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CONTENT

PSYCHOSOCIAL BURDEN OF CAREGIVERS OF CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS WITH MENTAL ILLNESS RECEIVING TREATMENT IN HOSPITALS IN KANO STATE

Murtala, Hassan Hassan RN, RM, BNSc, MSc (N)¹ Garba, Saleh Ngaski RN, Ph.D, FWACN² Amadu, Lawal MBBS, PGDM, FWACPH³ Balarabe, Fatima RN, RM, BNSc, MSc (N)² Isa, Abubakar RN, RPHN, BSc, M.Ed² __1

STIGMATIZATION, DISCRIMINATION AND ACCEPTANCE OF HIV AND AIDS MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES BY SERO-POSITIVE PATIENTS IN AKWA IBOM STATE

Grace Enomfon Akpan (PhD)¹ Rosemary Ebong (Ph.D)² __14

SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AMONG HOUSEHOLDS IN BAUCHI STATE

Abu.bakar Ahmed¹ & A.I. Hassan Ph.D² __28

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY LEVELS OF PREGNANT WOMEN IN NSUKKA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA

Perpetua Chinyere, Ofili (Ph.D) __39

APPRAISAL OF THE ROLE OF SCHOOL HEALTH SERVICES IN PROMOTING EFFECTIVE PARTICIPATION OF STUDENTS IN ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES

Akerele, Stephen Segun¹ & Ikhiya, Grace Olohiomeru (Ph.D)² __52

OPTIMIZING WELLNESS AMONG UNDERGRADUATES IN NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES THROUGH ADEQUATE SCHOOL HEALTH SERVICES

Agbonlahor N. Loveth¹ Osagiede F. Isoken² __61

KNOWLEDGE OF STRATEGIES FOR PREVENTING MALARIA AMONG PREGNANT WOMEN ATTENDING ANTENATAL CLINICS AT A TERTIARY HOSPITAL IN IMO STATE, NIGERIA

Veronica O. Charles-Unadike (PhD)¹ Kalu Mgbo Okeke² A. Ibhafidon (PhD)³ A.U. Ejifugha (PhD)⁴ N.M. Onuzulike, (PhD)⁵ __73

**TEENAGE MOTHERS' KNOWLEDGE OF NUTRITIONAL RISK FACTOR
FOR UNDER-FIVE MORTALITY IN NIGERIA**
Dorothy I. Ugwu, Ph.D__88

THE PLACE OF HEALTH EDUCATION IN ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH
Okudaye Ismaila Nwabenu PhD.¹__102

**A REVIEW OF THE HEALTH CHALLENGES FACED BY INTERNALLY
DISPLACED PERSONS (IDPS) IN NIGERIA AND THE ROLE OF HEALTH
EDUCATION**

Julius O. Owoyemi, Ph.D__119

**MALNUTRITION AND UNDERNUTRITION: TWO CONTEMPORARY
HEALTH PROBLEMS IN NIGERIA**

Joy-Telu Hamilton-Ekeke, PhD¹__133

**KNOWLEDGE OF HIV VOLUNTARY COUNSELING AND TESTING
SERVICES AMONG STUDENTS OF TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN BAUCHI
STATE**

Murtala Ahmed M.Sc¹__147

**HEALTH EDUCATION: A PANACEA FOR SCHOOL-RELATED GENDER-
BASED VIOLENCE IN NIGERIA**

C.A, Adedigba¹ & S.O., Oniyangi²__156

**FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH RISKY SEXUAL BEHAVIOURS AMONG
SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN NSUKKA LGA OF ENUGU STATE,
NIGERIA**

**Amelia Ngozi Odo (Ph.D)¹ David C.J. Ayalogu (B.Sc)² Justina I. Ofuebe (Ph.D)³
Anthony A.O Adie (B.Sc)⁴__169**

**STUDENTS' KNOWLEDGE ON THE HEALTH IMPLICATIONS OF SELF
MEDICATION IN FEDERAL COLLEGE OF EDUCATION KANO**

Ifeoma M. Okonkwo__184

**EFFECT OF ROPE-SKIPPING ON EXPLOSIVE POWER OF LOWER LIMB
OF OVERWEIGHT FEMALE STUDENTS IN KANO STATE, NIGERIA**

Musa Sa'ad Muhammad PhD.¹ Isa Musa²__193

INFLUENCE OF HEALTHFUL SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT ON PROMOTING STUDENTS' HEALTH IN KANO STATE, NIGERIA.

