



Environmental Sanitation Awareness of Students of Government Secondary School Toro, Bauchi State

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Abstract

This descriptive research examines the awareness of students to environmental sanitation in Government Secondary School Toro, Bauchi State. 138 students constituted the sample drawn from the population of the students in the study area. Data were collected using level of understanding among students on the concepts of environment, sanitation and environmental sanitation as well as constraints to environmental sanitation. Data collected were subjected to statistical analysis using simple percentages. Results obtained indicate a high positive understanding of the concepts and awareness to environmental sanitation practices. It was concluded that the best way to provide awareness is through increase access to environmental Education materials and write-ups. Much emphasis be placed on existing activities and strategies such as seminars, monthly or yearly world environmental clean-up exercises, environmental exhibitions, competitions, workshops and even award of cash prizes to the best and cleanest schools. These activities are necessary in order to effectively impact, sensitize and infuse into the citizens, a sense of decency, discipline and responsibility towards the environment.

Keywords: *Environmental, Sanitation, Awareness, Students, Government Secondary School Toro.*

Introduction

The word environment is derived from the French word “Environ” which means “surrounding” our surrounding includes biotic factor like human beings, plants, animals, microbes, etc and biotic factors such as light, air, water, soil etc.

Environment as a complex of many variables, which surrounds man as well as the living organisms, environment includes water, air and land and human beings and other living creatures such as plants, animals and micro organisms (Kalavathy, 2004). In separate whole system constituted by physical, chemical, biological, social and cultural elements, which are interlinked individually and collectively in myriad ways.

The natural environment consists of four interlinking systems namely, the atmosphere, the hydrosphere, the lithosphere and the biosphere. These four systems are in constant change and such changes are affected by human activities and vice versa (Kumarasamy et al, 2004).

According to Wikipedia encyclopedia sanitation is the hygienic means of promoting health through prevention of human contact with the hazards of wastes as well as the treatment and proper disposal of sewage or waste water. Hazard can be physical, microbiological, biological or chemical agents of disease. Wastes that can cause health problems include human and animal excreta, solid

wastes, domestic waste water (sewage, sludge, and grey water), industrial wastes and agricultural wastes.

The Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary defines sanitation as “system that protect people's health especially those that dispose efficiently of human waste” Other dictionaries also mention prevention of transmission of disease and insurance of public and private health in the developing world, Nadkarni M. (2004).

In other words, environmental sanitation envisages promotion of health of the community by providing clean environment and breaking the cycle of disease. It depends on various factors that include hygiene status of the people, types of resources available, innovative and appropriate technologies according to the requirement of the community, socioeconomic development of the country, cultural factors related to environmental sanitation, political commitment, capacity building of the concerned sectors, social factors including behavioral pattern of the community, legislative measures adopted, and others (Pandve, 2008).

Aim of the study

The aim of this work is to examine the awareness of students towards environmental sanitation in Government Secondary School Toro, Bauchi State.

Objective of the study

- i. To describe the perception of students on concepts of awareness and attitude
- ii. To ascertain the level of understanding among students on concepts of environment, sanitation and environmental sanitation.
- iii. To examine students awareness and attitude to environmental sanitation.

Literature Review

Globally, most public schools are facing a high level of pollution. The situation in less-developing countries such as Nigeria is more acute, partly because of the lack of adequate solid waste disposal facilities and people's negative attitude towards the environment. There is strong evidence which suggests that individual or group awareness and attitudes towards waste generation and management is critical in the effort to respond to the waster management challenges (Kofoworola, 2007). The negative attitude of the society towards the environment also affected the educational institution whose problem has been aggravated by constant changes, not just in curriculum content but also school subjects. For example, health education as school subject has replaced hygiene where students were once taught sanitation of the environment, which provided opportunity through which the act of waste management and sanitation can be learnt (Ogunyemi, 1994; Adara, 1997; Ifegbesan, 2010). The awareness, attitudes and behaviors of people in the community are crucial to the management of water.

