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Muhammad Ikhtiar <muhammad.ikhtiar@umi.ac.id>

HLS - Healthcare in Low-resources Settings [paper #13381] - Submission Acknowledgement

Teresa Carrara from PAGEPress Publications <sendmail@pagepress.eu>

Wed, Nov 13, 2024 at 7:37 PM

Reply-To: Teresa Carrara <teresa.carrara@pagepress.org>

To: Muhammad Ikhtiar <muhammad.ikhtiar@umi.ac.id>

Dear Muhammad Ikhtiar:

Thank you for submitting the manuscript, "SOCIAL SUPPORT FOR STOP OPEN DEFECATION FREE: INCREASE AWARENESS AND HEALTHY BEHAVIOR" to Healthcare in Low-resource Settings. With the online journal management system that we are using, you will be able to track its progress through the editorial process by logging in to the journal web site:

Manuscript URL: <https://www.pagepressjournals.org/hls/authorDashboard/submission/13381>

Username: ikhtiar2024

If you have any questions, please contact me. Thank you for considering this journal as a venue for your work.

Teresa Carrara

[Healthcare in Low-resource Settings](#)

HLS - Healthcare in Low-resources Settings [paper #13381] - Revision

teresa.carrara teresa.carrara <teresa.carrara@pagepress.org>
To: Muhammad Ikhtiar <muhammad.ikhtiar@umi.ac.id>

Wed, Nov 20, 2024 at 5:16 PM

Dear Muhammad Ikhtiar:

We have reached a decision regarding your submission the manuscript "SOCIAL SUPPORT FOR STOP OPEN DEFECATION FREE: INCREASE AWARENESS AND HEALTHY BEHAVIOR" to Healthcare in Low-resource Settings. Please be so kind as to address the comments provided by the reviewers below

Our decision is The paper in question requires major revisions.

