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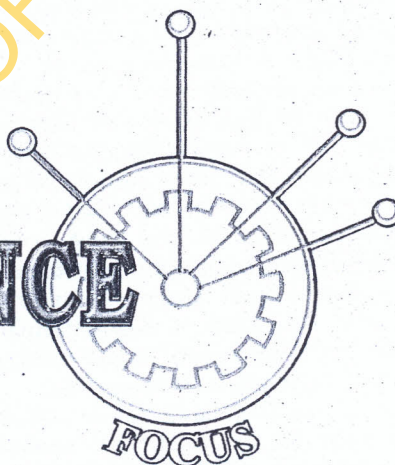
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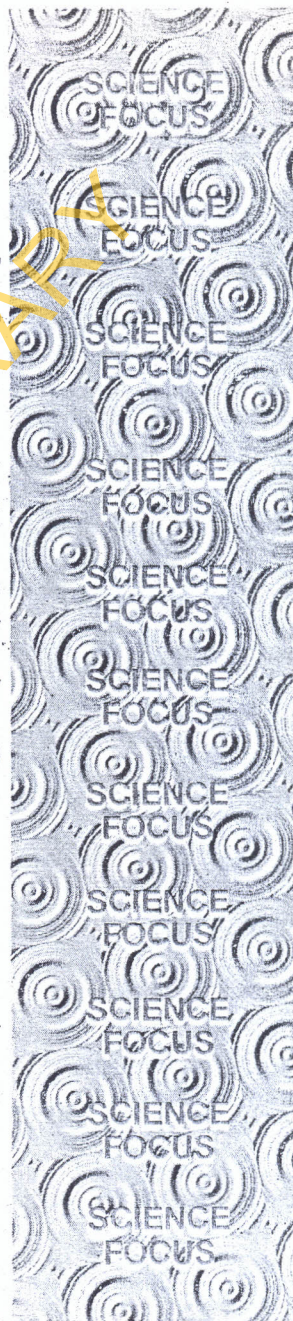
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at the university of Ibadan, Nigeria. The most effective environmental information programmes will help students to look at how their own action at a local level can cause and help prevent or solve environmental problems.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To identify the sources of information available to Nigerian university students;
2. To investigate the opinion of these students as regards to environmental problems;
3. To determine the willingness of these students to show positive concern to the environment as a result of available information.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

It is a well-known fact that the better the understanding of the environment the more effectively it can be used to support development. There is therefore a need for awareness among the general public as regards to environmental concerns, which will help in creating the attitude, motivation, and commitment to adopt environmentally sound approach in their daily activity (Aina & Salau, 1992). According to Sangowusi (1998) when people are aware of the environment and its significance to their lives, they will act in such manner that will promote healthy living. Consequently, environmental education has become necessary in order to generate general environmental consciousness through enlightenment on the damage done to the environment.

Okigbo (1996) in his article reviewed a number of environmental problems that occur at varying spatial scales from the home through the neighbourhood, the city to the region. These problems include the crowded and cramped living conditions and the presence of pathogens in the human environment because of lack of infrastructures. In addition, the dangerous and unhealthy sites of some neighborhood and the irregular or non-collection of garbage on some neighborhood are some of the environmental problems faced in Nigerian urban areas. There are many factors contributing to these problems in Nigeria, which includes lack of adequate information to the citizenry, massive rural-urban migration, poor planning and so on. However, as more information becomes available, potential benefits are better understood, and practical experience is gained (UNL: 1999)

Awareness, according to Akbar Naim (1991), is consciousness which he said is the ability to see accurately what is, and being able to see accurately means that one must be properly oriented in space,

time and person. Peoples' relationship to nature is the greatest issue facing the world at the turn of the century. He also noted that all over the world, young people are becoming enthusiastically involved in environmental action. To buttress the preceding Potter (1996) noted that if the environment is to have a major impact on human activity, it must be implanted and "indoctrinated in the young" he argued that only by such means would all eventually be sufficiently motivated to manage and preserve our globe for posterity. Younger people are reported to be more concerned about hazards than older people, female are found to be more concerned about the environment than males. Also those with formal education are reported to be more concerned than those with who have less formal education and blacks are to be more stressed by hazards than whites (Rockland, 1995; Budd & Curry, 1995; Flynn 1994).