Discussion of result

Table 1; Level of understanding on the concepts of environment, Sanitation and environmental sanitation

Concepts	Respondents	%
Environment	96	69.6
Sanitation	56	40.6
Environmental sanitation	108	78.3

Source; field survey 2020

This table 1 represents students level of understanding on the concepts of environment, sanitation and environmental sanitation. The findings indicate that majority of the students 78.3% have an understanding of the concept.

Table 2; Students awareness on environmental sanitation

	Yes	No	Non
Awareness through Organized lectures on Environmental sanitation	124 (89.9)	11 (7.9)	3 (2.2)

Awareness through other medium	Radio, Television, classroom	Football field	Non
	121 (87.7)	9 (6.6)	8 (5.8)

Source; Field survey 2020

Table 2 represents students' awareness of environmental sanitation. The respondents responded positively with 89.9%. While only 7.9% of the respondents had a negative responses and of the respondents 2.2% had no option. The finding of this study revealed that students have adequate knowledge on environmental sanitation. This knowledge gained by the students might be due to the fact that the knowledge is gained in the course of their exposure to environmental issues which constitute great influence on their attitude. The findings also supports the fact that education is a socializing process and tool for enlightenment. While the second segment of the question 87.7% of the respondents were aware of environmental sanitation through radio, television and classroom. While 6.6% of

Table 3; Students attitude on environmental sanitation

	Daily	Monthly	Yearly	No option
Frequency in Sweeping/cleaning the environment	119 (86.2)	11 (7.9)	5 (8.7)	2 (2.2)
Made of easing oneself	Bush 9 (6.5)	Toilet 112 (81.2)	Within school premises 17 (12.3)	
method of waste Disposal	Dust bin 95 (68.9)	Dining hall 14 (10.1)	Behind classroom 28 (20.2)	No option 1 (0.8)

Source: Field survey 2020

From the table 3 above, the attitude of the students to environmental sanitation was high with 86.2% or the students frequently sweep/clean their environmental daily. Finding is in line with that of Welch found out that education has a significant influence on environmental attitude. The study carried out by Pooley and O'connor Olawepo J.A and Jekayinta A.A (1990), investigated the cognitive and effective bases of environmental attitudes to indicate that, it is what people feel and believe about the environment that determines their attitude toward it. More ever, environmental attitude of young people appear to be crucial as they ultimately play a direct role in providing knowledge-based solutions to in-coming environmental problems. (Bradly et al.,

1999; Eagle and Demare, 1999). School environmental programs, although address to students if property channel can also influence the environmental knowledge, attitude and

Conclusion

The findings of the study shows that the level of students awareness and attitude to environmental sanitation is high as the majority of the students are aware of environmental sanitation and practice it frequently in sweeping and cleaning their environment and mostly disposing their waste in dust bin as well as defecate in toilets. That the best way to provide awareness for environmental issues and promote environmentally responsible behavior is through increased access to environmental education. It is therefore, believed that with appropriate environmental sanitation education inculcated at the formative age of the child Nigerians can still achieve the version of the type of environment considered most desirable to bequeath to our nation.

Recommendations

1. That the best way to provide awareness for environmental issues and promote environmentally responsible behavior is through increased access to environmental education materials. It is therefore, believed that with appropriate environmental sanitation education inculcated at the formative age of the child, Nigerians can still achieve the version or the type of environment considered most desirable.
2. Much emphasis should be placed on existing activities and strategies such as seminars, monthly/yearly world environmental day celebrations, Saturday Environmental Clean-up Exercises, environmental exhibitions, competitions, workshops and even award of cash prizes to the best and cleanest schools. These activities are necessary in order to effectively impart, sensitize and infuse in the citizens a sense of decency, discipline and responsibility towards the environment.
3. Environmental expert should be brought to the school to deliver lectures to students at least once in a year. This will equip the students with the necessary information and knowledge in the maintenance of a healthy school environment.

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