Kind regards,
Teresa Carrar

~~~~~  
#Reviewer 1:

1. Add aim in abstract and total sample in research
2. Keywords consists of 3-5 words
3. You should start with global prevalence data on access to basic sanitation
4. Before in paragraph, your make in sentences or words that emphasize the urgency of your research
5. Add aim in study in last paragraph
6. This is a method but it is incomplete in conveying data analysis techniques, please add it
7. Education in sample is very important but you failed to present sample education data
8. Narrative sentences explaining the table need to be completed after the table as an illustration for the reader

#Reviewer 2:

1. Please modification in tittle, option: social support to eradicate open defecation: raise awareness and promote healthy behavior
2. Your mention about novelty and aim your research

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[Healthcare in Low-resource Settings](#)



Muhammad Ikhtiar <muhammad.ikhtiar@umi.ac.id>

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## HLS - Healthcare in Low-resources Settings [paper #13381] - Revision

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**Muhammad Ikhtiar** <muhammad.ikhtiar@umi.ac.id>

Tue, Nov 26, 2024 at 6:56 PM

To: Teresa Carrara <teresa.carrara@pagepress.org>

Dear Editor,

We have completed the revision according to the recommendations of the reviewers

Best Regards  
Muhammad Ikhtiar  
Universitas Muslim Indonesia

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 **response to the reviewer's comments.pdf**  
24K

 **13381-R1.pdf**  
198K

## RESPON TO REVIEWER

| <b>From Reviewer 1</b>                                                                                                            | <b>Respon from author</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Add aim in abstract and total sample in research                                                                                  | Ok, Page 1 (Line 3-5 in abstract)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Keywords consists of 3-5 words                                                                                                    | Done , social support, ODF, health behavior, cross sectional study (in keywords)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| you should start with global prevalence data on access to basic sanitation                                                        | Globally, over 1.5 million people are still without access to basic sanitation services, such as private toilets and latrines. (page 1, line 16-18)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Before in paragraph, your make in sentences or words that emphasize the urgency of your research                                  | The provision of triggering and latrine assistance has been conducted in stages. However, it has been, observed that a proportion of the population has not accessed this assistance due to a lack of financial resources to purchase the necessary materials. Additionally, there are individuals within the community who do not perceive latrines as a priority and even construct residences that lack bathroom or toilet facilities. It is therefore evident that a robust commitment and motivation from the community, coupled with the provision of social support, is essential to encourage individuals to adopt healthier behaviours. (Page 2 , paragraph 4) |
| Add aim in study in last paragraph                                                                                                | Aim of this study is to analyse social support for stopping open defecation, with a view to improving awareness and healthy behaviour among coastal communities. (Page 2, paragraph 5)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| This is a method but it is incomplete in conveying data analysis techniques, please add it.                                       | Univariate and bivariate data analysis was conducted (Page 2-3)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Education in sample is very important but you failed to present sample education data                                             | Done add in education item in tabel 1 (Table 1 , chracteristic responndnet)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| narrative sentences explaining the table need to be completed after the table as an illustration for the reader                   | Done, we have added explanations below each table 1,2, and 3                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Reviewer 2</b>                                                                                                                 | <b>Respon Author</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Please modification in tittle , option: social support to eradicate open defecation: raise awareness and promote healthy behavior | Done, new tittle : SOCIAL SUPPORT FOR STOP OPEN DEFECATION FREE: INCREASE AWARENESS AND HEALTHY BEHAVIOR                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Your mention about novelty and aim your research                                                                                  | Aim of this study is to analyse social support for stopping open defecation, with a view to improving awareness and healthy behaviour among coastal communities (Page 2-3)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |

# ANALYSIS STOP OPEN DEFECATION FREE:INCREASE AWARENESS AND HEALTHY BEHAVIOR

## ABSTRACT

Indonesia has achieved 100% Open Defecation Free (ODF) status as a wholeThe research was conducted in the catchment area of the Manggarabombang community health centre in Takalar Regency. The data were analysed using both univariate and bivariate techniques.. The results of the statistical tests using

the chi-square test yielded a p-value of 0.000, which is less than 0.05. This indicates that there is a statistically significant relationship between social support, including the role of health workers, community leaders, and religious leaders, and open defecation behavior. Social support is a significant factor in promoting ODF behaviour change. The study's findings indicate that emotional social support and exposure to information about the health risks associated with open defecation motivate individuals to maintain healthy practices in their environment. With knowledge and awareness of the importance of personal health, individuals are more likely to adopt long-term ODF behaviours.

**Keyword:** social support, ODF,

**Jeclin Romero [R11]:** Add aim in abstract and total sample in research

**Jeclin Romero [R12]:** Keywords consists of 3-5 words

## INTRODUCTION

419 million people continue to defecate in unprotected locations, including street gutters, vacant lots, and open water (1). Sanitation-related issues have become a global concern, including in Indonesia, which has set the goal of achieving 0% open defecation and 15% access to safe sanitation by 2024 (2-4). The Community-Based Total Sanitation Profile up to 2021 indicates that Indonesia's population of 288.22 million people still includes 32.77 million individuals engaged in open defecation practices (5,6).

**Jeclin Romero [R13]:** you should start with global prevalence data on access to basic sanitation

The Indonesian government has implemented a series of initiatives with the objective of sustaining a decline in the prevalence of open defecation on an annual basis. It is anticipated that 100% open defecation will be achieved by 2025, while 100% access to improved sanitation is predicted to be achieved by 2027 (7,8). Despite the limitations of the data, it would appear that access to safe sanitation has remained constant at 7% over the past five years, which suggests that there is still much work to be done by all parties (2,9). It remains challenging to alter long-established habits and practices regarding latrine use, particularly in coastal areas, due to deeply entrenched cultural norms and behaviours. Furthermore, there are households that possess latrines but refrain from utilising them, despite convenient access to water, due to the unfitness or unsanitary nature of the latrines (10, 11).

As reported by the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia in 2022, the prevalence of open defecation in Indonesia has exhibited a declining trend over time, with an estimated 5.69% of the population engaging in this practice (2). This is inextricably linked to the numerous initiatives implemented by the government with the objective of eradicating open defecation, including the provision of latrines and the implementation of awareness-raising campaigns. However, despite these efforts, many individuals and communities continue to exhibit a reluctance to alter their practices, particularly in coastal areas. In such cases, government cooperation across institutions is typically conducted with the objective of providing education to the community with the aim of preventing open defecation. Information, communication and education (ICE) pertains to the domain of knowledge and attitudes that are anticipated to exert an influence on open defecation (ODF) practices. Nevertheless, despite the presence of positive knowledge and attitudes, many individuals persist in engaging in open defecation. This underscores the necessity for an approach that directly engages with the community through social support. Unhealthy behaviours that are unconscious and deeply entrenched necessitate social support due to the absence of robust social norms and the lack of social support for healthy behaviours, including the ownership and utilisation of latrines (12, 13).

It is anticipated that the assistance of local residents, particularly community leaders, will facilitate the government's efforts to establish a healthy environment. The findings indicate that a significant number of residents continue to engage in open defecation due to a lack of social support from community leaders. Additionally, there is a lack of social disapproval or warning from their social environment if someone is caught engaging in open defecation. While many residents are aware that open defecation is unhealthy, this awareness is often disregarded if it is not accompanied by community involvement and commitment to achieving open defecation-free status (14, 15). Open defecation practices are prevalent across Indonesia, particularly in coastal areas, including South Sulawesi.

The province of South Sulawesi has reported and declared that the year 2023 was 100% open defecation free (ODF), although the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) has indicated that there were still 2.26% of households engaging in open defecation. This represents a decrease from the 3.69% of households engaged in open defecation in 2022 (16). The government has invested significant resources in the pursuit of achieving zero open defecation, a goal that has been met in Takalar District by 2023 (17). The 100% ODF status has not necessarily resulted in the complete eradication of open defecation practices among residents in riverine and coastal areas of Takalar. Despite the implementation of triggering and monitoring activities by local health workers, open defecation persists in rivers, gardens, and other open spaces. A 2022 data set from the Takalar District Health Office revealed that 120 households in the Bontomanai village area of the Mangarabombang Community Health Centre continued to engage in open defecation due to a lack of access to latrines. These households exhibited both the practice of open defecation and the presence of latrines, yet the latter were not functioning properly. In the subsequent year, the number of latrine owners increased as a result of the local government's latrine assistance program (18).

This study elucidates the role of social support provided by community leaders in the Mangarabombang area, which has achieved 100% open defecation free status. However, despite this, a significant proportion of residents continue to engage in open defecation practices. It is typically the case that, when an achievement reaches its target, it will be accompanied by sustainable positive behaviour. However, this study has revealed that there are still residents, both children and adults, who are ODF and resort to hitchhiking when defecating because they do not have a toilet.

**Jeclin Romero [R14]:** Before in paragraph, your make in sentences or words that emphasize the urgency of your research

**Jeclin Romero [R15]:** Add aim in study in last paragraph

## METHODS

A cross-sectional study design was employed to utilise quantitative methods. The research was conducted in the catchment area of the Manggarabombang Health Centre in Takalar Regency. with data presentation utilising narration, distribution tables and graphs. The population comprised 178 households, with sampling conducted using the Slovin formula to obtain 123 households.

