

A STUDY OF PEOPLE'S KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICES OF ENVIRONMENTAL ABUSE IN IBADAN METROPOLIS, NIGERIA

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Abstract. The study examines people's knowledge and practices resulting in environmental abuse in Ibadan metropolis. The population of Ibadan according to 1991 census was one million seven hundred and sixty-six thousand three hundred and ninety-one people. Fifty people were interviewed from each of the 5 major local governments in the city using the quota sampling. The study reveals that the knowledge level of most of the respondents as regards environmental, water and air, pollution is high but their environmental practices are unhealthy. The study also shows that poor environmental practices are prevalent amongst the aged (over 55 years) compared with respondents from ages 10-55. In addition, the study reveals a kind of lackadaisical attitude on the part of some local government officials, towards the cleanliness of their local government. In view of the findings the following recommendations are made, amongst other things: enlightenment programmes should be organized to encourage sorting of solid waste at source; both Eleyele, and Asejire, dams should be channeled and widened in such a way that the two dams would supply enough water to the people of the city throughout the year; and indiscriminate burning of refuse in different parts of the metropolis should be banned. Rather, people should be encouraged to empty their refuse into refuse tanks.

Introduction

The need to keep a clean and health community, provide portable drinking water and ensure that pure air circulates among the teeming population that reside in a city, rank high amongst other socio-economic demands of urban centres. To achieve these goals a clean and healthy city, provision of adequate and pure water and air- in the cities, there is need for joint and concerted efforts not only on the part of private and public organizations alone but also individual citizen. The need for co-operation in ensuring the attainment of this goal cannot be over-estimated.

However, if the individual citizens, the private and the government corporations are not properly informed about their duties in ensuring the attainment of the foregoing, there is likely to be a dereliction of duties. For

attainment of the foregoing, there is likely to be a dereliction of duties. For instance, if the individuals that live in the city feel that the whole duty of ensuring a clean environment, providing adequate and pure water and enhancing the circulation of pure air is solely the responsibility of the government, the individual are likely to do nothing and still blame the government for consequences of their negligence.

There is also a need for the inculcation of adequate and useful environmental information that will help to revolutionize the shabby environmental practices of the urban dwellers. It is hoped that with this study, if urban dwellers are given proper information about their environment, the water they drink and the air that circulates in their vicinity will bring about a remarkable improvement on what they do in their environment.

Statement of the Problem

Waste disposal provision of quality water and air, rank high amongst social problem, which any urban centres have to contend with. The need to investigate the afore-mentioned problem is justifiable because if people live in a clean and hygienic environment, drink pure water and live in an environment where pure air circulates they are likely to be protected from sickness and diseases. It is such healthy individuals that can contribute meaningfully to the economic development of the society.

In a bid to tackle the problem of waste disposal, Federal Government launched the 5th phase of War Against Indiscipline (WAI) in 1984, which has to do with environmental sanitation. The last Saturday of every month was also declared a national clean-up day while the second Saturday of every month was in addition declared by the Oyo State Government as state clean up day. Moreover, there is a Solid Waste Management Board in Ibadan, which is charged with the responsibility of clearing the refuse heaps in the city and ensuring a clean environment. To enhance the effectiveness of this Board, Government provides refuse disposal vehicles to strategic centres in the city and also encourages the inhabitants of the city to make use of such in a bid to ensure a clean and healthy city. In spite of all these laudable efforts, the city has remained sordid as ever. The question is this: What else could be done that has not been done to ensure a clean and healthy environment in Ibadan city?

To solve the problem of lack of adequate drinkable water the state Government through the state water management Board built Asejire and Eleyele water dams in Ibadan. The five local Government in the municipality and private individuals have also been sinking deep wells in their

However, in spite of the efforts made by the Government and private individuals to ensure the provision of adequate drinkable water to the people of Ibadan, Water-borne diseases such as typhoid, cholera, and dysentery, among others, are rampant in the metropolis (Ogunlayi, 1999).