The problems of environmental degradation in Nigeria have spanned over two or three decades (Egunjobi: 1993). According to him, these problems range from those that are more urban in nature to those that are associated with the rural and urban areas. This fact was confirmed by NEST in their 1992 report, which brought into focus the pollution on land, air and water in Nigeria. They reported that apart from the tremendous quantity of organic and inorganic wastes generated by Nigeria's industries in both urban and rural areas, the amount of wastes produced in other land use context is equally enormous, these land use context include residential, commercial, educational and other numerous locations. According to Ogbonna (2001), Nigerian cities are characterized by poverty, unemployment, flood and erosion, pollution of rivers and lakes, unpaved road system, full of potholes and littered with garbage. There is lack of water supply in many Nigerian neighborhoods and of course in various cities, water supply is untreated. The urban environment is dirty and polluted, dirty streets and squares, refuse collection and disposal points are not well maintained (Ogbonna: 2001). Public markets are habitat of diseases and garbage, as foods and goods are placed on the groundside by sides with heaps of stinking garbage dumps. Mabogunje (1988) opined that air pollution in Nigeria cities presently come largely from automobile exhaust which is said to account for as much as 80% while direct industrial processing account for much of the remaining 20%. He commented further that accidental release of toxic air pollutant poses' serious health risk to residents in such neighborhoods. This situation is largely due to the fact that most Nigerian citizens are not fully informed about the danger associated with the environment or they are just not concerned about the whole issue. When citizens are informed on a regular basis about what they stand to gain from an organized

environment the state of the Nigerian environment will improve.

Environmental information is therefore public enlightenment whereby the people are made to understand that the consequence of their action is needed to avert any further degradation of the environment. This public enlightenment should be through seminars, film shows, symposia, lectures, and the print media. The major aim is to challenge peoples' thinking, attitude, value systems and life styles (Modupe: 1994). Public involvement has become a vital element in the environmental field, the integrity of the information base and the packaging of environmental news for public communication has serious implication for policy makers and educators. Protection of the environment needs the support of a wide range of organization. For this reason developmental corporation between different institutions and groups (ministries, administrative bodies, territorial authorities, pressure groups, information brokers and NGOs) must exist in order to disseminate timely, relevant and adequate information. Nigerian citizens need to have a free access to environmental information sources in order for them to become more aware of their relationship with their environment. The way and format the information is transferred is vital for effective communication. Information sometimes has to be packaged in such a way as to suit the intended audience. The processes of environmental information provision and dissemination would be said to have achieved some purpose when university students have become environmentally responsible citizens.

METHODOLOGY

The descriptive survey research method was used for this study. The population of the study includes students of the university of Ibadan who resides in the hostels provided by the university. A sample size of three hundred and eight (308) respondents was chosen for the study from the seven halls of residence randomly selected from nine halls. This means that 44 respondents were selected in the seven halls namely Queens, Idia, Zik, Teddar, Balewa, Mellanby, and Bello Halls. The validated questionnaire was used as the instrument for collecting the data used in the study. The questionnaire was divided into five sections: section A was on their background information, section B sought information on students' awareness of environmental problems. Section C looked into the sources of information consulted by students and section D focused on the

environmental opinion of the students while section E was designed to find out how responsive students were about environmental protection practices. Most of the questions took the close-ended form; few questions were open ended while the rest was designed with the Likert scale (a measurement scale or format in which respondents were asked to strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree, or strongly disagree with stated variables). The statistical method used in analyzing the results of the questionnaire includes descriptive statistics like frequency tables, bar chart, standard deviations and percentages to show the patterns of responses.

Analysis and discussion of findings

Out of 308 questionnaire sent out a total of 254 (82.5%) questionnaire was returned and analyzed. There was 100% response when the respondents were asked if they are aware of the environmental problems existing in Nigeria. They were then asked to indicate their knowledge about the existence of Federal Environmental Protection Agency (FEPA), 89.4% of the respondents is aware about the existence of the agency while 10.6% indicated that they have never heard of the agency. This shows that undergraduate students in Nigeria are not ignorant of Nigeria's environmental problems neither are they unaware of government efforts to contain the problems through the efforts of FEPA.

The students were asked to indicate the different sources were they obtain environmental information. According to Figure I the television 80 %, school 69%, radio 65%, newspaper 63% and lectures 55% ranked among the highest sources of environmental information. The fact that television, radio, and newspaper were ranked among the highest sources of environmental information is an indication that environmental issues are expressed through these media channels adequately. However, it is by watching television that many people acquire an awareness and understanding of the environment and environmental issues near and far. According to Huckle (1995) images and sounds from television are increasing significant in shaping their belief, attitudes and identities and environmental pressure groups are learning that they can use the medium to their advantage. Billboards, newsletter and reference sources like the encyclopedia were rated low by the respondents, which could be as a result of these materials carrying little on environmental issues. Billboards should be constructed by environmental agencies in cities in order to achieve maximum efforts in their operations.

