

IMPACT OF SCHOOL LOCATION ON STUDENTS' ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

ENVIRONMENT HEALTH: THE VESSEL FOR CURRENT HEALTH CHALLENGES IN EKWULOBIA AGUATA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, ANAMBRA STATE.

By

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Abstract

The study was carried out to ascertain Environmental Health as the vessel for current Health challenges in Ekwulobia Aguata Local Government Area. Two research questions guided the study. The population of the study comprises of Forty Thousand (40,000) people from the nine villages that make up Ekwulobia. Systemic sampling techniques was adopted to select forty five people from each village making it Four Hundred and Five (405) as sample for the study. A descriptive survey research was adopted for the study. The instrument for data collection was a questionnaire titled Environment Health, the vessel for current Health Challenges in Ekwulobia Aguata L.G.A. and was validated. The questionnaire consisted fourteen items (14) put into two clusters with response options of strongly Agree = 4, Agree = 3, Disagree = 2 and strongly disagree = 1. Mean was used in data analysis. The result of the study showed that people of Ekwulobia contributed toward frequent attack of various health challenges and diseases through their environmental health activities such as throwing refuse inside gutters, defecating at nearby bush, burning bushes indiscriminately and other such activities that polluted the air, water soil and other environmental degradations. It was recommended therefore that both Government and each village head should provide a place for dumping of refuse, burning of refuse and others. Each household should have toilet, public toilet should be provided in designated areas. Law should be made against open defecation and offenders should be punished.

Key Words: Environmental Health, Health Challenge, Vessels

Introduction:

Environment Comprises of our surroundings or external conditions that affect human live. Davis in Ogbalu (1979) defined environment as the combination of external or extrinsic conditions that affect the growth and development of organisms.

Also, Edem 2005 highlighted that environment is the surrounding in which an individual lives and learn. It is made up of physical, social, biological, economical and other such components.

Parks 2007 stressed that environment includes not only the water, air and soil that form our environment but also the social, physical and economic conditions under which are live. The physical components includes non-living things like air, climate and others, social environment comprises all manmade like religious practices, customs and others, biological environment comprises all the living thing like man, animals, crops and others.

However, human beings depend on the environment for their survival. The water we drink, air we breathe, cloths we wear, housing, culture were product of environment. As Pruitt, crumple and pro-throw stitch (1988) stressed that all living things are part of the environment and depend on it for all their needs; the food we eat, water we drink and other such that make human lives worth living. Unfortunately, man in one way or the other instead of preserving this environment for themselves and future generations struggle to destroy it. As Odigbo 2009 highlighted that a number of scientist are of the opinion that man is pushing species to extinction at an alarming rate through habitat destruction, introductive of foreign species and other such destructive measures. In Ekwulobia Urban Area of study, people letters refuge here and there, feces scatters in all the gutters, burning of bushes is not left out, broken bottles, empty cans and tins and other such environmental degradation were other of the day. This erupts foul odours, smells and irritating environment. This lead to many untold sicknesses in the area. To ensure that man retreat from these destructive behaviours, environmental health awareness should be created.

Nonetheless, most health problems and challenges in the world today where due to neglect and destruction of our environment through pollution, deforestation and other such degrading issues. According to parks 2009, much of man's ill health can be traced to adverse environmental factor such as water pollution, soil pollution, air pollution, poor housing condition and other such factors which pose a constant threat to man's health.

Furthermore, he stressed that man is responsible for the pollution of his environment through Urbanization, industrialization and other such human activities.

Environmental health therefore comprises all the factors that affect man's survival and modifying them for favourable living conditions. According Cathrine (2022) environmental health is a division or branch of public health which is concerned with related aspect connecting both the natural and built and are often required to be monitored or mitigated. Also WHO (1993), defined environmental health as comprises those aspects of human health, including quality of life, that are determined by physical, chemical, biological, social and psychosocial factors in our environment.

However, the impact of these environmental health to live could not be overemphasized. As Otti (2010) observed in Onitsha, Anambra State where solid wastes are dumped around indiscriminately which lead to a lot of environmental and health problems including frequent attack of several diseases like typhoid fever, hepatitis, lasa fever and other such diseases. Ekwulobia is not left out of this ugly situations.

Again, environment need to be protected and preserve by keeping the environment clean and avoid any thing capable of destroying the environment. It is believe that by so doing, individual lives will be improved and environment will be protected. This is in line with Parks' 2007 which states that the aim of environmental health is to create and maintain ecological condition that will promote health and prevent diseases. Nevertheless, if environment is well preserve and protected the goal fifteen (15) of sustainable Development goals which states, protect, restore and promote sustainable use of Eco system would be achieved.

Statement of the Problem

Environment comprises of our surrounding or external conditions that affect the growth and development of organisms. Davis in Ogbalu 1979 defined environment as the combination of

external or extrinsic conditions that affect the growth and development of organisms. Every human beings has right to a healthy environment and also the responsibility to protect and improve the environment of their lives and future generations. Unfortunately man instead of improving the environment and preserving the environment struggle hard to destroy and degrade it.

Odigbo 2009 stressed that a number of societies are of the opinion that man is pushing species to extinction at an alarming rate through habitat destruction, introduction of foreign species and other such destructive measures. The resultant effect of these are frequent outbreak of diseases and illnesses. Ikeke 2016 stated that many environmental problem arises from deliberate or inadvertent abuse, misuse and other use of natural resources by human beings. These have adversely affected man.

The researchers however were provoke to investigate on Environmental health Challenges in Ekwulobia A.L.G.A. it is believed that if the purpose of Environmental health which is to create and promote health is achieved, there would be a healthy environment.

