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TRADERS CONTRIBUTION TO POOR WASTE MANAGEMENT AS PERCEIVED BY WASTE MANAGERS IN KWARA STATE

Abdulrasaq Qazeem Onaolapo,¹

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&

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Abstract

The study examined challenges of market traders contributing to poor waste management as perceived by waste managers in Kwara State. Waste management in market areas is a serious problem as heaps of wastes are found lying on the road side around market areas. The availability of both private and Government owned waste management agencies have not made matters any better in these areas therefore one wonders what could be the cause of this. It is based on this that the study therefore attempted an investigation into the challenges of market traders contributing to poor waste management as perceived by waste managers in Kwara State. The findings revealed that refusal to pay for waste collection; poor packagings of waste and lackadaisical attitude of market traders are behavioural challenges contributing to poor management of waste as perceived by waste managers. It was therefore recommended that market traders should be educated on the importance of the adoption of the proper ways of disposing wastes and waste collection should be subsidize to encourage traders.

Keywords: waste, poor behaviour, perception, health education, waste managers

Introduction

Waste management is a very important aspect of every community which requires adequate monitoring in order to avoid all the negative effects accompanied by improper waste management. Awosusi (2010) reported that waste has been defined as that which is not or cannot be used, no longer of use which has no economic value to the owner. This was corroborated by Chukwuemeka, Ugwu and Igwegbe (2012) who stated that wastes are useless, unwanted and discarded materials. For an individual to be willing to get rid of something, such a thing must have no value or he/she no longer want to be in possession of the item.

The importance of waste collection, transfer and disposal cannot be over-emphasized. Apart from the issue of aesthetics, uncollected wastes constitute a health risk, which can be a serious consideration in low income residential areas (Amuda, Adebisi, Jimoda & Alade, 2014). Leachate from uncollected and decomposed garbage waste can contaminate groundwater and this could have enormous health implications in low-income communities where the use of well-water for drinking is

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common. Ogwueleka (2009) affirmed that municipal solid waste management has emerged as one of the greatest challenges facing environmental protection agencies in developing countries. This implies that solid waste management is a serious challenge in Nigeria and waste management agencies are finding it difficult to handle. The volume of solid waste being generated continues to increase at a faster rate than the ability of the agencies to improve on the financial and technical resources needed to parallel this growth. Solid waste management in Nigeria is characterized by inefficient collection methods, insufficient coverage of the collection system and improper disposal of solid waste (Ogwueleka, 2009).

Al-Khatib, Arafat, Daoud and Shwahneh (2009) affirmed that a negative behaviour often associated with the mismanagement of solid waste in developing countries is the occurrence of littering and indiscriminate waste disposal. There are a multitude of causes that can contribute to an increase in indiscriminate waste disposal, such as a lack of social pressure to prevent littering, absence of realistic penalties or inconsistent enforcement, and lack of knowledge of the environmental effects of littering (Al-Khatib, Arafat, Daoud, & Shwahneh, 2009). Other causes also include the amount of litter already present at a particular site, absence of signs referring to litter, and the number and/or placement and appearance (if any) of waste collection bins at the site. Henry, Yongsheng, and Jun (2006) opined that convenience of garbage bins has been cited many times in research as a priority when disposing of trash, and when these are not present or lacking in areas this has been reason enough to dispose of waste indiscriminately.

Anaman and Nyadzi (2014) affirmed that improper disposal of wastes is a common practice in many African countries. Most of the solid wastes are located close to markets and public places. Uncollected wastes produce foul odour and constitute a source of environmental nuisance (Ofomata & Eze, 2001). Yousif and Scott (2007) affirmed that when there is no formal system for sorting and disposal in a community, people become accustomed to throwing their waste in streets and other inappropriate places, so when changes are implemented people are not changing their disposal behaviour out of pure habit and custom.

The European Environment Agency (2000) affirmed that environmental taxes have been successfully adopted in developed countries in solving a wide range of issues which includes waste disposal, water pollution and air emissions. Environmental taxes used anywhere in the world are part of a set of environmental policy tools known as economic or incentive - based instruments (European Environment Agency, 2000). Despite the fact that people are charged for waste management in Nigeria, some people bluntly refuse to pay for such levies with the mindset that it should be burden of the Government. Some people refuse the payment because they believe that what they are being charged is higher than the amount of waste they generate (Sokoya & Diamond, 2017). Although the Council for Sustainable Development (2013) affirmed that in order to change the unsustainable trend in waste generation, people have to change their daily behaviour of waste generation and in order to do that they should be charged for the waste generated.