To curb the problem of air pollution, the police and road marshals often apprehend vehicles whose exhaust pipes are bad. Burning of refuse in the public places has also been discouraged. Moreover, industries whose effluence pollutes the environment have been advised to put in place the kind of technology that would reduce the air pollution due to emissions from industries to the barest level. But complaints about air pollution due to emissions from industries are rampant in the city of Ibadan. The question is this: What other measures could be taken to enhance the circulation of quality air in the metropolis?

Purpose of the Study

The following are the purpose for which the study was conducted:

1. to curb unhealthy environmental practices of Ibadan residents;
2. to accentuate the tempo of awareness as regard environmental information in Ibadan city;
3. to provide useful literature for other researchers in the field of environmental studies.

Basic Assumptions

The study assumes the followings:

1. that the awareness of the people affects their environmental practices.
2. that age affects environmental abuse in the city.
3. that environmental degradation is due to negligence on the part of the individuals or the local Government Authorities.

Literature Review

Urbanization

Man's propensity towards "agglomeration in multi-functional settlements of relatively substantial size is not a new phenomenon in Nigeria (Onibokun, 1985). Urbanization with its peculiar characteristics feature of high population density is not without certain inevitable social consequences, which include

density is not without certain inevitable social consequences, which include high volume of waste generation, air water pollution, lack of accommodation, joblessness, insecurity etc.

Solid waste

While commenting on the menace and the threat which waste disposal pose to human existence, Udo (1990) opines that:

apart from defacing the face of the cities, refuse dumps in vacant plots creates health problems and in many cases the refuse over-spills to block roads and streets thereby causing delay in traffic. Household refuse and scraps have blocked river channels in such cities as Ibadan, Lagos, and Calabar.

Water Pollution

As regards the sources of water pollution, Agbeja, (1999) affirms that "the main sources of water pollution are domestic waste, water and industry effluent discharger, power plants and atmospheric fallout"

Air pollution

While elucidating on the causes of air pollution, Samuel *et. al.*, (1985) assert that:

air pollution is caused by dust, coal dust, sulphurdioxide carbon monoxide, traces of acids, radio-active materials and pollen, and spores of bacteria and fungi. This pollution may be breathed in through the lungs... This type of pollution is more common in large cities.

Environmental Information (Education)

Leftridge and James (1980) define environment education as including all activities tending to promote higher development relating to a better appreciation and understanding of the biophysical environment and its associated problems.

depletion of natural resources, world starvation and many others at the early stage of our studies, is of great importance and goes a long way to form the foundation of the awareness and effective utilization of the environment.

According to Oduwaiye, (1997):

Environmental education has been defined in different ways by different people. Some define it as leaning to understand, appreciate, work and sustain environmental systems on their totality. Others see environment and education as leaning how to manage and improve the relationships between human society and the environment in an integrated and sustainable way.

Stressing the rapidity and speed with which environmental awareness is now gaining universal prominence, Pickering and Owen (1995) commented that:

Today, the global implications of pollution are beginning to be appreciated by both scientists and the wider community along with recognition that countries should be responsible for more than just their own backyards.

Owolabi, (1996) while contesting the need for environment ethics in Africa opines that:

Respect for land, earthworm, forest should be given scientific view. We need them for our survival and health. As it was in traditional society, communal interest should prevail over selfish interest and inanimate objects should be given their own regard and reverence.

While talking on the need for a more concerted effort towards ensuring an increase in environmental awareness among Nigerians, Isa (1999) remarks that:

Nigeria's increasing environmental problems coupled with her decreasing natural resources call for conservation practice among her citizenry. There are relatively few people in the country, who have access to sufficient environmental information to ensure support for initiatives to protect, manage and restore depleted resources. From all indications, therefore, It becomes imperative that schools' Environmental clubs should be

information to ensure support for initiatives to protect, manage and restore depleted resources. From all indications, therefore, It becomes imperative that schools' Environmental clubs should be established and effectively managed to send the conservation message to the people so as to influence their behaviour and attitude, and also to make them knowledgeable about conservation practice, as a new way of living sustainably.

Inferences

From the foregoing reviewed literature, one can rightly infer that the social malaise of improper waste disposal, water and air pollution are the direct consequences of urbanization These problems can, however, be solved through proper environment information.

