.89
		Village panchayat officials,	10	22.22
		Family and friends or neighbors.	01	02.22
3.	In the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan scheme plan, have you obtained any facilities at your Gram Panchayat?	Yes	28	62.22
		No	17	37.78
4.	Have you constructed a toilet under the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan scheme plan?	Yes	23	51.11
		No	22	48.89
5.	Do people in your village go out in the open for defecation?	Yes	28	62.22
		No	17	37.78
6.	Has the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan scheme plan been helpful in improving the quality of life for rural people?	Yes	41	91.11
		No	4	08.89
7.	Is the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan scheme	Yes	40	80.89

	plan actively contributing to rural development?	No	05	11.11
8.	How has the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan scheme plan contributed to the development of the poor people?	Construction of toilet	33	73.33
		Adequate garbage disposal	7	15.56
		Construction of internal drainage	3	06.67
		Water conservation	2	04.44

**Table 3: Awareness of the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan Scheme**

Sl. No	Questions	Responses	Respondents	%
1.	Are you aware that the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan scheme plan has provided unbiased/equitable facilities to women?	Yes	29	64.44
		No	16	35.56
2.	Is women empowerment possible through the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan scheme plan?	Yes	36	80.00
		No	09	20.00
3.	How do you engage with everyone to discuss the prioritization of initiatives for addressing problems in your village and promoting cleanliness under the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan scheme?	In the Gram Panchayat general meeting,	15	33.33
		In the village assembly,	14	31.11
		Individually with no specific group,	09	20.00
		And in the Ward Sabha	07	15.56
4.	Does the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan scheme plan provide opportunities for people's participation in shaping the program's initiatives?	Yes	40	88.89
		No	05	11.11
5.	Does the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan scheme plan help you lead a healthy lifestyle?	Yes	43	95.56
		No	02	04.44
6.	Has the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan scheme plan had an impact on the social and economic development of your district?	Yes	40	88.89
		No	05	11.11
7.	Could you please describe the changes and developments that have occurred in your district (Dharwad) in terms of the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan scheme plan, both in the past and currently?	Rural Development	18	40.00
		Territorial change	11	24.44
		Social and Economic Development	9	20.00
		Other	7	15.56