**Jeclin Romero [R16]:** This is a method but it is incomplete in conveying data analysis techniques, please add it.

## RESULTS

Table 1. Respondent Characteristics

| Characteristics | n  | %    |
|-----------------|----|------|
| <b>Umur</b>     |    |      |
| < 20 years      | 3  | 2,4  |
| 20-29 years     | 26 | 21,1 |
| 30-39 years     | 25 | 20,4 |
| 40-49 years     | 35 | 28,5 |
| > 49 years      | 34 | 27,6 |
| <b>Gender</b>   |    |      |
| Male            | 54 | 36.4 |
| Female          | 69 | 63.6 |

**Jeclin Romero [R17]:** Education in sample is very important but you failed to present sample education data

|                                 |     |       |
|---------------------------------|-----|-------|
| Not Working                     | 17  | 13,8  |
| <b>Occupation</b>               |     |       |
| Trader/self-employed            | 14  | 11,3  |
| Farmer/fisherman                | 38  | 30,9  |
| Laborer                         | 8   | 6,5   |
| Not Working                     | 29  | 23,6  |
| Housewife                       | 34  | 27,7  |
| <b>Income of Head of Family</b> |     |       |
| >Rp.3.643.321,- / Month         | 0   | 0     |
| <Rp.3.643.321,- / Month         | 123 | 100,0 |
| <b>Latrine Ownership</b>        |     |       |
| Has a toilet                    | 78  | 63,4  |
| Do not have a toilet            | 45  | 36,6  |
| <b>Total</b>                    | 123 | 100   |

Source: Primary Data 2024

**Jeclin Romero [R18]:** narrative sentences explaining the table need to be completed after the table as an illustration for the reader

Table 2. Distribution of respondents' answers based on Social support to the community to Stop Open defecation

| Number | Statement                                                                                                                                                                      | Yes |      | No |      |
|--------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|------|----|------|
|        |                                                                                                                                                                                | n   | %    | n  | %    |
| 1      | Health workers engage in the provision of counselling services pertaining to the ownership and utilisation of latrines.                                                        | 113 | 92.0 | 10 | 8,0  |
| 2      | The health worker recommends that family members utilize the toilet at home, provided that such a facility is available.                                                       | 116 | 94.4 | 7  | 5,6  |
| 3      | Health professionals elucidate the health risks associated with the lack of access to adequate sanitation facilities.                                                          | 118 | 96.0 | 5  | 4,0  |
| 4      | In the preceding 12-month period, health workers have conducted home surveys.                                                                                                  | 121 | 98.4 | 2  | 1,6  |
| 5      | In order to facilitate the utilisation of latrines, village officials, community leaders and religious leaders collaborate with household heads to ensure their participation. | 120 | 97,6 | 3  | 2,4  |
| 6      | A programme of empowerment has been developed for village officials, community leaders and religious leaders with a view to encouraging the use of latrines.                   | 119 | 97.4 | 4  | 3,2  |
| 7      | The village head, community leaders and religious leaders are involved in the provision of advice and guidance on the construction of healthy latrines.                        | 107 | 87.2 | 16 | 12.8 |
| 8      | In order to facilitate the use and utilisation of latrines, village officials, community leaders and religious leaders have provided assistance.                               | 122 | 99.2 | 1  | 0.8  |

|    |                                                                                     |     |      |    |      |
|----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|------|----|------|
| 9  | The role of family members in encouraging the utilisation of the latrine.           | 119 | 97.4 | 4  | 3,2  |
| 10 | The utilisation of latrines is viewed favourably by the local population.           | 122 | 99.2 | 1  | 0.8  |
| 11 | In the event of open defecation, neighbours are quick to express their disapproval. | 102 | 83,2 | 21 | 16,8 |

#### Research variables

The distribution of respondents regarding the role of social support in achieving an ODF status is illustrated in the following table.

Table 3. Distribution of respondents based on the role of social support in stop open defecation behavior

| Research Variable          | n          | %            |
|----------------------------|------------|--------------|
| <b>Social Support</b>      |            |              |
| Enough                     | 108        | 87,8         |
| Lack                       | 15         | 12,2         |
| <b>Defecation Behavior</b> |            |              |
| Open Defecation            | 6          | 4,9          |
| ODF                        | 117        | 95,1         |
| <b>Total</b>               | <b>123</b> | <b>100,0</b> |

Source: Primary Data 2024

#### Bivariate analysis

Table 4. Relationship between social support and open defecation behavior

| Social support | Open defecation (OD) behavior |      |     |      | Total |       | P value |
|----------------|-------------------------------|------|-----|------|-------|-------|---------|
|                | OD                            |      | ODF |      | N     |       |         |
|                | n                             | %    | n   | %    |       |       |         |
| Lack           | 6                             | 40,0 | 9   | 60,0 | 15    | 100,0 | 0,000   |
| Enough         | 0                             | 0,0  | 108 | 86,4 | 108   | 100,0 |         |
| Total          | 6                             | 4,9  | 117 | 95,1 | 123   | 100   |         |

Source: Primary Data 2024

## DISCUSSION

The role of social support is to facilitate community participation, thereby enhancing the capacity to adopt and maintain clean and healthy behaviours. The influence of social support, including that from family, friends and neighbours, on health-improvement behaviours is well documented. Social relationships and social support are reciprocal and can influence both positive and negative behaviours (19, 20). Other forms of social support, which can be provided by health workers, local government, religious leaders and community leaders in conjunction with the promotion of family latrines, include the dissemination of information and the delivery of educational programmes about the advantages of latrines. Additionally, assistance can be provided to communities that continue to practise open defecation, with the aim of fostering motivation and awareness among these communities with regard to the ownership and utilisation of latrines (21-23).

The results demonstrated that the relationship between social support, including the role of health workers, and open defecation behaviour can be observed in Table 3. Social support in relation to open defecation behaviour was classified as sufficient in the case of 108 respondents, representing 87.8% of the total sample. The role of health workers was deemed sufficient when respondents scored a minimum of 50%. In the case of the 15 respondents (12.2% of the total sample) who were classified in the "less" category, the role of health workers was deemed to be less influential when the respondents scored less than 50%.

Table 4 illustrates that households that receive social support from health workers, religious leaders, community leaders and local government are lacking and engage in open defecation practices. This is evidenced by the fact that 6 households (40.0%) fall into this category. This situation can be attributed to the fact that there are still individuals who have not been made aware of the consequences of open defecation and who continue to engage in this practice due to the lack of social disapproval and the absence of any adverse consequences in their immediate environment. Another contributing factor is that some households have not yet received facilities from stop defecation programmes, such as the free latrine programme provided by the government. This is because the provision of these facilities is being made in stages. Nevertheless, there are also households that have received free latrines but remain indifferent and do not construct and utilise them on the grounds that they require funds for other materials. Therefore, it is necessary to implement a voluntary community awareness programme to stop open defecation, as it can have a negative impact on their own health (24, 25).

A total of 108 respondents (86.4%) indicated that they received sufficient social support and did not engage in open defecation behaviour. This is corroborated by the fact that health workers frequently conduct educational initiatives with the objective of triggering behavioural change. This approach has been shown to be effective in fostering awareness and encouraging individuals to adopt recommended healthy behaviours. Furthermore, the latrine assistance programme serves to encourage community members to utilise latrines in order to maintain a defecation-free environment. The role of the local government is to reinforce behavioural change by setting an example and providing a trigger to protect the environment, which includes the use of latrines (26, 27). In accordance with Lawrence Green's theory (28-30), which posits that behaviour change is determined by three factors, namely predisposing, enabling and reinforcing, it can be argued that education through triggering can facilitate or predispose change in knowledge and attitudes. Similarly, social support and the provision of facilities are effective in motivating ODF, such as the involvement of community leaders and neighbours in the use of latrines. This will shape positive perceptions for other families, as religious and community leaders are important supporters of behaviour change (31, 32). Health workers, religious and community leaders and local government are reinforcers for the community to change, as they are the reference group for community behaviour (33, 34).

There is a notable correlation between social support and open defecation behaviour. The role of health workers and other relevant stakeholders is of great consequence in influencing individuals' behaviour with regard to open defecation. The results demonstrate that open defecation behaviour is more prevalent among respondents with limited social support than among those who receive social support. The chi-square statistical test in this study yielded a p-value of ( $0.000 > 0.05$ ), indicating a statistically significant relationship between the role of health workers and open defecation behaviour in the Mangarabombang puskesmas area, Takalar Regency.

The role of health workers and community leaders in influencing open defecation habits is contingent upon a number of factors. Firstly, there must be exposure to information, assistance from health workers and community leaders, and reprimands if ODF. Secondly, the community must be disciplined in utilising latrines. These two factors, when present, can act as a catalyst for behavioural change (35, 36). Households that have never received education from health workers are at risk of becoming open defecation free (ODF) by a factor of 5.037 compared to people who have been exposed to health workers (37, 38). The importance of social support from the social environment greatly influences the healthy behaviour of others and will increase public awareness of the adoption of recommended behaviours such

as defecation free practices. This is because a healthy environment is proven to improve the health status of the community.

## CONCLUSION

The findings of the research indicate that social support from health workers, religious leaders and community leaders is a significant factor in the adoption of healthy behaviours. Exposure to information and emotional support from individuals who have ceased open defecation is an important motivator for others to protect their environment, as knowledge and awareness of the benefits of healthy practices can lead to long-term behaviour change towards achieving Open Defecation Free (ODF) status.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We would like to express our gratitude to the Directorate of Research, Technology and Community Service, Directorate General of Higher Education, Research and Technology, Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia for providing financial support for this fundamental basic research project in 2024. We would also like to acknowledge the Muslim University of Indonesia for their continued encouragement and assistance in advancing our knowledge, as well as the Government of Takalar Regency, South Sulawesi, for allowing us to conduct our research in their region. Finally, we would like to thank all those who have contributed to this research project in any way.