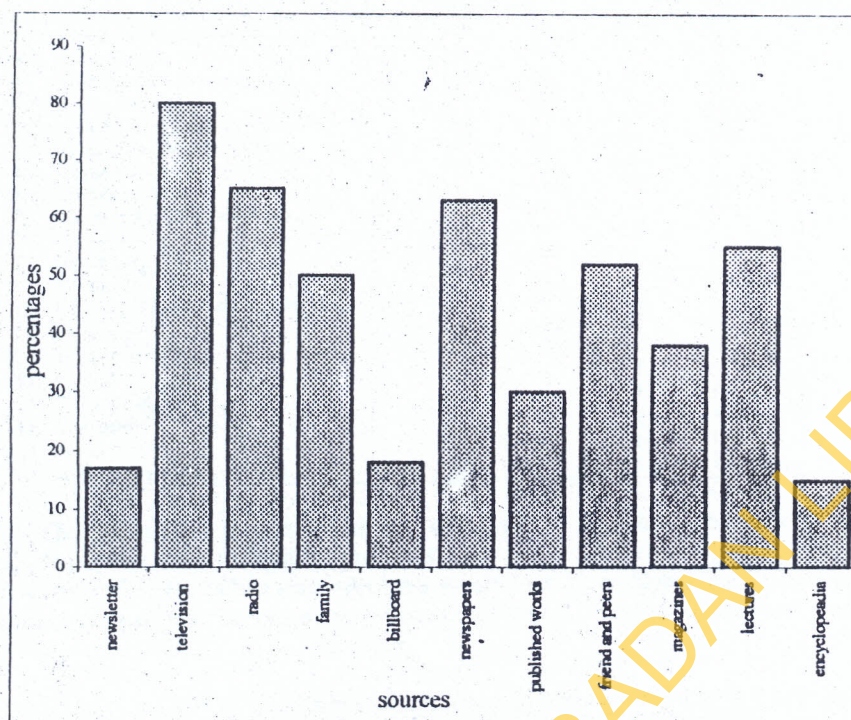


Fig. 1: Sources of Environmental Information

Table I below clearly reveals that most of the respondents are aware of the Nigerian Environmental problems itemized in the table. Poor solid waste disposal and blocked litter and garbage gutters with a mean of 4.46 while air pollution from pesticide and insecticide ranked lowest with a mean of 2.92. The strength of the mean which is generally above 3 shows indeed that most students are aware of environmental problem since the continuum is from 1-5 with the highest number five (5) used to portray the extent of seriousness and one (1) portray nonexistent.

The standard deviation which can be seen in the last column in Table I indicate the pattern of responses, those which score below 1 shows strongly that respondents chose either serious or very serious in their responses, an indication of converging pattern of respondents and awareness of Nigeria

environmental problems. Poor solid waste disposal, blocked and smelly gutters and litter, these three environmental problems with high means are common problems on most Nigerian campuses and the society at large. The problem of solid waste disposal is quite persistent and overwhelming as large heaps of rubbish can be spotted along major streets in Nigerian cities (NEST, 1992). The respondents by their responses have also established the fact that blocked drainages, litter & garbage are seen everywhere on their campus. Polythene bags and traditional leaves used in wrapping food are the major cause of blockage, which later leads to flooding during the raining season. Air pollution from pesticides and insecticides with a mean of 2.92 this shows that many people are unaware of pesticides and insecticides as potential environmental hazards.

