



Swacch Bharat Abhiyan – Patna A Case Study

- Ayesha Madiha • Astha Grace Peters • Nidhi Savya
- Amitabh Ranjan

Received : November 2018

Accepted : March 2019

Corresponding Author : Amitabh Ranjan

Abstract: *Cleanliness is the degree to which people keep themselves and their surroundings clean. It is both the abstract state of being clean and free from dirt, and the process of achieving and maintaining that state.*

India is a beautiful country and is often visualized as a salad bowl of culture, colour, craft and chaos! The Prime Minister's 'Swacch Bharat' campaign to clean India is a call to us all to realize the relevance and significance of 'Swacchta' or cleanliness in our culture.

The study explains whether the Swacch Bharat Abhiyan is anywhere close to attaining its objectives in Patna or is it just

Ayesha Madiha

CEMS II year, Session: 2017-2020,
Patna Women's College, Patna University, Patna,
Bihar, India

Astha Grace Peters

CEMS II year, Session: 2017-2020,
Patna Women's College, Patna University, Patna,
Bihar, India

Nidhi Savya

CEMS II year, Session: 2017-2020,
Patna Women's College, Patna University, Patna,
Bihar, India

Amitabh Ranjan

Guest Faculty, Department of CEMS,
Patna Women's College, Bailey Road,
Patna- 800001, Bihar, India
E-mail: amitabhranjan@gmail.com

on papers. The research also gives an insight into the present works of Patna Municipal Corporation, its efforts to achieve the Swacch Bharat deadline by October next year, areas to be focused and deficiencies which have to be looked into.

Keywords : *Swacch Bharat, Sanitation, Manual Scavenging, Solid Waste Management, Equipment, Manpower, Waterlogging, Garbage,*

Introduction :

A clean environment and workplace is essential for a healthy workforce. In India, 53 per cent of households or 600 million people defecate in open, out of which 69.3 per cent belong to rural areas and 18.6 per cent belong to urban areas. This unhygienic practice is one of the reasons for high prevalence of diarrhoeal diseases and helminthic (caused by parasitic worms) diseases in the country.

Addressing the issue of sanitation is the need of the hour which not only helps in reducing the burden of the communicable diseases like diarrhoea but also provides the scope for Gross Domestic Product growth, reduction in infant and under-5 mortality rates, reduction in healthcare costs, and a source of employment.

Above all, cleanliness is woven into the ethos of Indian life. Father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi, once said cleanliness is more important than independence.

Hence, Swacch Bharat Abhiyan was launched with the basic objective to create sanitation facilities for all and eliminate completely the unhealthy practice of open defecation.

For the first time after independence, the Government of India has taken the responsibility to achieve the objective of National level cleanliness working at local levels. The estimated cost of implementation of the Swacch Bharat Abhiyan is Rs 62,009 crore.

The 'Clean India Campaign', popularly known as the 'Swacch Bharat Mission', was launched on October 2, 2014. The Mission aims to achieve a 'Swacch Bharat' by 2019, as a fitting tribute to Mahatma Gandhi on his 150th birth anniversary. The core objective of the Mission is to make India open defecation and filth free by the target date of October 2, 2019. Keeping public spaces clean, constructing and maintaining both individual and community toilets are part of the programme.

The Swacch Bharat Mission has two components:-

- Swacch Bharat Mission (Rural)
- Swacch Bharat Mission (Urban).

While the Union Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation is the nodal agency for the rural mission, the Ministry of Urban Development takes care of the budgetary concerns of the urban mission.

The focus of the Swacch Bharat Mission for urban areas is on establishing close to 2.6 lakh individual toilets and 2.5 lakh community toilets across 4,401 towns and cities in India. Eradicating manual scavenging and improved municipal solid waste management are also parts of the agenda.

Hypothesis :

- The progress towards achieving the Swacch Bharat Abhiyan (SBA) objectives in the municipal area of Patna has been tardy for the past four years and the possibility of meeting the deadline by October 2, 2019 looks practically impossible.
- Though the authorities are aware of the state of affairs and are keen to put things on the track, they lack, besides a holistic plan, enough equipment and manpower.

