



Implications of Lockdown on Failure to Continue with Monthly Environmental Sanitation Exercise with Emphasis on Residential Area in Minna Metropolis, Niger State Nigeria

Jamil Hassan Abdulkarim^{1*}, Ibrahim Friday Sule², Tamizhazhagan V³

^{1*}Department of Environmental Health, New Gate College of Health Technology, Minna Niger State, Nigeria

^{2*}Department of Biological science ATBU Bauchi

^{3*}Department of Zoology, Syed Ammal Arts and Science College. Ramanathapuram, 623 513

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Abstract: *Environment: the complex of physical, chemical, and biotic factors (such as climate, soil, and living things) that act upon an organism or an ecological community and ultimately determine its form and survival” (Merriam-Webster Dictionary). "Sanitation generally refers to the provision of facilities and services for the safe disposal of human urine and feces. The word 'sanitation' also refers to the maintenance of hygienic conditions, through services such as garbage collection and wastewater disposal”. (WHO). Environmental sanitation includes human excreta control, managing solid waste and wastewater, and pest and vector control. ... Human excreta should be kept away from sources of water and accommodation. Immediate action is taken to localize excreta disposal and prevent contamination of the water supply. (The Sphere Project, 2011).*

Keywords: COVID-19, WHO, Environmental Sanitation, Niger state Nigeria.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Niger State Government has commenced a process to address growing concern of poor environmental health and sanitation in the State, it is in view of this development that why Niger state Government flag off monthly environmental sanitation on 29 February in Minna. Niger State Environmental Protection Agency (NISEPA) taking the center stage in the campaign on healthy environment (3). However, the government of Niger State has sign Memoranda of Understanding with refuse recycling company in Ghana with view to established waste recycling plant in the state, these are all effort beingmade by Niger State government to keep Niger State clean.

Meanwhile, Nigeria announces the first COVID-19 case on February 27, 2020 which was imported into the country by an Italian national, it is in view of these development Nigeria



Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) swing into action to control the spread of this deadly virus. Among the action taken by the Federal government of Nigeria to contain the spread of the virus was announcing at first, restriction of movement, then total lockdown in three cities namely Lagos, Ogun and Abuja, however few weeks later Niger state government announce the lockdown in state thereby affecting monthly environmental sanitation program in the state (3).

Lockdown imposed by the Niger State government due the global pandemic of COVID19 has not only affect the sanitation exercise itself but also affect the drivers in the campaign of clean environment i.e the enforcement team ranging from environmental health official, police and member of task force committee, thereby diverting their attention toward war against COVID19. Stay at home order in view to contain spread of COVID19 pandemic resulted to increase the quantities of solid waste generation compared to months before lockdown was enforced. Meanwhile all financial allocation set aside for the environmental sanitation exercise by the state government has being used in fight COVID19 living the aspect of environmental sanitation in a shambolic situation (4).

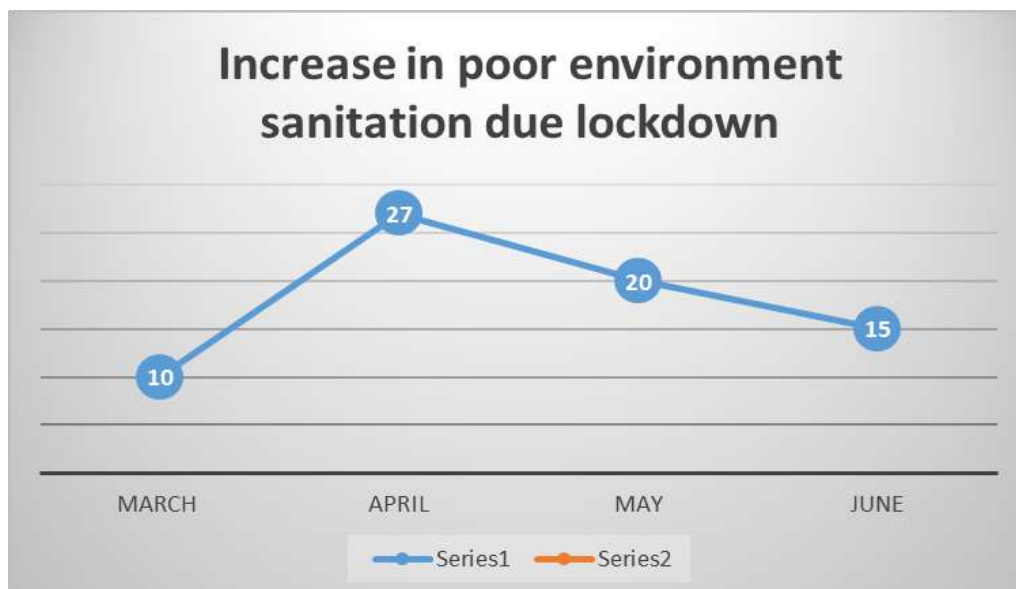
The Consequences of Lockdown on Public Health with Regard to Failure to Continue with Monthly Environment Sanitation.

