**“INVESTIGATING HOW SOCIO-CULTURAL AND BEHAVIORAL FACTORS INFLUENCE SANITATION AND HYGIENE ADOPTION”: A CASE OF IDRUSI VILLAGE IN MANGOCI DISTRICT-MALAWI**

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**Introduction**

Sanitation is a Public Health concern; inadequate sanitation is a major cause of diseases world-wide and improving sanitation is known to have a significance in health both in households and across communities. Culture is a way of life of a group of people and includes their behaviors, beliefs, values and symbols that they accept. Different groups of people’s beliefs have positive and negative impact on people’s health both within the group and outside hence the need to critically look at the relationship between the two.

**Objectives**

1. To find out the socio-cultural and behavioral factors available in relation to sanitation
2. To assess the impact effects of Socio-Cultural and behavioral factors have on sanitation

**Methodology**

1. Face to Face Interview
2. Observation

**Results and Discussion**

According to the observations and interviews conducted it is clear that culture and patterned behavior has a bearing on sanitation and personal hygiene adoption. Among Yao people in Idrusi village cleanliness is a crucial cultural value. Since most of the population in the area is dominantly Muslim, it is a requirement that every individual must keep him or herself ritually clean for prayers and avoid cleanliness-degrading activities that nullify “*wudu”* like urination and defecation through washing of execratory parts of the body with water after visiting toilet. Hence, almost every household’s toilet and a bathroom is equipped with a bucket of water and a cup.

However, even though the wudu act promotes cleanliness, it poses some threats on an individual’s health especially if one is not using soap; and there are also threats of hypothermia in cold weather. In an event one is not able to perform Wudu with water he or she may use sand or dust which is not hygienic. This form of cleanliness is paradoxical to health. The availability of water in Idrusi village does not translate to hygiene practices in terms of storage and use. Water usually gets contaminated from source to storage; they use open buckets to draw water and store in the same.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion; some Socio-cultural and behavioral practices promote good sanitation and hygiene practices in themselves. However, there is need for hygiene promotion messages to make people aware of some behaviors or beliefs that are hazardous to their health.