Purpose of the Study

1. To ascertain environmental health activities being practiced by people in Ekwulobia Aguata Local Government Area.
2. To determine the precautionary measures that control and promote environmental health.

Research Question

1. What environmental health activities is being practiced by people in Ekwulobia Aguata Local Government Area.
2. What precautionary measures are adopted to control and promote environmental health in Ekwulobia Aguata Local Government Area.

Method

Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study which was carried out in Ekwulobia Aguata Local Government Area. The population of the study was over forty thousand (40,000) people (Ekwulobia independent 2019) from nine (9) villages that make up the town. Systematic sampling techniques was adopted to select forty-five (45) people from each of the nine villages making it four hundred and five as a sample size for the study. Anaekwe (2016) stated that systematic sampling ensures that elements are drawn at specified intervals from a lot containing all the elements of the population. So, this method was employed to ensure that all the villages were involved and partake in the study. A structured and validated questionnaire of fourteen (14) items was used as instrument for data collection. The researchers in an attempt to determine the reliability of the instrument carried out a trial testing once on forty-five (45) people in Umunze Orumba South L.G.A. which has similar structure and culture with the area of study and the same state of origin. There scores were computed using cronbach Alpha through SPSS version 21 and a eligibility index of point sixty three (.63) was obtained. The instrument was administered by the researchers with the aid of Town Union executives during Town Union meeting and was collected on the spot. This ensures 100 percent (100%) return. Likert 4 scale point of strongly agree (SA) – 4, Agree (A) = 3, Disagree (D) = 2, and strongly Disagree (SD) =1 was used to elicit information from respondent. Descriptive statistics mean (x) was used to analyze the data collected. Decision rule was that any item that was 2.50 and above signifies Agree and any item with less than 2.50 signifies Disagrees.

Research Question One

1. What environmental practices were practiced in Ekwulobia Towns.

Table 1: Mean rating on the environmental health practices in Ekwulobia were.

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	N	X	Remarks
2	I delegate at nearby bush drop cans.	102	190	70	43	405	2.84	Agree
3	I drop empty cans of malt and bottles after use.	200	102	53	50	405	3.1	Agree
4	I burn bushes for farming/get wild animals.	105	126	88	86	405	2.6	Agree
5	I drop refuse in gutters.	201	70	53	81	405	2.95	Agree
5	I throw away moi moi foils and wraps after use.	180	103	82	40	405	3.02	Agree
6	I do not normally wash hand after defecation	200	102	33	70	405	3.05	Agree
7	I drink water from any nearby tanks.	103	112	96	94	405	2.53	Agree
TOTAL GRAND MEAN							2.86	2.87

Source Field Survey, 2021

From the table above item 1 indicate negative response while other items which implied that they do not defeat 1,2,3,4,5,6 and 7 indicated positive responses. This implied that most people in Ekwulobia practices activities that predisposes them to diseases like, dropping refuse at gutters, throwing used cans and bottles away indiscriminately, drink any water within their rich, burn bushes indiscriminately, do not wash hand after defecation.

Research Question Two

What precautionary measures are adopted to control and promote Environmental Health in Ekwulobi Aguata Local Government Area.

Table 2: Mean rating of precautionary measures to aid in control and promotion of environmental health in Ekwulobia Aguata Local Government Area.

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	RD	X	REMARKS
8	I bury empty cans and bottles in the ground	50	70	105	180	405	1.95	
9	I dispose my refuse at designated places	30	80	201	94	405	2.14	
10	I drink fluttered water	60	40	104	201	405	1.88	
11	I defecate in modern toilets	70	90	113	132	405	2.22	
12	I throw moi-moi foils wraps inside dustbin	30	80	201	94	405	2.1	
13	I burn refuse in an incinerator/designated pace	40	70	95	200	405	2.25	
14	Wash hand after defeat	80	70	133	122	405	2.25	
GRAND MEAN							2.11	

Source field survey 2021.

The table above revealed negative response from the items. This indicated that precaution e.g. measures to control and promote environmental health such as burying empty cans and bottles in the ground, proper disposal of refuse at designated places, drinking of clean water, defecating in modern toilets, throwing moi-moi wraps and foils in the dustbin, burning in a designated places and washing of hands after defecation is not observed by people in Ekwulobia Aguata L.G.A. This however requires urgent attention and creating awareness else epidemic can erupt from these ugly practices.

Discussion

From the results, it could be concluded that all the environmental health practices such as defecating in toilets, putting refuse in dustbins, burning and burying refuse in designated places, washing hand after defecation among others were not practiced by people of Ekwulobia in Aguata L.G.A. This led to frequent attack of diseases like malaria among others, pollution both air, water, soil and other such environment components. Effort is thereby needed to enforce and encourage people to adopt the precautionary measure. If these precautionary measures are adhered to, the goal fifteen (15) of sustainable Development goal which states “protect, restore and promote sustainable use of ecosystems would be achieved.

Conclusion

The study investigated Environmental Health as the vessel for current health challenges in Ekwulobia Aguata L.G.A., Anambra State. It is obvious that cleanliness is next to Godliness. No meaningful good health could be achieved in a filthy and degraded environment such as in Ekwulobia Aguata L.G.A. The result of these filthy and degraded environment had led to increase and frequent attack by diseases both known and unknown. Every where is polluted and this is an eye soar to passerby. This ugly situation triggered researches into the study. It is believed that if recommendations were adhered to Ekwulobia will be a better place for living.

Recommendation

1. Government should provide refuse bins at designated places.
2. Village heads should provide dustbin at some strategic places in their village.
3. Each village should have a designated place for burning refuse.
4. There should be law against open defecation and penalty for offenders.

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