Research Methodology

Sample and sampling procedure

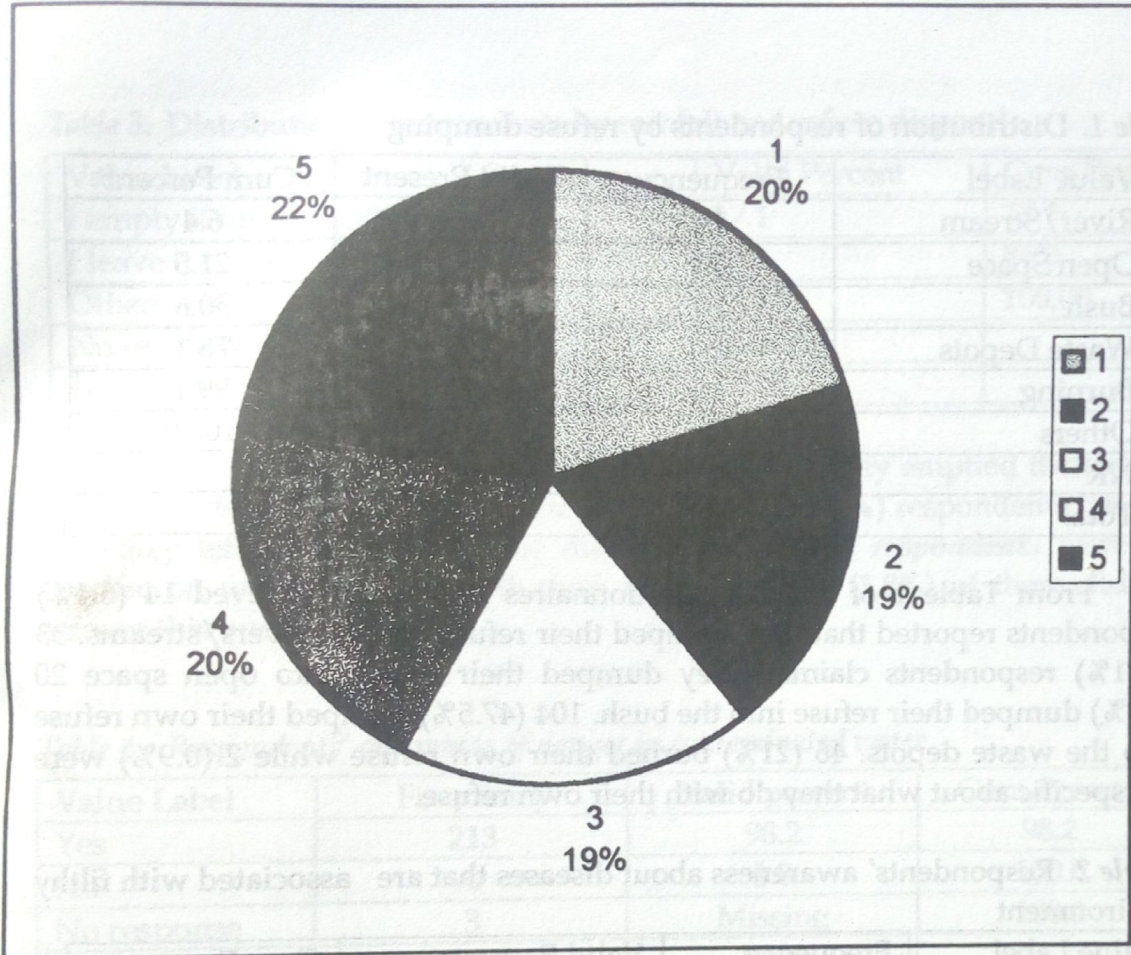
The sample for this study was randomly selected from among the residents; market men and women, government workers, students, apprentices and so on. The officials of Waste Management Boards, State Water Boards, Local Government Authorities, Askar Paints and Nigerian National Petroleum Company were separately interviewed.

Research Instrument

The researcher de signed a questionnaire, which was classified into seven major sections namely: A, B, C, D, E, F, and G. There are forty-nine (49) questions in all, which covers the objectives of the study. It is from the responses to the items in all these sections that data used in this paper were mostly derived.