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## ANALYSIS STOP OPEN DEFECATION FREE: INCREASE AWARENESS AND HEALTHY BEHAVIOR

Xi Chi [R01]: Please modification in title , option: social support to eradicate open defecation: raise awareness and promote healthy behavior

### ABSTRACT

Indonesia has achieved 100% Open Defecation Free (ODF) status as a whole. The research was conducted in the catchment area of the Manggarabombang community health centre in Takalar Regency. The data were analysed using both univariate and bivariate techniques. The results of the statistical tests using the chi-square test yielded a p-value of 0.000, which is less than 0.05. This indicates that there is a statistically significant relationship between social support, including the role of health workers, community leaders, and religious leaders, and open defecation behavior. Social support is a significant factor in promoting ODF behaviour change. The study's findings indicate that emotional social support and exposure to information about the health risks associated with open defecation motivate individuals to maintain healthy practices in their environment. With knowledge and awareness of the importance of personal health, individuals are more likely to adopt long-term ODF behaviours.

**Keyword:** social support, ODF

### INTRODUCTION

419 million people continue to defecate in unprotected locations, including street gutters, vacant lots, and open water (1). Sanitation-related issues have become a global concern, including in Indonesia, which has set the goal of achieving 0% open defecation and 15% access to safe sanitation by 2024 (2-4). The Community-Based Total Sanitation Profile up to 2021 indicates that Indonesia's population of 288.22 million people still includes 32.77 million individuals engaged in open defecation practices (5,6).

The Indonesian government has implemented a series of initiatives with the objective of sustaining a decline in the prevalence of open defecation on an annual basis. It is anticipated that 100% open defecation will be achieved by 2025, while 100% access to improved sanitation is predicted to be achieved by 2027 (7,8). Despite the limitations of the data, it would appear that access to safe sanitation has remained constant at 7% over the past five years, which suggests that there is still much work to be done by all parties (2,9). It remains challenging to alter long-established habits and practices regarding latrine use, particularly in coastal areas, due to deeply entrenched cultural norms and behaviours. Furthermore, there are households that possess latrines but refrain from utilising them, despite convenient access to water, due to the unfitness or unsanitary nature of the latrines (10, 11).

As reported by the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia in 2022, the prevalence of open defecation in Indonesia has exhibited a declining trend over time, with an estimated 5.69% of the population engaging in this practice (2). This is inextricably linked to the numerous initiatives implemented by the government with the objective of eradicating open defecation, including the provision of latrines and the implementation of awareness-raising campaigns. However, despite these efforts, many individuals and communities continue to exhibit a reluctance to alter their practices, particularly in coastal areas. In such cases, government cooperation across institutions is typically conducted with the objective of providing education to the community with the aim of preventing open defecation. Information, communication and education (ICE) pertains to the domain of knowledge and attitudes that are anticipated to exert an influence on open defecation (ODF) practices. Nevertheless, despite the presence of positive knowledge and attitudes, many individuals persist in engaging in open defecation. This underscores the necessity for an approach that directly engages with the community through social support. Unhealthy behaviours that are unconscious and deeply entrenched necessitate social support due to the absence of robust social norms and the lack of social support for healthy behaviours, including the ownership and utilisation of latrines (12, 13).

It is anticipated that the assistance of local residents, particularly community leaders, will facilitate the government's efforts to establish a healthy environment. The findings indicate that a significant number of residents continue to engage in open defecation due to a lack of social support from community leaders. Additionally, there is a lack of social disapproval or warning from their social environment if someone is caught engaging in open defecation. While many residents are aware that open defecation is unhealthy, this awareness is often disregarded if it is not accompanied by community involvement and commitment to achieving open defecation-free status (14, 15). Open defecation practices are prevalent across Indonesia, particularly in coastal areas, including South Sulawesi.

The province of South Sulawesi has reported and declared that the year 2023 was 100% open defecation free (ODF), although the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) has indicated that there were still 2.26% of households engaging in open defecation. This represents a decrease from the 3.69% of households engaged in open defecation in 2022 (16). The government has invested significant resources in the pursuit of achieving zero open defecation, a goal that has been met in Takalar District by 2023 (17). The 100% ODF status has not necessarily resulted in the complete eradication of open defecation practices among residents in riverine and coastal areas of Takalar. Despite the implementation of triggering and monitoring activities by local health workers, open defecation persists in rivers, gardens, and other open spaces. A 2022 data set from the Takalar District Health Office revealed that 120 households in the Bontomanai village area of the Mangarabombang Community Health Centre continued to engage in open defecation due to a lack of access to latrines. These households exhibited both the practice of open defecation and the presence of latrines, yet the latter were not functioning properly. In the subsequent year, the number of latrine owners increased as a result of the local government's latrine assistance program (18).

This study elucidates the role of social support provided by community leaders in the Mangarabombang area, which has achieved 100% open defecation free status. However, despite this, a significant proportion of residents continue to engage in open defecation practices. It is typically the case that, when an achievement reaches its target, it will be accompanied by sustainable positive behaviour. However, this study has revealed that there are still residents, both children and adults, who are ODF and resort to hitchhiking when defecating because they do not have a toilet.

Xi Chi [R02]: Your mention about novelty and aim your research

METHODS

A cross-sectional study design was employed to utilise quantitative methods. The research was conducted in the catchment area of the Manggarabombang Health Centre in Takalar Regency. with data presentation utilising narration, distribution tables and graphs. The population comprised 178 households, with sampling conducted using the Slovin formula to obtain 123 households.

RESULTS

Table 1. Respondent Characteristics

| Characteristics | n  | %    |
|-----------------|----|------|
| Umur            |    |      |
| < 20 years      | 3  | 2,4  |
| 20-29 years     | 26 | 21,1 |
| 30-39 years     | 25 | 20,4 |
| 40-49 years     | 35 | 28,5 |
| > 55 years      | 34 | 27,6 |
| Gender          |    |      |
| Male            | 54 | 36.4 |
| Female          | 69 | 63.6 |

|                                 |     |       |
|---------------------------------|-----|-------|
| Not Working                     | 17  | 13,8  |
| <b>Occupation</b>               |     |       |
| Trader/self-employed            | 14  | 11,3  |
| Farmer/fisherman                | 38  | 30,9  |
| Laborer                         | 8   | 6,5   |
| Not Working                     | 29  | 23,6  |
| Housewife                       | 34  | 27,7  |
| <b>Income of Head of Family</b> |     |       |
| >Rp.3.643.321,- / Month         | 0   | 0     |
| <Rp.3.643.321,- / Month         | 123 | 100,0 |
| <b>Latrine Ownership</b>        |     |       |
| Has a toilet                    | 78  | 63,4  |
| Do not have a toilet            | 45  | 36,6  |
| <b>Total</b>                    | 123 | 100   |

Source: Primary Data 2024

Table 2. Distribution of respondents' answers based on Social support to the community to Stop Open defecation

| Number | Statement                                                                                                                                                                      | Yes |      | No |      |
|--------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|------|----|------|
|        |                                                                                                                                                                                | n   | %    | n  | %    |
| 1      | Health workers engage in the provision of counselling services pertaining to the ownership and utilisation of latrines.                                                        | 113 | 92.0 | 10 | 8,0  |
| 2      | The health worker recommends that family members utilize the toilet at home, provided that such a facility is available.                                                       | 116 | 94.4 | 7  | 5,6  |
| 3      | Health professionals elucidate the health risks associated with the lack of access to adequate sanitation facilities.                                                          | 118 | 96.0 | 5  | 4,0  |
| 4      | In the preceding 12-month period, health workers have conducted home surveys.                                                                                                  | 121 | 98.4 | 2  | 1,6  |
| 5      | In order to facilitate the utilisation of latrines, village officials, community leaders and religious leaders collaborate with household heads to ensure their participation. | 120 | 97,6 | 3  | 2,4  |
| 6      | A programme of empowerment has been developed for village officials, community leaders and religious leaders with a view to encouraging the use of latrines.                   | 119 | 97.4 | 4  | 3,2  |
| 7      | The village head, community leaders and religious leaders are involved in the provision of advice and guidance on the construction of healthy latrines.                        | 107 | 87.2 | 16 | 12.8 |
| 8      | In order to facilitate the use and utilisation of latrines, village officials, community leaders and religious leaders have provided assistance.                               | 122 | 99.2 | 1  | 0.8  |

|    |                                                                                     |     |      |    |      |
|----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|------|----|------|
| 9  | The role of family members in encouraging the utilisation of the latrine.           | 119 | 97.4 | 4  | 3,2  |
| 10 | The utilisation of latrines is viewed favourably by the local population.           | 122 | 99.2 | 1  | 0.8  |
| 11 | In the event of open defecation, neighbours are quick to express their disapproval. | 102 | 83,2 | 21 | 16,8 |

#### Research variables

The distribution of respondents regarding the role of social support in achieving an ODF status is illustrated in the following table.

Table 3. Distribution of respondents based on the role of social support in stop open defecation behavior

| Research Variable          | n          | %            |
|----------------------------|------------|--------------|
| <b>Social Support</b>      |            |              |
| Enough                     | 108        | 87,8         |
| Lack                       | 15         | 12,2         |
| <b>Defecation Behavior</b> |            |              |
| Open Defecation            | 6          | 4,9          |
| ODF                        | 117        | 95,1         |
| <b>Total</b>               | <b>123</b> | <b>100,0</b> |

Source: Primary Data 2024

#### Bivariate analysis

Table 4. Relationship between social support and open defecation behavior

| Social support | Open defecation (OD) behavior |      |     |      | Total |       | P value |