Muhammad Isa Sulaiman M.Sc¹ Umar Ibrahim Babangida M.Sc²

Adamu Umar Wangara M.Sc³__205

ASSESSMENT OF FOOD SECURITY, SURVEILLANCE AND POLICY MANAGEMENT: IMPLICATIONS FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN A CONTEMPORARY DEVELOPING NATIONS.

S.A Famuyiwa Ph.D¹__216

CIVIL SERVANTS OPINIONS ON THE UTILIZATION OF PRIMARY HEALTH CARE (PHC) SERVICES IN KANO STATE, NIGERIA.

Kassim Suleiman Kankarofi¹ & Musa Njidda Ph.D²__230

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE PREVENTION OF HEALTHCARE-ASSOCIATED INFECTIONS AMONG PRIMARY HEALTH CARE WORKERS IN NORTH-CENTRAL ZONE, NIGERIA

***Kperogi, Ismaila Ibrahim Ph.D¹ M.A Suleiman Ph.D² Umar Musa Ph.D³**

V. Dashe Ph.D⁴__241

FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO POOR ENVIRONMENTAL SANITATION AS PERCEIVED BY HEALTH EDUCATION STUDENTS IN ILORIN SOUTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA

Abdulrasaq Qazeem Onaolapo¹, Yakubu Suleiman² Adewale Olamiposi Madebo³__253

ALARMING MATERNAL MORTALITY IN NIGERIA: A TREND ANALYSIS

Latifah Musa – Pedro¹__262

HEALTH CONSEQUENCES OF BOREHOLE WATER CONSUMPTION THE NIGERIAN SITUATION

Uloko, Amos Ifeanyichukwu__270

GLOBAL WARMING, A THREAT TO ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH: THE WAY FORWARD

A. Blesssing, Efue¹__284

FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO POOR ENVIRONMENTAL SANITATION AS PERCEIVED BY HEALTH EDUCATION STUDENTS IN ILORIN SOUTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA

Abdulrasaq Qazeem Onaolapo¹, Yakubu Suleiman²
Adewale Olamiposi Madebo³

Abstract

The study examined health education students' perceived factors contributing to poor environmental sanitation in Ilorin South Local Government Area. Sanitation is the provision of facilities and services for the safe disposal of human urine and faeces, it can also be seen as the maintenance of hygienic conditions through services such as garbage collection and wastewater disposal. The state of the environment in some parts of Ilorin is worrisome as a result of poorly disposed garbage. This negative feature is worse in the raining season whereby after rainstorm, garbage, domestic waste and different forms of waste are seen lying on the road. It is based on this that the study therefore attempted an investigation into the factors contributing to poor environmental sanitation as perceived by Health Education Students in Ilorin South Local Government Area. The findings revealed that lack of environmental education, poor attitudes of residents and inconsistency in the provision of waste management services are some of the factors contribution to poor environmental sanitation. It was therefore recommended that health educators should endeavor to educate the residents on the importance of environmental sanitation and the adoption of the proper methods of disposing domestic waste.

Keywords: poor environmental sanitation, perception, health education, inadequate knowledge, poor attitude

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Introduction

A clean environment is appreciated by most humans and as such some people try as much as possible to be associated with an eco-friendly environment which gives them joy to be a part of such a beautiful place. The word environment is an ambiguous term which is difficult both to identify and to restrict its scope, because it could be used to encompass anything from the whole biosphere to the habitat of the smallest creature or organism. Sylvanus, Stephen and Prosper (2014) described the environment as a range from the totality of physical, economic, cultural, aesthetic, and social circumstances and factors which surround and affect the desirability and value of property or which also affects the quality of people's lives.

According to the National Sanitation Foundation of USA, the word sanitation is defined as a way of life that is expressed in the clean home, farm, business, neighborhoods and community (Park, 2011). Also, World Health Organization (WHO) defines sanitation as the provision of facilities and services for the safe disposal of human urine and faeces (UNICEF and WHO, 2012). Hence, inadequate sanitation is a major cause of disease world-wide and improving sanitation is known to have a significant beneficial impact on health both in households and across communities. The word 'sanitation' also refers to the maintenance of hygienic conditions through services such as garbage collection and wastewater disposal. In addition, environmental sanitation according to World Health Organization is the control of all those factors in man's physical environment which exercise or may exercise a deleterious effect on his physical development, health and survival. It could also be seen as the principle and practice of effecting healthful and hygienic conditions in the environment to promote public health and welfare, improve quality of life and ensure a sustainable environment (Alabi, 2010). The essential components of environmental sanitation include: solid waste management; medical waste management; excreta and sewage management; food sanitation; sanitary inspection of premises; market and abattoir sanitation; adequate potable water supply; school sanitation; pest and vector control; management of urban drainage; control of reared and stray animals; disposal of the dead animals; weed and vegetation control; hygiene education and promotion (Ibanga, 2015).