Abdulrasoul and Bakari, (2016) affirmed that the high rate of urbanization and population growth in most African countries has made it difficult to develop and implement effective Solid Waste Management (SWM) systems. The generated waste

is growing at increasing rate and the municipal council is not able to provide service for solid waste collection due to the rapid increase in the population and urbanization. A large amount of the solid waste generated by the market areas during working hours produced different types of waste which is not being properly managed, and might have detrimental effects on the environment, health and ecosystem. Most of the places inside the market are very dirty, they smell and are filled with flies as a result of the poor waste management system. Traders are unwilling to go to far distances to dispose their waste therefore they gather it in one corner of their stores or carelessly throw them around to rot away. Abdulrasoul and Bakari, (2016) found out that not only the solid waste management is a problem but also the behaviour of employees and vendors, all of which contribute to the dirtiness of the markets. The Southwark Council (2014) submitted that distance to public collection points for waste should be less than thirty metres so as to encourage people to adopt and practice proper waste disposal. Waste collection points are supposed to be on every street and at a considerable distance, in situations where this is not possible, a suitable ground floor collection must be agreed upon.

McAllister (2015) opined that when systems are breaking down and problems are escalating, people look to societal factors to fix the issue. This has often been the case when dealing with the mismanagement of solid waste in the developing world. People always go for alternatives that suit them in solving their immediate problem. This applies to the disposal of solid waste, when waste collection points or bins are situated at a distance, people may choose to dump their waste indiscriminately. Many researchers have argued that the waste problem is caused by human behaviour and therefore the solution lies in changing that behaviour (Milea, 2009). Public awareness and attitudes about waste can affect the whole solid waste management system (SWMS) (Zhu, Zurbrugg, Chris & Mani, 2008).

Another major behavioural challenge could be the unwillingness to seek for other waste disposal points. If the dump site/bin at a particular point is filled, a logical reasoning may be to look for another one and dispose of the waste in a less filled one. Most of the time, residents who dispose their waste by using their vehicles to transport the waste to the nearest dump site just drop the waste on the ground beside the dump site if such a dump site is filled with little regard for proper disposal.

Statement of the Problem

The researchers have observed that waste disposal and management in major markets in Ilorin has posed a serious challenge to the aesthetics of the environment. Huge heaps of waste were observed uncollected at a major roundabout (Oja Oba market), on road verges and by the roadside in market areas. The mountain of waste seem to be a normal sight as people were seen passing without any feeling of remorse and some other people were observed dumping their waste at the point. This could be attributed to the poor behaviour of traders which may include their unwillingness to properly package their waste, seek for proper waste collection site or exhibition of nonchalant attitude towards proper waste disposal which in turn affect proper and easy waste management.

Despite the availability of both private and government owned waste management agencies, the presence of waste on the roads remain a serious challenge in the state. It is against this background that the researchers sought to study

challenges of Kwara State market traders contributing to poor waste management as perceived by waste managers.

Research Questions

In view of the issues and concerns surrounding this study, this question was raised to guide the study.

1. What are the challenges of market traders contributing to poor waste management as perceived by waste managers in Kwara State?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is:

1. to find out the challenges that contribute to poor waste management in markets in Kwara State.

Methodology

Descriptive survey research method was adopted for this study. According to Koul (2009) a descriptive research design provides a means through which opinions, attitudes, suggestions for improvement of educational practices and instructions can be obtained. The design is suitable because one can generalize with its findings and it is not expensive. The population of the study comprised of all waste managers (social workers) in Kwara State. According to the Kwara State Environmental Protection Agency (KWEPA), waste managers in Kwara State are referred to as social workers and according to their record, there are two thousand (2,000) social workers in Kwara State (KWEPA, 2016). Systematic sampling technique was used in selecting ten percent (10%) representing 200 waste managers out of the entire population. This was done by requesting for the register containing the names of the waste managers and randomly selecting a name to start with and subsequently selecting every 10th name after the first name that was randomly selected until the desired number of sample was selected. The instrument that was used for the study was an adapted questionnaire which is meant to obtain the views of waste managers on the variables of the study. The items in the questionnaire were scored based on the direction of the questions. Responses (Agree) with a percentage of sixty percent (60%) and above were considered to be a factor contributing towards indiscriminate disposal of waste.

The research instrument was validated by lecturers in the Department of Health, Safety and Environmental Education, University of Benin and Department of Health Promotion and Environmental Health Education, University of Ilorin. Their suggestions and corrections were incorporated in the final draft of the research instrument. To determine the reliability of the instrument, test re-test method of reliability was adopted. Twenty copies of the questionnaires were administered to twenty waste managers in Kwara State using a systematic sampling technique in the selection of the respondents. The questionnaire was administered to the same set of respondents after an interval of two weeks. The two sets of questionnaire were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC) which yielded a correlation coefficient of 0.71 which was considered high to carry out the study. The instrument was administered by the researchers after permission was obtained from the appropriate authorities at KWEPA. The data collected was sorted, coded and analyzed using descriptive statistics of frequency counts, percentages and bar charts.