Administration of the Instrument

The researcher had to tour each of the Local Government and establishments where he personally administered the questionnaire. The data collected through the questionnaire were analyzed using simple statistics like percentages, frequencies, table and graphs.



The above chart shows that respondents are equitably spread in the 5 local governments.

Total	220	100.0
M.R.	7	Missing

Of the 220 respondents, 200 (90.9%) claimed that cholera was associated with a filthy environment. 10 (4.5%) respondents claimed ignorance of the disease while there was no response at all from 7 respondents.

Response	Count	Percentage
Associated with a filthy environment	200	90.9
Ignorance of the disease	10	4.5
No response	7	3.1
Total	217	100.0

Table 1. Distribution of respondents by refuse dumping

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Present	Cum Percent
River/Stream	14	6.4	6.4
Open Space	33	15.1	21.5
Bush	20	9.1	30.6
Waste Depots	104	47.5	78.1
Burning	46	21.0	99.1
Others	2	0.9	100.0
NR	1	Missing	
Total	220	100.0	

From Table 1 of the 220 questionnaires that were retrieved 14 (6.4%) respondents reported that they dumped their refuse into the rivers/streams. 33 (15.1%) respondents claimed they dumped their refuse into open space 20 (9.1%) dumped their refuse into the bush. 104 (47.5%) dumped their own refuse into the waste depots. 46 (21%) burned their own refuse while 2 (0.9%) were not specific about what they do with their own refuse.

Table 2. Respondents' awareness about diseases that are associated with filthy environment

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cum Percent
Cholera	200	93.3	93.9
Aids	3	1.4	95.3
I don't know	10	4.7	100.0
N.R.	7	Missing	
Total	220	100.0	

Of the 220 respondents, 200 (93.9%) claimed that cholera was associated with a filthy environment, 3 (1.4%) ticked AIDS, 10 (4.7%) respondents claimed ignorance of the diseases while there was no response at all from 7 respondents.

Table 3. Distribution of respondents by rainfall and refuse disposal

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cum Percent
I empty it into the gutter	37	17.1	17.1
I leave it in the dust bin	145	67.1	84.3
Others	34	15.7	100.00
No response	4	Missing	
Total	220	100.0	

Of the 220 respondents, 37(17.1%) claimed that they emptied their refuse into the gutter when there was rain. A total of 145 (67.1%) respondents claimed that they left their refuse in the dust-bin. 34 (15.7%) respondents were not specific on what they did with their refuse while 4 (1.8%) of them did not answer this question at all.

Table 4. Respondents' awareness of danger in contaminated water

Value Label	Frequency	Valid percent	Cum Percent
Yes	213	98.2	98.2
No	4	1.8	100.0
No response	3	Missing	100.0
Total	220	100.0	

213 (98.2%) respondents ticked 'yes' to the fact that there is danger in contaminated water while 4 (1.8%) ticked 'No' 3 (1.4%) respondents did not answer this question at all.

Table 5. Respondents' awareness of diseases that are associated with polluted air

Value Label	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cum Percent
Asthma	25	12.0	12.0
Cough and Catarrh	52	24.9	36.8
Bronchitis	5	2.4	39.2
All of the above	124	59.3	98.6
None of the above	3	1.4	100.0
No response	11	Missing	
Total	220	100.0	

Asking the respondents about the diseases that were associated with polluted air, 25 (12%) tick asthma, 52 (24.9%) respondents ticked cough and catarrh, 5 (2.4%) identified bronchitis, 124 (59.3%) acknowledged all the above-mentioned diseases 3 (1.4%) affirmed that none of the above-mentioned diseases came from air pollution while 11 did not respond to the question.

Table 6. Percentage prevalence of age distribution and refuse dumping by respondents.