|----------------|-------------------------------|------|-----|------|-------|-------|---------|
|                | OD                            |      | ODF |      | N     |       |         |
|                | n                             | %    | n   | %    |       |       |         |
| Lack           | 6                             | 40,0 | 9   | 60,0 | 15    | 100,0 | 0,000   |
| Enough         | 0                             | 0,0  | 108 | 86,4 | 108   | 100,0 |         |
| Total          | 6                             | 4.9  | 117 | 95.1 | 123   | 100   |         |

Source: Primary Data 2024

## DISCUSSION

The role of social support is to facilitate community participation, thereby enhancing the capacity to adopt and maintain clean and healthy behaviours. The influence of social support, including that from family, friends and neighbours, on health-improvement behaviours is well documented. Social relationships and social support are reciprocal and can influence both positive and negative behaviours (19, 20). Other forms of social support, which can be provided by health workers, local government, religious leaders and community leaders in conjunction with the promotion of family latrines, include the dissemination of information and the delivery of educational programmes about the advantages of latrines. Additionally, assistance can be provided to communities that continue to practise open defecation, with the aim of fostering motivation and awareness among these communities with regard to the ownership and utilisation of latrines (21-23).

The results demonstrated that the relationship between social support, including the role of health workers, and open defecation behaviour can be observed in Table 3. Social support in relation to open defecation behaviour was classified as sufficient in the case of 108 respondents, representing 87.8% of the total sample. The role of health workers was deemed sufficient when respondents scored a minimum of 50%. In the case of the 15 respondents (12.2% of the total sample) who were classified in the "less" category, the role of health workers was deemed to be less influential when the respondents scored less than 50%.

Table 4 illustrates that households that receive social support from health workers, religious leaders, community leaders and local government are lacking and engage in open defecation practices. This is evidenced by the fact that 6 households (40.0%) fall into this category. This situation can be attributed to the fact that there are still individuals who have not been made aware of the consequences of open defecation and who continue to engage in this practice due to the lack of social disapproval and the absence of any adverse consequences in their immediate environment. Another contributing factor is that some households have not yet received facilities from stop defecation programmes, such as the free latrine programme provided by the government. This is because the provision of these facilities is being made in stages. Nevertheless, there are also households that have received free latrines but remain indifferent and do not construct and utilise them on the grounds that they require funds for other materials. Therefore, it is necessary to implement a voluntary community awareness programme to stop open defecation, as it can have a negative impact on their own health (24, 25).

A total of 108 respondents (86.4%) indicated that they received sufficient social support and did not engage in open defecation behaviour. This is corroborated by the fact that health workers frequently conduct educational initiatives with the objective of triggering behavioural change. This approach has been shown to be effective in fostering awareness and encouraging individuals to adopt recommended healthy behaviours. Furthermore, the latrine assistance programme serves to encourage community members to utilise latrines in order to maintain a defecation-free environment. The role of the local government is to reinforce behavioural change by setting an example and providing a trigger to protect the environment, which includes the use of latrines (26, 27). In accordance with Lawrence Green's theory (28-30), which posits that behaviour change is determined by three factors, namely predisposing, enabling and reinforcing, it can be argued that education through triggering can facilitate or predispose change in knowledge and attitudes. Similarly, social support and the provision of facilities are effective in motivating ODF, such as the involvement of community leaders and neighbours in the use of latrines. This will shape positive perceptions for other families, as religious and community leaders are important supporters of behaviour change (31, 32). Health workers, religious and community leaders and local government are reinforcers for the community to change, as they are the reference group for community behaviour (33, 34).

There is a notable correlation between social support and open defecation behaviour. The role of health workers and other relevant stakeholders is of great consequence in influencing individuals' behaviour with regard to open defecation. The results demonstrate that open defecation behaviour is more prevalent among respondents with limited social support than among those who receive social support. The chi-square statistical test in this study yielded a p-value of ( $0.000 > 0.05$ ), indicating a statistically significant relationship between the role of health workers and open defecation behaviour in the Mangarabombang Puskesmas area, Takalar Regency.

The role of health workers and community leaders in influencing open defecation habits is contingent upon a number of factors. Firstly, there must be exposure to information, assistance from health workers and community leaders, and reprimands if ODF. Secondly, the community must be disciplined in utilising latrines. These two factors, when present, can act as a catalyst for behavioural change (35, 36). Households that have never received education from health workers are at risk of becoming open defecation free (ODF) by a factor of 5.037 compared to people who have been exposed to health workers (37, 38). The importance of social support from the social environment greatly influences the healthy behaviour of others and will increase public awareness of the adoption of recommended behaviours such

as defecation free practices. This is because a healthy environment is proven to improve the health status of the community.

CONCLUSION

The findings of the research indicate that social support from health workers, religious leaders and community leaders is a significant factor in the adoption of healthy behaviours. Exposure to information and emotional support from individuals who have ceased open defecation is an important motivator for others to protect their environment, as knowledge and awareness of the benefits of healthy practices can lead to long-term behaviour change towards achieving Open Defecation Free (ODF) status.

Xi Chi [R03]: Please suggest in future research recommendation

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# SOCIAL SUPPORT FOR STOP OPEN DEFECATION FREE: INCREASE AWARENESS AND HEALTHY BEHAVIOR

## ABSTRACT

Indonesia has achieved 100% Open Defecation Free (ODF) status as a whole, yet a considerable proportion of the population continues to engage in open defecation practices, particularly in proximity to rivers, swamps, and coastal regions. The objective of this study was to analyse the role of social support in the context of efforts to halt open defecation. This study employed a quantitative methodology with a cross-sectional study design. The research was conducted in the catchment area of the Manggarabombang community health centre in Takalar Regency. The data were analysed using both univariate and bivariate techniques. The results were presented in the form of narrations, distribution tables and graphs. The study population comprised 178 households, with sampling conducted using the Slovin formula to obtain a sample size of 123 households. The results of the statistical tests using the chi-square test yielded a p-value of 0.000, which is less than 0.05. This indicates that there is a statistically significant relationship between social support, including the role of health workers, community leaders, and religious leaders, and open defecation behavior. Social support is a significant factor in promoting ODF behaviour change. The study's findings indicate that emotional social support and exposure to information about the health risks associated with open defecation motivate individuals to maintain healthy practices in their environment. With knowledge and awareness of the importance of personal health, individuals are more likely to adopt long-term ODF behaviours.

**Keyword:** social support, ODF, health behavior, cross sectional study

## INTRODUCTION

Globally, over 1.5 million people are still without access to basic sanitation services, such as private toilets and latrines. Furthermore, 419 million people continue to defecate in unprotected locations, including street gutters, vacant lots, and open water (1). Sanitation-related issues have become a global concern, including in Indonesia, which has set the goal of achieving 0% open defecation and 15% access to safe sanitation by 2024 (2-4). The Community-Based Total Sanitation Profile up to 2021 indicates that Indonesia's population of 288.22 million people still includes 32.77 million individuals engaged in open defecation practices (5,6).

The Indonesian government has implemented a series of initiatives with the objective of sustaining a decline in the prevalence of open defecation on an annual basis. It is anticipated that 100% open defecation will be achieved by 2025, while 100% access to improved sanitation is predicted to be achieved by 2027 (7,8). Despite the limitations of the data, it would appear that access to safe sanitation has remained constant at 7% over the past five years, which suggests that there is still much work to be done by all parties (2,9). It remains challenging to alter long-established habits and practices regarding latrine use, particularly in coastal areas, due to deeply entrenched cultural norms and behaviours. Furthermore, there are households that possess latrines but refrain from utilising them, despite convenient access to water, due to the unfitness or unsanitary nature of the latrines (10, 11).

As reported by the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia in 2022, the prevalence of open defecation in Indonesia has exhibited a declining trend over time, with an estimated 5.69% of the population engaging in this practice (2). This is inextricably linked to the numerous initiatives implemented by the government with the objective of eradicating open defecation, including the provision of latrines and the implementation of awareness-raising campaigns. However, despite these efforts, many individuals and communities continue to exhibit a reluctance to alter their practices, particularly in coastal areas. In such cases, government cooperation across institutions is typically

conducted with the objective of providing education to the community with the aim of preventing open defecation. Information, communication and education (ICE) pertains to the domain of knowledge and attitudes that are anticipated to exert an influence on open defecation (ODF) practices. Nevertheless, despite the presence of positive knowledge and attitudes, many individuals persist in engaging in open defecation. This underscores the necessity for an approach that directly engages with the community through social support. Unhealthy behaviours that are unconscious and deeply entrenched necessitate social support due to the absence of robust social norms and the lack of social support for healthy behaviours, including the ownership and utilisation of latrines (12, 13).

It is anticipated that the assistance of local residents, particularly community leaders, will facilitate the government's efforts to establish a healthy environment. The findings indicate that a significant number of residents continue to engage in open defecation due to a lack of social support from community leaders. Additionally, there is a lack of social disapproval or warning from their social environment if someone is caught engaging in open defecation. While many residents are aware that open defecation is unhealthy, this awareness is often disregarded if it is not accompanied by community involvement and commitment to achieving open defecation-free status (14, 15). Open defecation practices are prevalent across Indonesia, particularly in coastal areas, including South Sulawesi.