- The journey towards a 'Swacch Patna' appears all the more difficult if one takes into account an abysmally low level of involvement of the city's residents towards maintaining a neat and clean surrounding.

Methodology :

- Data have been accessed from the nodal agency and the Patna Municipal Corporation for works done, works remaining, money spent, and the availability of funds.
- An effort has been made to lay hands on the data which are already in public domain. For this, scanning of newspapers, magazines, relevant government documents and websites, both government and private, has been done.
- A questionnaire put to 300 respondents (across a cross-section of the city's residents) tries to map the public opinion.
- These have been supplemented by interviews of key officials, experts from the academia and civil society stakeholders.
- On-site visits to some of the filthiest spots in the city have been organised to gauge the severity of the problem.

Data Analysis :

The questionnaire comprised nine questions, three each for three different sample groups. The respondents just had to mark the option which they found to be correct as it was a closed questionnaire. The data analysis was done on the basis of the responses provided by the respondents.

1. Have you heard about Swacch Bharat Abhiyan and are you aware of its deadline?

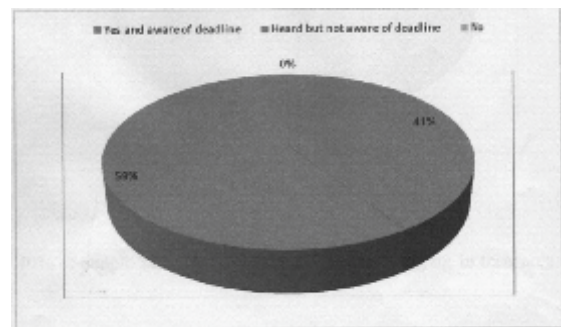


Fig. 1.

59% of people have heard about Swacch Bharat Abhiyan but are not aware of the deadline.

2. Do you face waterlogging in your area?

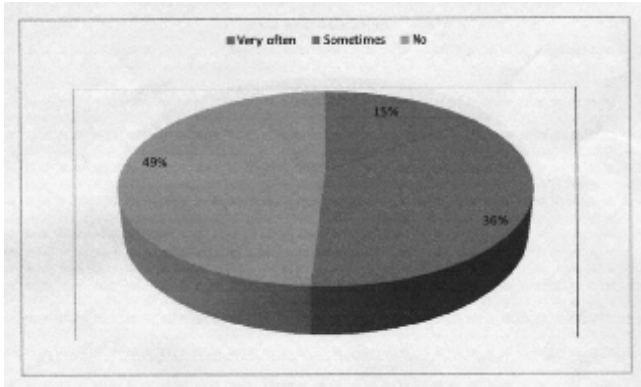


Fig. 2.

49% of people said that they do not face waterlogging in their area.

3. Have you seen municipal staff in your area ever to take away garbage?

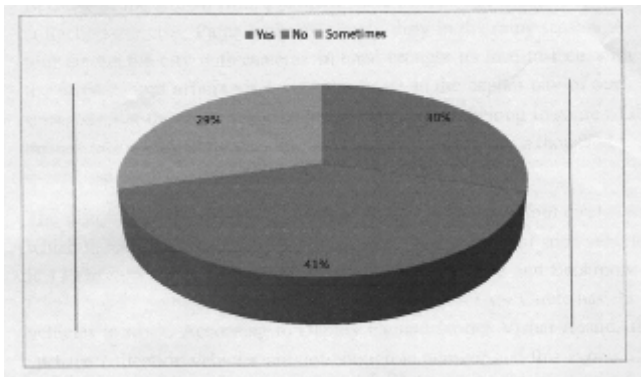


Fig. 3.

About 41% of the people said that they have not seen municipal staff in their area ever to take away garbage.

Analysis :

Because of the strewn filth, pathetic state of drainage and poor garbage collection exercise, Patna looks extremely dirty in the rainy season. A tour around the city with cameras in hand brought us face-to-face with the sorry state of affairs vis-à-vis cleanliness in the capital city of our state. Most of the shots that caught the filth around belong to some of the busiest and prominent places in Patna. Since pictures say a thousand words, we need not explain more.