Result

Research question 1: what are the challenges of market traders contributing to poor waste management as perceived by waste managers in Kwara State?

Table 1: challenges of market traders contributing to poor waste management as perceived by waste managers in Kwara State.

S/N	Statement of Items	Agree	Disagree
1.	Traders may not want to go to a relatively long distance before they are able to dispose their waste	168 (84.0%)	32 (16.0%)
2.	Sometimes market traders' waste are poorly packaged making it tasking for waste collectors to easily collect wastes at different point	159 (79.5%)	41 (20.5%)
3.	Some traders just scatter their waste on the ground when they get to public disposal points	168 (84.0%)	32 (16.0%)
4.	In some areas where stall to stall collection of waste is adopted, some traders do refuse to pay for the services	166 (83.0%)	34 (17.0%)
5.	Some traders just throw their waste in nearby drainages	168 (84.0%)	32 (16.0%)

From the table above, it can be observed that 168 (84.0%) respondents agreed that the distance to a disposal site could encourage traders to dump their waste indiscriminately while 32 (16.0%) of the respondents disagreed. A total of 159 (79.5%) respondents agreed that poor packaging is a behavioural challenge to the management of waste while 41 (20.5%) of the respondents disagreed. 168 (84.0%) of the respondents agreed that some traders scatter their waste on getting to a disposal without regard while 32 (16.0%) of the respondents disagreed with the assertion. A total of 166 (83.0%) of the respondents agreed that a lot of the market traders refuse to pay for waste collection which is a behavioural challenge to waste management while 34 (17.0%) of the respondents disagreed. Finally, 168 (83.0%) of the respondents agreed that some traders adopt drainage dumping as a means of disposing their waste and it is perceived as a behavioural challenge to waste management while 34 (17.0%) of the respondents disagreed with this view.

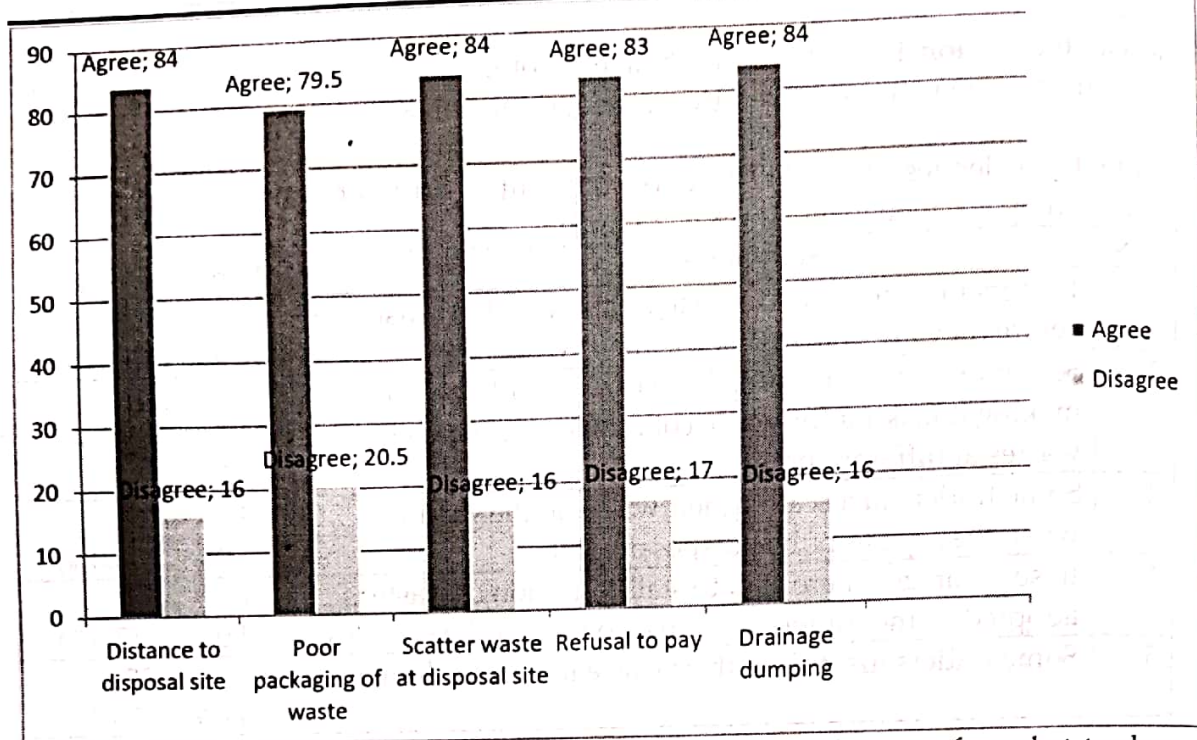


Fig. 1: Bar chart showing responses of respondents on challenges of market traders contributing to poor waste management as perceived by waste managers in Kwara State.