The high rate of urbanization in African countries implies a rapid accumulation of refuse. Owusu, Oteng-Ababio and Afutu-Kotey (2014);

Ahmed and Ali (2011) affirmed that social and economic changes that most African countries have witnessed since the 1960s have also among other things contributed to an increase in the waste generated per capita. As a result, municipal waste management constitutes one of the most crucial health and environmental issues facing waste managers of African cities (Onibokun & Kumuyi 1999; Ghana Statistical Service (GSS) 2003). Proper waste management is a public benefit and obligation. Improper waste disposal by one individual affects the entire citizenry, so, as a policy, countries have tasked every individual, establishment or institution to contribute significantly to the process of keeping their communities and environment clean (Fobil, Armah & Carboo, 2008; Palczynski 2002; Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development, 1999). Everyone is expected to keep their environment clean and dispose off their waste responsibly and avoid littering and other forms of improper waste disposal.

Yoad, Chirawurah and Adongo (2014) the perception of domestic waste disposal indicates that people's attitudes about and perceptions of sanitation issues contribute to the waste management problem. There is a growing perception that inadequate education about the importance of proper sanitation account for poor waste management practices. Other factors accounting for this situation are poor attitudes and lack of concern about environmental issues, high levels of poverty and misguided waste disposal practices (Mosler, Drescher, Zurbrugg, Rodriguez & Miranda 2006; Oteng-Ababio, 2012). Onifade and Nwabotu (2014) explained that illegal dumping of refuse are caused by bad attitudes and practices of people towards refuse disposal. Olukanmi, Azuh, George, Ajayi and Emenike (2014) and Africa Development Bank (2012) reported that large numbers of both urban and rural areas still lack access to adequate sanitary facilities like latrines, hand washing facilities and waste disposal facilities. Non-availability of sustained, effective and safe services is common experience for many developing countries around the world and has resulted into high prevalence of water and sanitation related diseases, causing many people, children in particular to fall ill or even die (United Nations Children's Fund, 1998).

Statement of the Problem

The state of the environment in some parts of Ilorin, the Kwara State capital, has been observed by the researchers to be in a poor state as result of poor waste disposal methods and incessant disposal of waste on road verge/dividers. The researchers observed that there were boards directing people not to dispose waste at such points but some people disregard it and dump their waste there. This negative feature is worse during the raining season whereby garbage and other domestic waste are seen lying on the road. This is as a result of the fact that rainstorm has washed the waste onto the roads and this gives rise to a poor aesthetic value to the environment. The environment becomes dirty and unpleasing. As a result of this, the researcher tried to investigate health education students' perceived factors contributing to poor environmental sanitation in Ilorin South Local Government Area.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

1. What are the factors contributing to poor environmental sanitation as perceived by Health Education Students in Ilorin South Local Government Area?
2. Will poor attitude of residents be a factor contributing to poor environmental sanitation in Ilorin South Local Government Area?

Research Method

The descriptive survey research method was adopted for this study. This was because according to Omorogiuwa (2006), the method helps to provide information about the situation without manipulation of variables. The population of the study comprised of all health education students in the Department of Health Promotion and Environmental Health Education, Faculty of Education, University of Ilorin during the 2017/2018 academic session. According to the information obtained from the department, there are seven hundred and eighty eight students in the department from which the researchers purposively selected all the final year students as respondents for this study because they have received considerable skills and knowledge in the field of environmental education. The total number of final year students amounted to one hundred and eighty six (186) and they constituted the sample for the study.

