



KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDES OF TRADERS TOWARDS ENVIRONMENTAL SANITATION PRACTICES IN OWAN WEST LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF EDO STATE

UNUMEAKHE FRIDAY IDOMEI

University of Benin, Benin City, Edo State.
destinyfridayid@gmail.com
08124749470

IGUDIA ENOMA

University of Benin, Benin City, Edo State.
omorieva.igudia@uniben.edu
07035040575

EDOGIAWERIE VICTOR IKPONMWOSA

University of Benin, Benin City
victoredogiawerie4@gmail.com
08101546205

Abstract

The study examined the level of knowledge of traders in Owan West Local government area on environmental sanitation practices, and determined the factors influencing traders' attitudes towards environmental sanitation practices among traders in Owan West Local Government Area. Survey research design was adopted for this study. The sample size of the study comprises of four hundred and fifty (450) traders from four (4) markets which is in Owan West Local Government Area. A simple random sampling technique was used to select the respondent for the study. The instrument for data collection was a self-structure questionnaire which was validated by the researchers' supervisor and two other experts in the department of Health, Safety and Environmental Education (HSE). The test-retest method of reliability was used. The instrument was administered twice to 20 traders that are not part of the study within a two week interval. Thereafter, Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to analyze the scores from the both administrations and r-value of 0.9 correlation coefficient was determined, which shows that the instrument was reliable. The data collected were analyzed with percentage and frequency. The findings of the study therefore clearly revealed among others that the level of knowledge of the traders about sanitation is high. The study recommends that there should be constant advocating for increased public sector investment in basic sanitation infrastructures that are suitable, well planned and coordinated within different markets across the State.

Keywords: Environment, Sanitation, Market, Traders, Solid Waste Management

Introduction

Markets serve a universally critical role in the economic and social life of communities worldwide, market is generally understood as a designated physical space where buyers and sellers interact for exchange of goods and services (FRN, 2005; Fakere & Dadamiro, 2012). It is a centralized, physically defined site for business transactions. Nigerian markets are typically classified as either traditional or modern, the former often reflecting indigenous design and cultural aesthetics while the latter embodies contemporary planning and spatial structures (Oluwabemide, 2007, 2015; Olatunji, 2013). This classification, seen in areas like Owan West, is based on location, appearance, materials, and items sold.



Despite their economic benefits, market operations in Nigeria are widely associated with severe environmental issues. A primary concern is the generation of enormous amounts of solid waste (FRN, 2005; Lade, 2012; Abajegah, 2013). Visible heaps of refuse are common, creating unsightly conditions, emitting foul odors, and serving as breeding grounds for disease vectors like rodents and insects (WHO, 2002; UNEP, 2005) Furthermore, this refuse poses a fire risk and contributes to flooding by blocking public drainage systems. Another prevalent problem is the overall filthy state of market surroundings due to environmental contamination from open urination and defecation (Adejuwo, 2014; Daramola & Olowoporoku, 2016). These unhygienic conditions often stem from a lack of basic sanitary amenities such as functional toilets, water supply, and adequate waste disposal facilities (Adejumo, 2014; Olowoporoku & Popoola, 2017) which in turn can lead to the spread of infectious, potentially epidemic diseases (Fakere & Fadamiro, 2012).

Governments, in response to these human health and environmental hazards, have implemented various policies, including regular environmental sanitation exercises in urban and market areas (Mmom, 2011; Daramola, 2015) Markets require frequent sanitation efforts because buying, selling, and immediate consumption of goods lead to continuous waste generation and social misconduct, such as indiscriminate littering and improper sewage disposal. The resulting heavy contamination, combined with the proximity of markets to residential areas, puts nearby residents at risk. Environmental sanitation practice is defined by citizens' participation in the provision, use, and maintenance of sanitation facilities, as well as their adherence to regulations (Daramola, 2015). Effective market cleanliness thus requires a collaborative approach: the availability of suitable infrastructure must be matched by the appropriate attitudes and behaviors of the traders towards using these facilities (Oyelajo, 2014.) While much literature has explored the link between amenities and sanitation behavior (Afon, 2010; Olatunji, 2013; Daramola, 2015), limited empirical evidence exists on traders knowledge and attitudes towards environmental sanitation practices in markets within Owan West Local Government Area, creating a need for location-specific investigation.