To further buttress the findings in Table 1, it can be observed in figure 1 that respondents agreed that distance to disposal site, poor packaging of waste, scattering of waste at disposal site, refusal to pay for waste collection and drainage dumping (84%, 79.5%, 84%, 83% and 84% respectively) are challenges towards poor waste management.

Discussion of Findings

This study examined the challenges of market traders contributing to poor waste management as perceived by waste managers in Kwara State.

Research question 1: what are the challenges of market traders contributing to poor waste management as perceived by waste managers in Kwara State? To assess the challenges of market traders contributing to poor waste management as perceived by waste managers in Kwara State, respondents were asked questions regarding this and based on their responses it was revealed that 168 (84.0%) respondents agreed that the distance to a disposal site could encourage traders to dump their waste indiscriminately while 32 (16.0%) of the respondents disagreed. This finding is in line with the finding of Henry, Yongsheng, and Jun (2006) who opined that convenience of garbage bins has been cited many times in research as a priority when disposing of trash, and when these are not present or lacking in areas this has been reason enough to dispose of waste indiscriminately. Siting disposal site far away from those who generate waste will not encourage them to go far away to dump their waste in such places except for those who understand the implication of adopting a poor way of waste disposal. This could be the reason why a few of the respondents were not in support of the statement.

A total of 159 (79.5%) respondents agreed that poor packaging is a behavioural challenge to the management of waste while 41 (20.5%) of the respondents disagreed. This finding is in line with the finding of Sunday, Salau, Thomas-Odia, and Kadiri, (2018) who reported that one of the most important issues with solid waste management is the poor packaging of waste which makes the evacuation of waste at various collection points difficult for waste managers. Proper waste packaging makes waste management easier and assists waste managers in the smooth and timely evacuation of waste at various designated points.

In the study, 168 (84.0%) of the respondents agreed that some traders scatter their waste on getting to a disposal site without regard while 32 (16.0%) of the respondents disagreed with the assertion. This is in line with the findings of Al-Khatib, Arafat, Daoud, and Shwahneh, (2009) who affirmed that some of the causes of indiscriminate waste disposal include the amount of litter already present at a particular site, presence of signs referring to litter, and the number and/or placement and appearance (if any) of waste collection bins at the site. Scattered waste at a disposal site encourages subsequent people who want to dispose their waste to follow the trend and dump their waste carelessly.

It was also discovered that 166 (83.0%) of the respondents agreed that a lot of the market traders refuse to pay for waste collection which is a challenge to waste management while 34 (17.0%) of the respondents disagreed. This finding is in line with the finding of Sokoya and Diamond (2017) who submitted that some people refuse to pay for waste collection because they believed that what they are being charged is higher than the amount of waste they generate. When a person is charged unnecessarily for a service that does not equate properly to the payment being made such a person may be discouraged to continue in that line.

Finally, a total of 168 (83.0%) of the respondents agreed that some traders adopt drainage dumping as a means of disposing their waste and it is perceived as a challenge to waste management while 34 (17.0%) of the respondents disagreed with this view. This finding is in line with that of Bakare (2016) who affirmed that when waste generators feel that the amount being charged by the waste franchisee is beyond their means, they dump the waste along flood paths thus compounding the waste predicament.

Findings

The following findings were discovered in the study:

Distance to a disposal site could encourage traders to dump their waste indiscriminately; poor packaging is a behavioural challenge to the management of waste; some traders scatter their waste on getting to a disposal without regard; a lot of the market traders refuse to pay for waste collection which is a behavioural challenge to waste management and some traders adopt drainage dumping as a means of disposing their waste and it is perceived as a behavioural challenge to waste management.

Conclusions

This study thus concluded that:

1. The behaviour of market traders towards indiscriminate disposal of waste is poor.
2. Most of the market traders are not willing to pay for waste disposal.
3. Most traders are not comfortable trekking to far disposal points to dump their waste.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, it was thus recommended that:

1. Adequate education about the importance of the adoption of positive behaviours towards waste disposal should be provided for market traders.
2. Waste collection in markets should be subsidized if not made free so that traders do not feel the urge to refuse the payment.
3. Disposal points should be situated close to traders and kept clean always to encourage them to make good use of it.

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