A researcher designed questionnaire which was validated by experts in the field of environmental education was used in gathering data for the study. The instrument was tested for reliability using the test re-test method. Twenty (20) questionnaires were administered to health education students using the systematic sampling technique in the selection of the respondents. The instrument was administered to the same set of students after an interval of three weeks and the two administrations were analyzed using Pearson product moment correlation coefficient to ascertain the reliability of the instrument. The reliability of the instrument yielded a result of 0.79 and was adjudged reliable for use. The instrument was administered by the research to the one hundred and eighty six (186) respondents and retrieved on the spot to avoid loss. The data collected was sorted, coded and analyzed using descriptive statistics of frequency counts and percentages. The researchers decided that scores from sixty percent and above would be ascertained as factors contributing to poor environmental sanitation in Ilorin South Local Government Area.

Results

Research Question 1: What are the factors contributing to poor environmental sanitation as perceived by Health Education Students in Ilorin South Local Government Area?

Table 1: Test items and responses on environmental education as a factor contributing to poor environmental sanitation.

S/N	Items	F	%	Decision
1.	People who lack knowledge of environmental education adopt poor means of disposing their waste.	147	79	C
2.	People who lack knowledge of environmental education do not understand the implication of poor sanitation on health.	173	93	C
3.	People who lack knowledge of environmental education care less about their environmental conditions.	123	66	C
4.	People who lack knowledge of environmental education are not committed to environmental sanitation programs.	83	45	NC
5.	People who lack knowledge of environmental education dispose their waste in drainages when they have premonition of rainfall.	135	73	C

*C - Contributory factor *NC - Not a contributory factor

Table 1 shows the number of respondents and the corresponding percentages to test items that they perceived as factors contributing to poor environmental sanitation. It can be observed that the respondents perceived poor means of waste disposal; lack of understanding of the implication of poor sanitation on health; lack of concern for environmental condition and drainage dumping as a contributory factor to poor environmental sanitation due to the lack of environmental education (79%, 93%, 66% and 73% respectively).

Table 2: Test items and responses on poor attitude of residents as a factor contributing to poor environmental sanitation.

S/N	Items	F	%	Decision
1.	Drainage dumping is a form of poor attitude that contribute to poor environmental sanitation.	186	100	C
2.	Indiscriminate waste disposal is a form of poor attitude that contribute to poor environmental sanitation.	176	95	C
3.	Refusal to pay waste management fees is a poor attitude that contributes to poor environmental sanitation.	123	66	C
4.	Refusal to abide by the sign "do not dump refuse here" is a poor attitude that contribute to poor environmental sanitation	181	97	C

* C - Contributory factor

Table 2 shows the number of respondents and the corresponding percentages to test items that they perceived as factors contributing to poor environment. It can be observed that the respondents perceived drainage dumping; indiscriminate waste disposal; refusal to pay waste management fees and refusal to abide by warning signs against waste disposal as factors contributing to poor environmental sanitation (100%, 95%, 66% and 97% respectively).

Discussion of Findings

The findings of the study revealed that lack of environmental education and poor attitudes of residents of Ilorin South Local Governments are factors contributing to poor environmental sanitation in the area. The

findings of the study revealed that poor means of waste disposal; lack of understanding of the implication of poor sanitation on health; lack of concern for environmental condition and drainage dumping contributes to poor environmental sanitation. This is in line with the findings of Yoda, Chirawurah and Adongo (2014) who affirmed that there is a growing perception that inadequate education about the importance of proper sanitation account for poor waste management practices. Drainage dumping; indiscriminate waste disposal; refusal to pay waste management fees and refusal to abide by warning signs against waste disposal were perceived as factors contributing to poor environmental sanitation by the respondents. This was supported by the findings of Onifade and Nwabotu (2014) who explained that illegal dumping of refuse are caused by bad attitudes and practices of people towards refuse disposal. The finding is also in line with the findings of Yoda, Chirawurah and Adongo (2014) who opined that the perception of domestic waste disposal indicates that people's attitudes about and perceptions of sanitation issues contribute to the waste management problem.

Conclusion

Environmental sanitation is an important aspect of public health and human lives that help keep at bay some diseases and helps maintain environmental aesthetics. To attain a state of optimum health, it is important to keep our total environment clean and free from pathogens. Lack of environmental education and poor attitude of residents are some of the factors contributing to poor environmental sanitation.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion of this study, it was recommended that;

1. There should be community outreach programmes to educate the residents of Ilorin South Local Government Area on the implications of poor environmental sanitation on health.
2. There should be strict enforcement of the laws guiding the weekly environmental sanitation in the area.

3. Failure of waste management services to collect waste will contribute to poor environmental sanitation therefore waste managers should be encouraged to collect waste from different point on time.

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