The province of South Sulawesi has reported and declared that the year 2023 was 100% open defecation free (ODF), although the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) has indicated that there were still 2.26% of households engaging in open defecation. This represents a decrease from the 3.69% of households engaged in open defecation in 2022 (16). The government has invested significant resources in the pursuit of achieving zero open defecation, a goal that has been met in Takalar District by 2023 (17). The 100% ODF status has not necessarily resulted in the complete eradication of open defecation practices among residents in riverine and coastal areas of Takalar. Despite the implementation of triggering and monitoring activities by local health workers, open defecation persists in rivers, gardens, and other open spaces. A 2022 data set from the Takalar District Health Office revealed that 120 households in the Bontomanai village area of the Mangarabombang Community Health Centre continued to engage in open defecation due to a lack of access to latrines. These households exhibited both the practice of open defecation and the presence of latrines, yet the latter were not functioning properly. In the subsequent year, the number of latrine owners increased as a result of the local government's latrine assistance program (18).

The provision of triggering and latrine assistance has been conducted in stages. However, it has been observed that a proportion of the population has not accessed this assistance due to a lack of financial resources to purchase the necessary materials. Additionally, there are individuals within the community who do not perceive latrines as a priority and even construct residences that lack bathroom or toilet facilities. It is therefore evident that a robust commitment and motivation from the community, coupled with the provision of social support, is essential to encourage individuals to adopt healthier behaviours.

This study elucidates the role of social support provided by community leaders in the Mangarabombang area, which has achieved 100% open defecation free status. However, despite this, a significant proportion of residents continue to engage in open defecation practices. It is typically the case that, when an achievement reaches its target, it will be accompanied by sustainable positive behaviour. However, this study has revealed that there are still residents, both children and adults, who are ODF and resort to hitchhiking when defecating because they do not have a toilet. The purpose of this study is to analyse social support for stopping open defecation, with a view to improving awareness and healthy behaviour among coastal communities.

## METHODS

A cross-sectional study design was employed to utilise quantitative methods. The research was conducted in the catchment area of the Mangarabombang Health Centre in Takalar Regency. Univariate and bivariate data analysis was conducted, with data presentation utilising narration, distribution tables

and graphs. The population comprised 178 households, with sampling conducted using the Slovin formula to obtain 123 households.

## RESULTS

Table 1. Respondent Characteristics

| Characteristics                 | n   | %     |
|---------------------------------|-----|-------|
| <b>Umur</b>                     |     |       |
| < 20 years                      | 3   | 2,4   |
| 20-29 years                     | 26  | 21,1  |
| 30-39 years                     | 25  | 20,4  |
| 40-49 years                     | 35  | 28,5  |
| > 49 years                      | 34  | 27,6  |
| <b>Gender</b>                   |     |       |
| Male                            | 54  | 36.4  |
| Female                          | 69  | 63.6  |
| <b>Education</b>                |     |       |
| Elementary School               | 57  | 46,4  |
| Senior High School              | 26  | 21,1  |
| High School                     | 23  | 18,7  |
| Not Working                     | 17  | 13,8  |
| <b>Occupation</b>               |     |       |
| Trader/self-employed            | 14  | 11,3  |
| Farmer/fisherman                | 38  | 30,9  |
| Laborer                         | 8   | 6,5   |
| Not Working                     | 29  | 23,6  |
| Housewife                       | 34  | 27,7  |
| <b>Income of Head of Family</b> |     |       |
| >Rp.3.643.321,- / Month         | 0   | 0     |
| <Rp.3.643.321,- / Month         | 123 | 100,0 |
| <b>Latrine Ownership</b>        |     |       |
| Has a toilet                    | 78  | 63,4  |
| Do not have a toilet            | 45  | 36,6  |
| <b>Total</b>                    | 123 | 100   |

Source: Primary Data 2024

Table 1 reveals that the majority of respondents are between the ages of 40 and 49 (28.5%), and that the gender distribution is predominantly female (69%). Additionally, the educational attainment of the respondents is generally at a middle to lower level (81%). The majority of respondents (30.9%) identified as farmers or fishermen, and 84% of income is below the provincial minimum wage. Additionally, 36.6% of households lack access to latrines.

Table 2. Distribution of respondents' answers based on Social support to the community to Stop Open defecation

| Number | Statement | Yes |   | No |   |
|--------|-----------|-----|---|----|---|
|        |           | n   | % | n  | % |

|    |                                                                                                                                                                                |     |      |    |      |
|----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|------|----|------|
| 1  | Health workers engage in the provision of counselling services pertaining to the ownership and utilisation of latrines.                                                        | 113 | 92.0 | 10 | 8,0  |
| 2  | The health worker recommends that family members utilize the toilet at home, provided that such a facility is available.                                                       | 116 | 94.4 | 7  | 5,6  |
| 3  | Health professionals elucidate the health risks associated with the lack of access to adequate sanitation facilities.                                                          | 118 | 96.0 | 5  | 4,0  |
| 4  | In the preceding 12-month period, health workers have conducted home surveys.                                                                                                  | 121 | 98.4 | 2  | 1,6  |
| 5  | In order to facilitate the utilisation of latrines, village officials, community leaders and religious leaders collaborate with household heads to ensure their participation. | 120 | 97,6 | 3  | 2,4  |
| 6  | A programme of empowerment has been developed for village officials, community leaders and religious leaders with a view to encouraging the use of latrines.                   | 119 | 97.4 | 4  | 3,2  |
| 7  | The village head, community leaders and religious leaders are involved in the provision of advice and guidance on the construction of healthy latrines.                        | 107 | 87.2 | 16 | 12.8 |
| 8  | In order to facilitate the use and utilisation of latrines, village officials, community leaders and religious leaders have provided assistance.                               | 122 | 99.2 | 1  | 0.8  |
| 9  | The role of family members in encouraging the utilisation of the latrine.                                                                                                      | 119 | 97.4 | 4  | 3,2  |
| 10 | The utilisation of latrines is viewed favourably by the local population.                                                                                                      | 122 | 99.2 | 1  | 0.8  |
| 11 | In the event of open defecation, neighbours are quick to express their disapproval.                                                                                            | 102 | 83,2 | 21 | 16,8 |

Table 2 presents the responses of the respondents regarding their perception of social support in relation to their open defecation habits. It can be observed that 16.8% of the respondents indicated that there was no reprimand from their neighbours if they defecated outside. Additionally, 12.8% of the respondents reported that religious leaders, hamlet and community leaders did not provide counselling on the importance of stopping open defecation. Furthermore, 5.6% of the respondents stated that they did not receive encouragement to use latrines.

#### Research variables

The distribution of respondents regarding the role of social support in achieving an ODF status is illustrated in the following table.

Table 3. Distribution of respondents based on the role of social support in stop open defecation behavior

| Research Variable | n | % |
|-------------------|---|---|
|-------------------|---|---|

|                            |            |              |
|----------------------------|------------|--------------|
| <b>Social Support</b>      |            |              |
| Enough                     | 108        | 87,8         |
| Lack                       | 15         | 12,2         |
| <b>Defecation Behavior</b> |            |              |
| Open Defecation            | 6          | 4,9          |
| ODF                        | 117        | 95,1         |
| <b>Total</b>               | <b>123</b> | <b>100,0</b> |

Source: Primary Data 2024

### Bivariate analysis

Table 4. Relationship between social support and open defecation behavior

| Social support | Open defecation (OD) behavior |      |     |      | Total |       | <i>P value</i> |
|----------------|-------------------------------|------|-----|------|-------|-------|----------------|
|                | OD                            |      | ODF |      | N     | %     |                |
|                | n                             | %    | n   | %    |       |       | 0,000          |
| Lack           | 6                             | 40,0 | 9   | 60,0 | 15    | 100,0 |                |
| Enough         | 0                             | 0,0  | 108 | 86,4 | 108   | 100,0 |                |
| Total          | 6                             | 4,9  | 117 | 95,1 | 123   | 100   |                |

Source: Primary Data 2024

Table 3 illustrates that 6 (40.0%) of the households surveyed reported receiving inadequate social support and engaging in open defecation practices. Conversely, 108 households (86.4%) indicated that they had sufficient social support to adopt defecation-free behaviours. The results of the chi-square statistical tests indicated a statistically significant relationship between social support and open defecation behaviour ( $p\text{-value} = 0.000 < 0.05$ ). This was observed in the working area of Mangarobombang Health Center, Takalar Regency, where the role of health workers, community leaders, and religious leaders was found to be particularly influential.

## DISCUSSION

The role of social support is to facilitate community participation, thereby enhancing the capacity to adopt and maintain clean and healthy behaviours. The influence of social support, including that from family, friends and neighbours, on health-improvement behaviours is well documented. Social relationships and social support are reciprocal and can influence both positive and negative behaviours (19, 20). Other forms of social support, which can be provided by health workers, local government, religious leaders and community leaders in conjunction with the promotion of family latrines, include the dissemination of information and the delivery of educational programmes about the advantages of latrines. Additionally, assistance can be provided to communities that continue to practise open defecation, with the aim of fostering motivation and awareness among these communities with regard to the ownership and utilisation of latrines (21-23).

The results demonstrated that the relationship between social support, including the role of health workers, and open defecation behaviour can be observed in Table 3. Social support in relation to open defecation behaviour was classified as sufficient in the case of 108 respondents, representing 87.8% of the total sample. The role of health workers was deemed sufficient when respondents scored a minimum of 50%. In the case of the 15 respondents (12.2% of the total sample) who were classified in the "less" category, the role of health workers was deemed to be less influential when the respondents scored less than 50%.

Table 4 illustrates that households that receive social support from health workers, religious leaders, community leaders and local government are lacking and engage in open defecation practices. This is evidenced by the fact that 6 households (40.0%) fall into this category. This situation can be attributed to the fact that there are still individuals who have not been made aware of the consequences of open