Table 1: Respondents perception of environmental problems

Environmental problems	Very Serious (3)	Serious (4)	Unsure (3)	Not Serious (2)	Non Existent (1)	Total n=254	Mean +2	Standard Deviation SD
1. Poor solid waste disposal	159	83	2	9	1	254	4.52	0.72
2. Water scarcity	101	130	4	19	0	254	4.23	0.81
3. Over crowded accommodation	144	86	10	14	-	254	4.41	0.80
4. Noise pollution	79	129	19	25	2	254	4.41	0.80
5. Lack of space for recreation	41	88	43	65	17	254	3.27	1.20
6. Blocked and smelly gutters	152	91	7	4	1	254	3.27	1.20
7. Automobile pollution	105	122	10	16	1	254	4.52	0.66
8. Sewage problems	47	134	30	40	3	254	3.71	0.98
9. Air pollution from pesticides	13	76	65	80	20	254	2.92	1.06
10. Oil spillage	52	87	62	45	8	254	3.51	1.09
11. Gas flaring	45	77	85	39	8	254	3.44	1.04
12. Poach	42	84	63	58	7	254	3.44	1.04
13. Land degradation from mining & quarrying	31	90	76	44	7	254	3.39	0.99
14. Flooding	52	109	38	52	3	254	3.61	1.06
15. Deforestation	84	100	35	31	4	254	3.39	0.99
16. Drought	28	75	71	69	11	254	3.15	1.07
17. Desertification	51	71	72	52	8	254	3.14	1.11
18. Soil erosion	88	113	32	20	1	254	4.05	0.90
19. Water pollution	102	113	21	17	1	254	4.17	0.87
20. Litter & Garbage	147	85	15	7	-	254	4.46	0.73

The respondents were asked if they were aware of Nigeria's environmental problems. It was discovered that the entire respondent are aware that Nigeria is faced with serious environmental problems

affecting the lives of the citizens. This implies that Nigerians know that there are environmental problems that have to be dealt with in order to live a better and more comfortable life.

Table 2: Respondents Willingness to Show Concern to Environmental Protection Practices

ITEMS	SA	A	U	D	SD	T.No.	X	S.D
1. If there is a paper recycling scheme in my school I will try my best to participate	90	115	42	4	3	254	4.11	0.83
2. I will remind other students not to throw garbage anywhere but on dumpsites.	105	126	20	2	1	254	4.30	0.68
3. I shall conserve water when carrying out my daily activities.	64	142	29	16	3	254	3.97	0.85
4. I would contribute time or money to an organization that works to improve the quality of the environment.	76	106	53	14	5	254	3.91	0.94
5. I must prevent any specie of animal from becoming extinct even if it means denying myself of something's.	46	80	76	43	9	254	3.44	1.06
6. I will participate in any green campaign organized by green clubs.	61	114	62	11	6	254	3.83	0.92
7. I will educate myself more on environmental issues by using any information issues by using any information source available to me.	119	112	17	2	4	254	4.33	0.77

Table 2 shows that students are willing to show concern to environmental protection practices. This strongly confirms Morbach (1992) observation that young people all over the world are becoming enthusiastically involved in environmental action. Since findings in Table 2 agree with Harts observation, efforts should be made to ensure that activities are followed up as student are willing to participate, this will go a long way in improving campus environmental outlook as student will over time become environmentally aware and responsible.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This study affirms the fact that awareness of environmental problems from the students' viewpoint can be achieved effectively. Information about the

environment, if brought to the notice of the public will go a long way in making more people environmentally responsible because they will influence other people's attitude positively towards the environment. Nigerians are becoming more involved in their environment especially when they are informed about options and decisions they have to take on living in a better environment which makes them more determined to have a say in their future. Acquired environmental information causes a positive change and shapes attitudes and behaviors in favour of a better environment. However, Students should be helped to acquire an awareness about the total environment and its problems; so that they would develop the ability to perceive and discriminate among stimuli; process, refine, and

extend these perceptions, and use this new knowledge in a variety of contexts.

Students should also be helped to acquire a basic understanding of how the environment functions, how people interact with the environment, and how issues and problems dealing with the environment arise and how they can be resolved. When this is done then they will acquire a set of values and feelings for the environment and the motivation and commitment to participate in environmental maintenance and improvement will increase.

However, all existing channel of information services on campus should be harnessed maximally to inform students on their environment. Billboards in halls of residence, faculties and strategic places on campus should be an effective way of disseminating information on the environment.

Environmental societies and clubs on campus as well as non-governmental Organization (NGO) should intensify their effort in creating a "green" society among students by bringing environmental concern to the notice of students through their activities. Improvement in the areas such as energy efficiency and waste reduction, should be worked upon on campus, as that is part of the process of making the campus a "green" one, existing leadership frames in the halls of residents and faculties.

Environmental information should aim at improving the peoples' standard of living which is still low in Nigeria due to the poor economic situation. Urban centers are rapidly growing in Nigeria, without effective planning processes. This is because Nigerian graduates are not interested in staying in rural setting. When students are adequately informed about the environment then they will apply such knowledge even after graduating from school. However, research should be directed towards ways of disseminating environmental information to various groups in Nigeria in order to sensitize the Nigerian public on how to sustain their environment for a better future.

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