Statement of the Problem

Markets are indispensable to the socio-economic life of communities in Nigeria, yet their operations lead to the generation of massive quantities of solid waste that often exceed existing management capacities. In Owan West Local Government Area, this waste is frequently managed through poor practices such as open dumping in heaps, which creates unsightly, malodorous conditions and serves as a breeding ground for disease vectors (Daramola & Olowoporoku, 2016). While the implementation of improved sanitation is globally recognized as essential for public health, the problem of filth persists in local markets like Sabo and Uzebba due to a combination of administrative negligence, high trader density, and a lack of effective supervision. Despite these visible environmental hazards, there is a critical gap in local research regarding how the individual behavioral factors of the traders themselves who are the primary waste generators influence these outcomes. Previous studies have often focused on general infrastructure, but as noted by Oyelajo (2014), the availability of facilities does not guarantee cleanliness if the users' attitudes and knowledge levels are not aligned with sanitary regulations. Consequently, there is an urgent need to empirically evaluate the specific relationship between the knowledge and attitudes of traders in Owan West and their actual participation in sanitation practices. This study is designed to bridge this gap by providing location-specific evidence required to design targeted interventions that can transform trader behavior and improve market hygiene within the local government area.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the level of knowledge and attitude of traders in Owan West Local Government towards participation in sanitation practices.

Specifically this study seeks to:

1. Examine the level of knowledge of traders in Owan West Local Government on environmental sanitation practice.
2. Determine the attitudes of traders towards environmental sanitation practices.



Research Questions

To aid the researcher in being focused on the study, the following research questions were formulated

1. What is the level of knowledge of traders in Owan West Local Government towards environmental sanitation practice?
2. What are the attitudes of traders towards environmental sanitation practices?

Methodology

A simple survey research design was used for the study. Survey research in the view of Olaitan et al. (2002) is a design that employs the study of a sample of large population to discover the relative incidence, distribution and interrelations of sociological variables through the use of interview or questionnaire. The target population of this study is the seven (7) markets and the market women trading in Owan West Local Government Area. The markets include; Ozalla market, Uhumora market, Sabo New market, Sabo Old Market, Uzebba market, Okpuje market and Sobe market. The sample size for the study comprise of four hundred and fifty (450) traders selected from three (3) markets within Owan west local government area. The multiple stage sampling technique was adopted for the study, the stages includes; stage one; A purposive sampling technique was used to select approximately half of the markets (for the study. Sabo Market (old and new markets) Uzebba market and Sobe market was selected. Stage two: in this stage, simple random sampling technique was used to select the traders who are the respondents for the study). A total of 150 respondents were randomly selected from each of the market for the study to make up of 450 respondents.

The Instrument for the study is a self-structure questionnaire with 20 items used to elicit information from the respondents. The questionnaires were divided into three sections. Section A, covers the demographic background of the respondents while Section B, consist of a multiple choice questions used to measure the level of knowledge of the respondents. Benchmark: Score of 1 – 10 = Low Knowledge, Score of 11 – 20 = Moderate Knowledge, Score of 21 – 32 = High Knowledge. While section C consist of a Four (4) point Likert scale which was constructed to solicit responses on the attitudes of traders towards participation in sanitation practices. Strongly Agree (SA) was scored = 4 points, Agree (A) was scored = 3 point, Disagree (D) = 2 points, while strongly disagree (SD) was scored = 1 points. The face and content validity of the Instrument was established by the supervisor and two experts from the Department of Environmental Health Science. Their inputs and correcting in terms of clarity and appropriateness of language was used to develop the final draft. To determine the reliability of the Instrument, the test-retest method of estimating the reliability of an instrument was used and an r-value of 0.9 correlation coefficient was determined which shows that the instrument was reliable.

Consequently, the constructed instrument was administered on a group of 20 traders who are not part of the study but part of the population within an interval of two weeks. The correlation of the response was determined using the Pearson's product moment correlation. The researcher administered the instrument to the respondents with the help of trained research assistant. The questionnaire was completed by the respondent was retrieved immediately. Data collected were analyzed using frequency count, percentages and mean scores for the research questions raised. The method employed in the analysis of the data collected for the study was a simple percentage and frequency counts.