The distribution of garbage collection vehicles across the four circles in which the state capital is divided is uneven. The number of such vehicles is 139 in New Capital Circle. Kankarbagh Circle has 48 and Bankipore Circle has 87 garbage collection vehicles and Patna City Circle has 93 vehicles in work. According to Deputy Commissioner Vishal Anand, the garbage collection vehicles are not enough in number and this is one of the reasons why Patna was ranked so low on ‘Swacchta’ indices.

There is a realization among the officials concerned as well as the general public that Patna is woefully short of public toilets. The silver lining is that an effort is afoot to solve this problem.

While the number of garbage collection points is satisfactory, about 570 in 75 wards, PMC lacks a solid waste management plan. This, according to an office bearer of NGO involved in the cleanliness drive, was a major reason why Patna performed poorly in ‘Swacchta Sarvekshan’, i.e. cleanliness survey.

For a movement of this kind to succeed, there has to be people’s participation. This campaign has to be assimilated as an integral part of their lifestyle. The residents of Patna have been found to be lacking in awareness and participation.

Through the survey it was clear that people are still laid-back in their attitude towards cleanliness. People are not aware of the segregation methods of garbage (wet and dry solid waste). This was one of the key reasons for Patna getting a poor ranking in the last ‘Swacchta Sarvekshan.’

Recently, around 200 steel dustbins that the Patna Municipal Corporation had installed during the 2016 and 2017 Prakash Utsav celebrations were stolen.

Deputy Commissioner of PMC said “This city does not belong to the Municipal Corporation only or to some individuals. The city belongs to residents. Citizens and the Corporation both are stakeholders. We all have a responsibility towards maintaining the city and keeping it beautiful. On one hand, the Corporation is trying to provide facilities and on the other hand, people are stealing civic property.”

Suggestion :

Because of the paucity of time, the research depended on a limited number of on-site visits. The survey samples were rather small in size and may not have captured the gravity of the situation or may not have brought a few bright sides of the story. Both these aspects need to be expanded for any research on the subject in the future.

This research also lacks in a comparative study of some other cities which have done well on the Swacchta indices. Such a study would have given a better perspective of where the capital of Bihar stands in terms of its Swacchta standing and what needs to be done to achieve the target.

There is also a need to engage with civil society initiatives in terms of opinion and action. This research did not quite explore that angle.

A clearcut delineation of the 'unfinished task' has also not been done.

Conclusion :

The research primarily based on surveys, interviews and site visits, does reveal that Patna's progress towards Swacchta target is tardy. Despite optimism expressed by some of the officials concerned, the ground reality tells a different story.

There is a problem of implementation mainly due to three basic reasons: lack of funds disbursal, inadequate equipment and manpower and a lack of synergy among various agencies involved. To address the last problem, at least a beginning has been made whereby the Urban Development Ministry will now communicate directly with municipal commissioners rather than going through state mission heads.

The research also reveals the fact that a lack of apathy and awareness among the general public poses a serious stumbling block in achieving the cleanliness target. The awareness drive taken up by the Patna Municipal Corporation is too little and too weak. The PMC must engage with the public robustly to bring about the behavioural change whereby each resident is convinced that he is the biggest stakeholder in keeping his city clean.

Therefore, Patna is likely to miss the target except for some window dressing by the authorities concerned.

Disclaimer :

There was no attempt to refer to a body of literature. The research endeavoured to understand how the campaign unfolds on the ground. The research relied on site visits; talking to gatekeepers; interviewing officials at the centre of implementing the project, including those at Patna Municipal Corporation and Urban Development Housing Department; and making surveys of samples coming from various strata of society.

The research did refer to reports in leading newspapers like, *The Times of India*, *Hindustan Times*, *Dainik Bhaskar* among others.

References :

Kishore Yadav J., Navya K.Naidu, Sreeharshika D., Harikrishna B. and Malhotra V. 'Study to assess knowledge, perception and practices regarding Swacch Bharat Abhiyan among rural people of Nalgonda district in Telangana state'.

Websites

<https://www.speakingtree.in/cleanliness-is-godliness-634223> Accessed 24/9/18.

<https://www.definitions.net/definition/cleanliness> Accessed 24/9/18.

<https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/cleanliness> Accessed 24/9/18.