Age/Distribution	River/stream	Open Space	Bush	Waste Depots	Burning	Row Total
10-20	4 (12.1%)	1 (3.0%)	4 (12.1%)	33 (69.7%)	28 (27.2%)	33 (15.3%)
21-35	5 (4.9%)	12 (11.7%)	5 (4.9%)	53 (51.5%)	13 (20.0%)	103 (47.7%)
36-45	4 (6.2%)	17 (26.2%)	8 (12.3%)	22 (33.8%)	5 (38.5%)	65 (30.1%)
46-55		1 (7.7%)	3 (23.1%)	4 (30.8%)		13 (6.0%)
Above 55	1 (50.0%)	1 (50.0%)				2 (0.9%)
Column Total	14 (6.5%)	32 (14.8%)	20 (9.3%)	162 (47.2%)	46 (21.3%)	216 (100%)

From table 6 above, 55 either dumped their refuse in the rivers or open space. 23 out of the 33 respondents from age group 10-22 dumped their refuse in waste depots. 53 out of the 103 respondents from age group 21- 35 also used the waste depots.

In Ibadan North- West 3 (60%) officials claimed that they provided refuse tanks and 2 (40%) officials said they were yet to do something. In Ibadan North 4 (80%) officials claimed that they provided refuse tanks while 1 (20%) officials confirmed that the Local Government was yet to do something. In Ibadan North-West all the 4 (100%) officials said that they provided refuse tanks.

Discussion of Result/Findings

From the results, it was found that the level of awareness of the public and officials of Local Government as regards environmental abuse in Ibadan metropolis was very high. However, environmental practices differed from one group to another. The study further revealed that majority of the respondents was aware of the diseases that were associated with filthy environment. However, there was a sharp contrast between what the people claimed to know and what they did.

The fact that majority of the respondents use the waste depots confirms the findings of Akintola (1978) who said that the people realise the importance and use waste depots. The high population density of the city coupled with the fact that the people generate a high volume of waste may have rendered all the concerted efforts of the people to rid the city of filth non-effective (Abiodun, 1985 and Adegoke, 1999).

Moreover, the awareness of the public on water pollution is high. However, in spite of the fact that majority of the people are aware of the dangers, that are associated with contaminated water, many of them still drink from unsafe sources such as stream, river etc. Economic considerations and non-availability of good drinkable water in some parts of Ibadan may have pushed the respondents to drink from sources which they know to be unsafe (Ogunlayi, 1999).

Furthermore, majority of the respondents are not ignorant of the dangers that are inherent in polluted air. The reaction of the people to polluted air is commendable too.

In addition, poor environmental practices are prevalent among the aged (over 55 years) while majority of the respondents from ages 10-55 exhibit better environmental practices.

Moreover, despite the fact that the officials of the five local governments know that it is their duty to keep their areas of jurisdiction clean, there is evidence of negligence in the cleanliness of some local governments in the city by the officials.

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Conclusions

From the study, the following conclusions are reached:

1. The awareness of the majority of the respondents (the public) on the danger of polluted environment, water and air is high but their environmental practices have remained poor.
2. The old people perpetrate acts that accentuate environmental degradation more than those whose ages range from 10-35 years.
3. Environmental degradation could be wholly attributed to neglect on the part of individuals in Ibadan North-East and South-East. In all other Local Government Areas of Ibadan South-West, North and North-West, the blame of environmental abuse is attributable, to neglect on the part of both individuals and local Governments.

Recommendations

In the light of this study, the following recommendations are made.

- (a) Enlightenment programmes should be organized to encourage sorting of solid waste at source.
- (b) Households should be encouraged to utilize refuse polythene bags.
- (c) Waste management should be commercialized in Oyo State to save the populace from health hazards arising from the environmental menace.
- (d) The sale of water without NAFDAC (National Agency of Food Drug Act) approved number at motor parks and streets should be banned henceforth in Ibadan.
- (e) Vehicles with heavy and obnoxious emissions should be banned from plying the various roads in the metropolis.
- (f) Industries with obnoxious emissions such as the Nigerian Breweries and the Nigerian National Petroleum Company should be relocated far away into the outskirts of the metropolis. Such new industrial sites should not be re-located for human habitation in the near future.
- (g) Indiscriminate burning of refuse in different parts of the metropolis should be banned. Rather people should be encouraged to empty their refuse into refuse tanks.

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