

Abstract

The purpose of the study was to assess the problems facing the world, South Africa and in particular New Forest in the provision of water and sanitation. New Forest is a small village found in Mpumalanga province. The issue of improving water and sanitation began over centuries ago, but still there are countless factors hindering water and sanitation services. The study has progressed through various phases. The first phase of the case study included sampling of the household in New Forest. The second phase included the use questionnaires, literature review, site observation and telephone interview as a data collection tools. In parallel with the literature survey, collection of basic background data was obtained from journals, water reports and approved thesis from internet, for site observation collection of data was done by taking photos and for telephone interviews data was collected through notes writing. The study used the combination of qualitative and quantitative approach. The third phase included combining the findings of several studies and this data was critically analysed using, notes writing, tables and graphs.

Through the distribution of questionnaires to members of the village it was confirmed that there was water and sanitation problem. For most people the desire was to have access to water and sanitation. The community's access to water and sanitation is severely limited due to their socio-economic status, mostly poverty. The villager's access to water and sanitation is caused by lack of employment. Lack of unemployment forces people migrate to urban to look for better opportunities. Most rural people are poor and are highly affected by privatisation. Lack of participation is another socio-economic factor that deprives people from receiving water and sanitation services, people in this village are poorly informed on almost aspect of water and sanitation problems. Water and sanitation coverage is poor in this village due to infrastructure failure.

The literature search showed that there are also other factors contributing to water and sanitation problems, which includes lack of capital and funds by the government to provide access to water and sanitation. Water and sanitation coverage is poor in rural areas because of the scattered nature of settlements. The increasing population was also causing serious depletion in water's availability and this was also causing an impact on the environment and economy. Water availability is also limited by low or irregular rainfalls and again there is too much water available on the world surface, but most of this water is saltwater and only a small amount of freshwater is accessible. xiv

People use indigenous knowledge to survive water and sanitation problem. People in New Forest dig traditional hand dug wells to survive water problems and some access water from the community river. The community borehole also supply water to the villagers, but when water is not available people hire cars to collect water for them in areas where water is available. People in New forest use pit latrine for sanitation. Pit latrines are considered as part of improved sanitation options. These facilities are cheap, easy to operate and no maintenance is required. Majority of the villagers do not own flushing toilets because of water shortage and some villagers do not have toilets at all; they share toilets with their neighbours. In conclusion the assessment of water and sanitation problem led to recommendations of mitigating these problems in the village of New Forest.