defecation and who continue to engage in this practice due to the lack of social disapproval and the absence of any adverse consequences in their immediate environment. Another contributing factor is that some households have not yet received facilities from stop defecation programmes, such as the free latrine programme provided by the government. This is because the provision of these facilities is being made in stages. Nevertheless, there are also households that have received free latrines but remain indifferent and do not construct and utilise them on the grounds that they require funds for other materials. Therefore, it is necessary to implement a voluntary community awareness programme to stop open defecation, as it can have a negative impact on their own health (24, 25).

A total of 108 respondents (86.4%) indicated that they received sufficient social support and did not engage in open defecation behaviour. This is corroborated by the fact that health workers frequently conduct educational initiatives with the objective of triggering behavioural change. This approach has been shown to be effective in fostering awareness and encouraging individuals to adopt recommended healthy behaviours. Furthermore, the latrine assistance programme serves to encourage community members to utilise latrines in order to maintain a defecation-free environment. The role of the local government is to reinforce behavioural change by setting an example and providing a trigger to protect the environment, which includes the use of latrines (26, 27). In accordance with Lawrence Green's theory (28-30), which posits that behaviour change is determined by three factors, namely predisposing, enabling and reinforcing, it can be argued that education through triggering can facilitate or predispose change in knowledge and attitudes. Similarly, social support and the provision of facilities are effective in motivating ODF, such as the involvement of community leaders and neighbours in the use of latrines. This will shape positive perceptions for other families, as religious and community leaders are important supporters of behaviour change (31, 32). Health workers, religious and community leaders and local government are reinforcers for the community to change, as they are the reference group for community behaviour (33, 34).

There is a notable correlation between social support and open defecation behaviour. The role of health workers and other relevant stakeholders is of great consequence in influencing individuals' behaviour with regard to open defecation. The results demonstrate that open defecation behaviour is more prevalent among respondents with limited social support than among those who receive social support. The chi-square statistical test in this study yielded a p-value of ( $0.000 > 0.05$ ), indicating a statistically significant relationship between the role of health workers and open defecation behaviour in the Mangarabombang puskesmas area, Takalar Regency.

The role of health workers and community leaders in influencing open defecation habits is contingent upon a number of factors. Firstly, there must be exposure to information, assistance from health workers and community leaders, and reprimands if ODF. Secondly, the community must be disciplined in utilising latrines. These two factors, when present, can act as a catalyst for behavioural change (35, 36). Households that have never received education from health workers are at risk of becoming open defecation free (ODF) by a factor of 5.037 compared to people who have been exposed to health workers (37, 38). The importance of social support from the social environment greatly influences the healthy behaviour of others and will increase public awareness of the adoption of recommended behaviours such as defecation free practices. This is because a healthy environment is proven to improve the health status of the community.

## **CONCLUSION**

The findings of the research indicate that social support from health workers, religious leaders and community leaders is a significant factor in the adoption of healthy behaviours. Exposure to information and emotional support from individuals who have ceased open defecation is an important motivator for others to protect their environment, as knowledge and awareness of the benefits of healthy practices can lead to long-term behaviour change towards achieving Open Defecation Free (ODF) status.

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## HLS - Healthcare in Low-resource Settings [paper #13381] - Editor Decision - Acceptance

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Dear Muhammad Ikhtiar, Nur Ulmy Mahmud, Andi Asrina, Andi Arysta, Putri Khairunnisa,

We are pleased to inform you that your paper entitled "SOCIAL SUPPORT FOR STOP OPEN DEFECATION FREE: INCREASE AWARENESS AND HEALTHY BEHAVIOR" has been accepted for publication in Healthcare in Low-resource Settings.

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This is to certify that the final versions of the Article “**Social support to stop open defecation free: increase awareness and healthy behavior**” by Muhammad Ikhtiar, Nur Ulmy Mahmud, Andi Asrina, Andi Arysta, and Putri Khairunnisa has been provisionally accepted on December 11th, 2024 for publication on the *Healthcare in Low-resource Settings*, and will be available online upon satisfactory completion of the publication process.

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# Social support to eradicate open defecation: raise awareness and promote healthy behavior

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## Abstract

Indonesia has achieved a 100% Open Defecation-Free (ODF) status; however, a significant portion of the population still practices open defecation, particularly in proximity to rivers, swamps, and coastal areas. This study aimed to analyze the role of social support in the context of efforts to halt open defecation. This study employed quantitative methodology with a cross-sectional study design. The research was conducted in the catchment area of the Manggarabombang community health center in Takalar Regency. Data were analyzed using both univariate and bivariate techniques, and results were presented through narrations, distribution

tables, and graphs. The study population comprised 178 households, with sampling conducted using the Slovin formula to obtain a sample size of 123 households. The results of the statistical tests using the chi-square method revealed a p-value of 0.000, indicating a significant relationship between social support and open defecation behavior. This highlights the important roles played by health workers, community leaders, and religious leaders. The findings of the study suggest that emotional and social support, as well as exposure to information about the health risks associated with open defecation, encourage individuals to adopt healthy practices in their environment. With increased knowledge and awareness of the importance of personal health, individuals are more likely to commit to long-term open defecation-free behaviors.

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## Introduction

Globally, over 1.5 million people still lack access to basic sanitation services, such as private toilets and latrines. Furthermore, 419 million people continue to defecate in unprotected locations, including street gutters, vacant lots, and open water.<sup>1</sup> Sanitation-related issues have become a global concern, including in Indonesia, which has set the goal of achieving 0% open defecation and 15% access to safe sanitation by 2024.<sup>2-4</sup> The Community-Based Total Sanitation Profile up to 2021 indicates that Indonesia's population of 288.22 million people still includes 32.77 million individuals engaged in open defecation practices.<sup>5,6</sup>

The Indonesian government has implemented a series of initiatives with the objective of sustaining a decline in the prevalence of open defecation on an annual basis. It is expected that open defecation will be eliminated by 2025, while complete access to improved sanitation is projected to be attained by 2027.<sup>7,8</sup> Despite the limitations of the data, it would appear that access to safe sanitation has remained constant at 7% over the past five years, which suggests that there is still much work to be done by all parties.<sup>2,9</sup> It remains challenging to alter long-established habits and practices regarding latrine use, particularly in coastal areas, due to deeply entrenched cultural norms and behaviors. Furthermore, some households possess latrines but refrain from utilizing them despite convenient access to water due to the unfit or unsanitary nature of the latrines.<sup>10,11</sup>

As reported by the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia in 2022, the prevalence of open defecation in Indonesia has declined over time, with an estimated 5.69% of the population engaging in this practice.<sup>2</sup> This is inextricably linked to the numerous initiatives implemented by the government with the objective of eradicating open defecation, including the provision of latrines and the implementation of awareness-raising campaigns. Despite various efforts, many communities, especially in coastal areas, are reluctant to change their practices regarding open defecation. Government collaboration typically aims to educate these communities to prevent this issue. While positive knowledge and attitudes

exist, many still engage in open defecation, highlighting the need for a community-based approach that includes social support. Unhealthy behaviors are often deeply rooted and unconscious, making social support essential, particularly in environments lacking strong social norms and encouragement for proper latrine use and maintenance.<sup>12,13</sup>

It is anticipated that the assistance of local residents, particularly community leaders, will facilitate the government's efforts to establish a healthy environment. The findings indicate that a significant number of residents continue to engage in open defecation due to a lack of social support from community leaders. Furthermore, there is a lack of social disapproval or warnings from the surrounding community when someone is caught engaging in open defecation. While many residents are aware that open defecation is unhealthy, this awareness is often disregarded if it is not accompanied by community involvement and commitment to achieving open defecation-free status.<sup>14,15</sup> Open defecation practices are prevalent across Indonesia, particularly in coastal areas, including South Sulawesi.

The province of South Sulawesi has reported and declared that the year 2023 was 100% Open Defecation-Free (ODF), although the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) has indicated that there were still 2.26% of households engaging in open defecation. This represents a decrease from the 3.69% of households engaged in open defecation in 2022.<sup>16,17</sup> The government has invested significant resources to achieve the goal of zero open defecation, a target that was met in Takalar District by 2023. However, obtaining a 100% ODF status has not completely eliminated open defecation practices among residents in riverine and coastal areas of Takalar. Despite the local health workers' efforts in triggering and monitoring activities, instances of open defecation continue to occur in rivers, gardens, and other open spaces. A dataset from the Takalar District Health Office in 2022 indicated that 120 households in the Bontomanai village area of the Mangarabombang Community Health Centre still practiced open defecation due to a lack of access to latrines. In the following year, the number of latrine owners increased due to a local government assistance program for latrines.<sup>18</sup>

The provision of triggering and latrine assistance has been carried out in stages. However, it has been observed that a portion of

the population has not been able to access this assistance due to a lack of financial resources. Some community members do not prioritize latrines and even construct homes without bathroom or toilet facilities. It is, therefore, evident that a robust commitment and motivation from the community, coupled with the provision of social support, is essential to encourage individuals to adopt healthier behaviors.

**Table 1.** Respondents' characteristics.

| Characteristics          | n   | %    |
|--------------------------|-----|------|
| Age                      |     |      |
| <20 years                | 3   | 2.4  |
| 20-29 years              | 26  | 21.1 |
| 30-39 years              | 25  | 20.4 |
| 40-49 years              | 35  | 28.5 |
| >49 years                | 34  | 27.6 |
| Gender                   |     |      |
| Male                     | 54  | 36.4 |
| Female                   | 69  | 63.6 |
| Education                |     |      |
| Elementary school        | 57  | 46.4 |
| Senior high school       | 26  | 21.1 |
| High school              | 23  | 18.7 |
| Not working              | 17  | 13.8 |