Results

Research Question One: What is the level of knowledge of traders towards environmental sanitation practices among traders in Owan West?



Table one: What is the level of Knowledge of Traders towards Environmental Sanitation Practices among Traders in Owan West?

Level of Knowledge	Frequency	Percentage
High	295	65.5
Moderate	143	31.7
Low	12	2.8
Total	450	100

Benchmark: Score of 1 – 10 = Low Knowledge, Score of 11 – 20 = Moderate Knowledge, Score of 21 – 32 = High Knowledge.

Table one above shows the output of level of knowledge of traders towards environmental sanitation. It reveals that 2.8% respondents traders had low knowledge towards environmental sanitation, 31.7% respondents depicts moderates knowledge on environmental sanitation, while 65.5% of the respondents was observed to have high level of knowledge. Based on this findings, it could be inferred that majority of the respondents traders have high knowledge of environmental sanitations which is very vital in the health and safety of the traders and the general public.

Research Question Two: What are the attitudes of traders towards environmental sanitation practices?

Table 2: Attitudes of Traders towards Environmental Sanitation Practices

ITEM	YES	%.	NO	%
1. Sanitation practices are not something that should be made Compulsory for traders.	76	50.7	74	49.3
2. Payment for waste disposal is not necessary in sanitation Practices.	56	37.3	94	62.7
3. Let everybody carryout environmental sanitation anytime and Anyhow they want it.	134	89.3	16	10.7
4. Sanitation practices should be carefully monitored by Sanitation officers to ensure compliance by every trader in The market.	81	54.0	69	46.0
5. If my home is clear, then I don't bother about the market Environment.	63.	42.0	87	58.0

Score of 0 – 4; negative attitudes, score of 5 – 8; positive attitudes

Table 2 above shows the attitudes of market traders towards environmental sanitation in Benin metropolis. From the report, 81.4% of the respondents were observe to have positive attitude towards environmental sanitation, at the same time 18.6% of the respondent market traders were observed to have negative attitude towards environmental sanitation. This connotes the fact that the respondents tend to have a positive attitude in keeping with environmental sanitation practices. Thus, attitude could be inferred to be a behavioral disposition which could be subject to external influences as regards to environmental sanitation practices in Benin metropolis.

Discussion of Findings

The study was embarked to evaluate the Knowledge and attitudes traders towards environmental sanitation in Owan west local government area of Edo State. It was discovered that majority of the traders have high knowledge of Environmental sanitation, this is in-line with the study carried by Arthur and Abubakari (2021), when they study challenges to environmental sanitation. This is also in line with the study carried by Arthur and Imoro (2012), it was also found that 90% of the respondents with secondary education, 97% with basic education, 86% of those with tertiary education, 93% of those



with no formal education agreed that, good personal hygiene improved health. The study also reveals that attitude of the traders it shows that they have a good attitude. The various factors that contribute to their attitude are their educational level, taking the market as their own home, environmental enlightenment and campaign. This shows that their positive attitude towards environmental sanitation is from the above mentioned factors. This is in line with the study carried by Adams (2003), when he asserted that Attitude development is influenced by our cognitive, affective and behavior responses to objects and things around us.

Conclusion

This study establishes that the level of knowledge and attitude of traders towards participation in sanitation practices. From the study we deduced that the level of knowledge of the traders about sanitation is high, but the effect on the poor because they seem to have low knowledge about it. On the attitude and factors that influences the attitude of the traders it shows that they have a good attitude. The various factors that contribute to their attitude are their educational level, taking the market as their own home, environmental enlightenment and campaign.

Recommendations

Following the findings of study, the researcher recommends below:

1. There should be constant advocating for increase public sector investments in basic sanitation infrastructures that is sustainable, well planned and coordinated within different markets across the State.
2. Employing and promoting strategies that influence behavioural change through effective regular education and awareness campaigns should be embarked.
3. Mass enlargement campaign should be carried out to educate the traders about the dangers of poor environmental sanitation

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