- Risk of Disease transmission
 - Environmental pollution
 - Flood
 - Road traffic accident
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- **Risk of disease transmission:** improper environment sanitation resulting from failure to manage solid waste, excretal disposal in the environment which will not only serve as breeding place of vector, pathogenic organism and vermin's but potential medium for transmission of disease such as lesser fever, cholera, hepatitis B, malaria dysentery and diarrhea disease. In this part of the world where open defecation become order of the in urban slum, and rural area, failure to enforce sanitation culture among the citizenry will increase mortality and morbidity from the preventable diseases (5).
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- **Environmental pollution:** various survey has reveal the association between poor environmental sanitation and environmental pollution, increase in waste generation without prompt evacuation of solid waste will lead to emission of offensive odor into environment thereby polluting the air, however the liquid waste generated from continue accumulation of solid waste can percolate and find its way into underground water source thereby contaminating the underground water, the quality of soil within the area where refuse were dumped resulted to soil pollution.

Littering of refuse around the environment as the result of lack of environmental sanitation affect the aesthetics value of the environment. However, the lock down due to the global pandemic of COVID19 has create more harm than good to the environment, poor environmental condition could facilitate spread of COVID19(5).

▪ **Flood:** lack of environmental sanitation couple with the failure to monitor and enforce regulation governing solid waste generation, storage, collection and disposal by the concern agency have resulted people finding drainage as a mean of dumping their waste which will not only affect the aesthetics value of the environmental but rather result to flood, however when water way are being block the water have to find its way into the environment (5).

▪ **Road traffic accident.** Failure in continuity of monthly environmental sanitation exercise due the COVID19 pandemic however affect the sanitary condition of environment, increase in the accumulation of waste thereby serve as potential environmental hazard, in the same vein this have affected the number staff from Niger State environmental protection agency(NISEPA) in an effort to keep the state clean thereby resulted in accumulation of heap of refuse from our street, road site and other public places, however this development will result to traffic congestion and may result to road traffic accident during the days of lockdown relaxation(5).



The above graph illustrates the increases in poor environmental condition from the month of March till date, due lockdown in an effort to contain the spread of COVID19 in Niger State



The above picture shows the poor sanitation condition of residential area in some part of Minna



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The above state is also in line with world health organization assertion made coup with other expert in the field, in respect to environmental sanitation.

‘‘In 2010, the UN General Assembly recognized access to safe and clean drinking water and sanitation as a human right, and called for international efforts to help countries to provide safe, clean, accessible and affordable drinking water and sanitation.

Sustainable Development Goal target 6.2 calls for adequate and equitable sanitation for all. The target is tracked with the indicator of ‘‘safely managed sanitation services’’ – use of an improved type of sanitation facility that is not shared with other households and from which the excreta produced are either safely treated in situ, or transported and treated off-site.’’ (WHO, 2019)

Sanitation and health

According World Health Organization, (WHO,2019), some, 827 000 people in low- and middle-income countries die as a result of inadequate water, sanitation, and hygiene each year, representing 60% of total diarrhoeal deaths. Poor sanitation is believed to be the main cause in some 432 000 of these deaths. Diarrhoea remains a major killer but is largely



preventable. Better water, sanitation, and hygiene could prevent the deaths of 297 000 children aged under 5 years each year.

Open defecation perpetuates a vicious cycle of disease and poverty. The countries where open defecation is most widespread have the highest number of deaths of children aged under 5 years as well as the highest levels of malnutrition and poverty, and big disparities of wealth (6).

Benefits of improving sanitation

Benefits of improved sanitation extend well beyond reducing the risk of diarrhoea. These include:

- reducing the spread of intestinal worms, schistosomiasis and trachoma, which are neglected tropical diseases that cause suffering for millions;
- reducing the severity and impact of malnutrition;
- promoting dignity and boosting safety, particularly among women and girls;
- promoting school attendance: girls' school attendance is particularly boosted by the provision of separate sanitary facilities; and
- potential recovery of water, renewable energy and nutrients from faecal waste.

A WHO study in 2012 calculated that for every US\$ 1.00 invested in sanitation, there was a return of US\$ 5.50 in lower health costs, more productivity, and fewer premature deaths (7).

2. CONCLUSION

Environmental sanitation being the driver in disease prevention and its role in bringing out the aesthetics value of the environment should be taken seriously and declared as the area that requires quick intervention by the state government and it should be incorporated into the COVID-19 State task force program.

3. REFERENCE

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