| Occupation               |     |      |
| Trader/self-employed     | 14  | 11.3 |
| Farmer/fisherman         | 38  | 30.9 |
| Laborer                  | 8   | 6.5  |
| Not working              | 29  | 23.6 |
| Housewife                | 34  | 27.7 |
| Income of head of family |     |      |
| >Rp.3.643.321,- / month  | 0   | 0    |
| <Rp.3.643.321,- / month  | 123 | 100  |
| Latrine ownership        |     |      |
| Have a toilet            | 78  | 63.4 |
| Do not have a toilet     | 45  | 36.6 |
| Total                    | 123 | 100  |

Source: Primary Data 2024.

**Table 2.** Distribution of respondents' answers regarding community support to stop open defecation.

| Number | Statement                                                                                                                                                                      | Yes |      | No |      |
|--------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|------|----|------|
|        |                                                                                                                                                                                | n   | %    | n  | %    |
| 1      | Health workers are engaged in providing counseling services related to latrine ownership and use.                                                                              | 113 | 92.0 | 10 | 8.0  |
| 2      | Health workers recommend that family members utilize the toilet at home, as long as it is available.                                                                           | 116 | 94.4 | 7  | 5.6  |
| 3      | Health professionals elucidate the health risks associated with the lack of access to adequate sanitation facilities.                                                          | 118 | 96.0 | 5  | 4.0  |
| 4      | In the preceding 12-month period, health workers have conducted home surveys.                                                                                                  | 121 | 98.4 | 2  | 1.6  |
| 5      | In order to facilitate the utilization of latrines, village officials, community leaders and religious leaders collaborate with household heads to ensure their participation. | 120 | 97.6 | 3  | 2.4  |
| 6      | A program of empowerment has been developed by village officials, community leaders, and religious leaders to encourage the use of latrines.                                   | 119 | 97.4 | 4  | 3.2  |
| 7      | The village head, community leaders, and religious leaders are involved in providing advice and guidance on the construction of healthy latrines.                              | 107 | 87.2 | 16 | 12.8 |
| 8      | Village officials, community leaders, and religious leaders have provided assistance to facilitate the use and utilization of latrines.                                        | 122 | 99.2 | 1  | 0.8  |
| 9      | Family members encourage the use of the latrine.                                                                                                                               | 119 | 97.4 | 4  | 3.2  |
| 10     | Local people view the use of latrines positively.                                                                                                                              | 122 | 99.2 | 1  | 0.8  |
| 11     | In the event of open defecation, neighbours are quick to express their disapproval.                                                                                            | 102 | 83.2 | 21 | 16.8 |

This study highlights the role of social support provided by community leaders in the Mangarabombang area, which has achieved a 100% open defecation-free status. Despite this achievement, a significant number of residents continue to practice open defecation. Typically, when a community reaches such a goal, it is expected that sustainable positive behavior follows. However, this study has uncovered that there are still residents, including both children and adults, who engage in open defecation due to a lack of access to toilets. The purpose of this study is to analyze social support for ending open defecation, with the aim of improving awareness and promoting healthy behaviors among coastal communities.

## Materials and Methods

A cross-sectional study design was employed to utilize quantitative methods. The research was conducted in the catchment area of the Manggarabombang Health Centre in Takalar Regency. Univariate and bivariate data analysis was conducted, with data presentation utilizing narration, distribution tables, and graphs. The population comprised 178 households, with sampling conducted using the Slovin formula to obtain 123 households.

## Results

Table 1 reveals that the majority of respondents are between the ages of 40 and 49 (28.5%) and that the gender distribution is predominantly female (69%). The educational attainment of the respondents is generally at a middle to lower level (81%). Most respondents (30.9%) identified as farmers or fishermen, and 84% of their income was below the provincial minimum wage. Furthermore, 36.6% of households do not have access to latrines.

Table 2 presents the respondents' responses regarding their perception of social support in relation to their open defecation habits. It was noted that 16.8% of respondents reported that there were no reprimands from their neighbors when they defecated outside. Additionally, 12.8% of respondents indicated that religious leaders, hamlet leaders, and community leaders did not provide guidance on the importance of ceasing open defecation. Furthermore, 5.6% of respondents mentioned that they did not receive any encouragement to use latrines.

### Research variables

The distribution of respondents regarding the role of social support in achieving an ODF status is illustrated in Table 3.

### Bivariate analysis

Table 4 illustrates that 6 (40.0%) of the households surveyed reported receiving inadequate social support and engaging in open defecation practices. Conversely, 108 households (86.4%) indicated that they had sufficient social support to adopt defecation-free behaviors. The results of the chi-square statistical tests indicated a statistically significant relationship between social support and open defecation behavior ( $p=0.000$ ,  $<0.05$ ). This was observed in the working area of Mangarabombang Health Center, Takalar Regency, where the role of health workers, community leaders, and religious leaders was found to be particularly influential.

## Discussion

The role of social support is to facilitate community participation, thereby enhancing the capacity to adopt and maintain clean and healthy behaviors. The influence of social support, including that from family, friends, and neighbors, on health-improvement behaviors is well documented. Social relationships and social support are reciprocal and can influence both positive and negative behaviors.<sup>19,20</sup> Other forms of social support, which can be provided by health workers, local government, religious leaders, and community leaders in conjunction with the promotion of family latrines, include the dissemination of information and the delivery of educational programs about the advantages of latrines. Additionally, assistance can be provided to communities that continue to practice open defecation to foster motivation and awareness among these communities regarding the ownership and utilization of latrines.<sup>21-23</sup>

Table 4 shows that 40.0% of households still receive poor or no social support from health workers, religious leaders, and community leaders, and they practice open defecation. This situation can be attributed to the fact that there are still individuals who have not been made aware of the consequences of open defecation and who continue to engage in this practice due to the lack of social disapproval and the absence of any adverse consequences in their immediate environment. Another contributing factor is that some households have not yet received facilities from stop-defecation programs, such as the free latrine program provided by the government. Nonetheless, some households have received free latrines but have chosen not to build or use them because they believe they require funds for other purposes. As a result, it is critical to implement a voluntary community awareness program to discourage open defecation, which can be harmful to people's health.<sup>24,25</sup>

A total of 108 respondents (86.4%) reported receiving sufficient social support and did not engage in open defecation practices. This finding is supported by the fact that health workers frequently conduct educational initiatives aimed at promoting behavior

**Table 3.** Distribution of respondents based on the role of social support in stopping open defecation behavior.

| Research variable   | n   | %    |
|---------------------|-----|------|
| Social support      |     |      |
| Enough              | 108 | 87.8 |
| Lack                | 15  | 12.2 |
| Defecation behavior |     |      |
| Open defecation     | 6   | 4.9  |
| ODF                 | 117 | 95.1 |
| Total               | 123 | 100  |

Source: Primary Data 2024

**Table 4.** Relationship between social support and open defecation behavior.

| Social support | Open defecation (OD) behavior |      |     |      | Total |     | P |
|----------------|-------------------------------|------|-----|------|-------|-----|---|
|                | OD                            |      | ODF |      | N     | %   |   |
|                | n                             | %    | n   | %    | N     | %   |   |
| Lack           | 6                             | 40.0 | 9   | 60.0 | 15    | 100 | 0 |
| Enough         | 0                             | 0    | 108 | 86.4 | 108   | 100 |   |
| Total          | 6                             | 4.9  | 117 | 95.1 | 123   | 100 |   |

Source: Primary Data 2024.

ioral change. These efforts have proven effective in raising awareness and encouraging individuals to adopt recommended health behaviors. Additionally, the latrine assistance program encourages community members to use latrines, helping to maintain a defecation-free environment. The local government plays a crucial role in reinforcing this behavioral change by setting a positive example and providing motivation to protect the environment through the use of latrines.<sup>26,27</sup> According to Lawrence Green's theory,<sup>28-30</sup> which suggests that behavior change is influenced by three factors—predisposing, enabling, and reinforcing—education through triggering can facilitate or predispose changes in knowledge and attitudes. Similarly, social support, the provision of facilities, and the involvement of community leaders and neighbors in the use of latrines are effective in motivating ODF.<sup>31,32</sup> Health workers, religious and community leaders, and local government are reinforcers for the community to change, as they are the reference group for community behavior.<sup>33,34</sup>

The results demonstrate that open defecation behavior is more prevalent among respondents with limited social support than among those who receive social support. The chi-square statistical test in this study yielded a p-value of ( $0.000 > 0.05$ ), indicating a statistically significant relationship between the role of health workers and open defecation behavior in the Mangarabombang Puskesmas area, Takalar Regency.

The influence of health workers and community leaders on changing open defecation habits depends on several factors. Firstly, community members need access to information and support from health workers and leaders, as well as consequences for not adhering to open defecation practices. Secondly, it is essential for the community to be committed to using latrines. When both of these conditions are met, they can serve as powerful catalysts for behavioral change.<sup>35,36</sup> Households that have never received education from health workers are 5.037 times more likely to continue open defecation practice compared to those who have been educated by health workers.<sup>37,38</sup> Raising public awareness about recommended practices, such as ensuring cleanliness and proper sanitation, is essential for maintaining a healthy environment and improving the overall health of the community.

## Conclusions

The research findings suggest that social support from health workers, religious leaders, and community leaders plays a crucial role in adopting healthy behaviors. Exposure to information and emotional encouragement from individuals who have stopped open defecation serves as a significant motivator for others to protect their environment. Knowledge and awareness of the benefits of healthy practices can lead to lasting behavior change, ultimately contributing to the achievement of open defecation-free status.

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