

ATTITUDE OF JOS METROPOLIS RESIDENTS ON COMMON HUMAN PRACTICES THAT AFFECT THE ENVIRONMENT

DANG EMMANUEL ISTIFANUS
Department of Social Science Education
University of Jos, Jos-Nigeria
dange@unijos.edu.ng, +2347069022611

ABSTRACT

To a great extent, what we experience as environmental disaster is the reaction of the environment to the human actions and inactions towards it. These actions and inactions are products of the human attitude, whether positive or negative. This study focuses on the attitude of Jos metropolis residents on certain common human practices or day to day practices that effects or mare the safety of the environment. The study adopted a survey research design, and the instrument used for data collection is a structured questionnaire titled "Attitude Evaluation Questionnaire (ATEQ)". The population for this study is Nine hundred and forty two thousand (942,000) respondents and a sample of three thousand was used in the study. The findings among others revealed that to a greater extent, structures don't adhere to the city master plan in Jos metropolis; there is also an unconcerned attitude by the residents regarding the clearing of their water ways; again to a greater extent the residents of Jos metropolis don't pay attention to the way and manner in which they disposed off their waste; an understanding of the dangers of burning refuse is not evident among the residents of Jos metropolis; and that residents don't adhere to the government policies on environmental protection. The study recommended that, more effort should be put in place by the government to ensure structures comply with the city master plan; Residents should develop the habit of constantly clearing their water ways; there is need for both government and individuals to work towards proper disposal of waste; There is need for law enforcement agencies to make sure that all policies of government regarding the protection of the environment are adequately enforced.

Keywords: Attitude, Common Human Practices. Affect, Environment, Jos Metropolis Residents.

Introduction

Human life and existence is dependent on **air, water and food** these factors are the key elements and products of the environment, by implication man depends on the environment for his survival which is both directly and indirectly. Ahmed and Ali (2019) conspicuously pointed out that for the planet to serve human life both now and in the future, sustaining its capacity is necessary. They also further stated that these efforts must be both globally and locally motivated. The ecosystem is facing serious challenge because of the irresponsible human activities that are affecting it.

The difficulty of the planet to regulate itself was aptly captured by UNESC (2016) where it was stated that "human activities are undermining the planet's capacity to regulate itself. These human activities are the function of the human attitude and behaviour which is the

focal point of this study. Onur, Sahin, & Tekkaya, (2012) clearly noted that human lifestyle and developmental activities as a result of poor knowledge and negative attitude towards environment, increases the severity of environmental issues globally. These environmental issues have significant impacts on human health, economics, climate change and the ability of the ecosystem to sustain human life (Laborde et al., 2015, Rafael & Elisa, 2017, United Nations, 2019, and Milman, 2015).

To reduce these environmental challenges, the main causes of environmental degradation needs to be addressed, this involves developing a responsible society that most recognize the importance of human effort in reducing these challenges both locally and globally (Ahmed and Ali 2019). environmental protection policies should be geared towards enhancing positive attitudes towards the environment.

The attitude one portrays towards an object determines the direction of such person's behaviour towards that object. Such behaviour can be to either sustain the growth or protection of that object or will lead to the destruction or elimination of such an object. Attitude as a psychological concept refers to a set of emotions, beliefs, and behaviours toward a particular object, person, thing, or event. They are often the result of experiences or upbringing, and they have a powerful influence over behaviour. While attitudes are enduring, they can also change.

Attitude Towards the Environment

Attitudes towards the environment are individual's concerns that are rooted in the individuals concept of self and the extent to which such a person perceives himself or herself to be an important part of the natural environment (Schultz and Zelezny 2000). People's perceived level of self-involvement in the efforts towards protecting the environment may enhance their involvement in environmentally friendly activities (Wiener and Sukhdial, 1990). According to Mansaray and Abijoye, (1998) they asserted that the quality of the environment depends critically on the level of knowledge, attitudes, values and practices of the people. Attitudes are the most consistent explanatory factor in predicting events (Chyong et al., 2006).

Though natural disaster is a global problem, and it affects both developed and developing countries of the world, but the fact still remains that the level of vulnerability of developing countries is more than that of a developed country. According to Marija (2018), the vulnerability of developing countries to natural disasters is because people in developing countries live in areas at high risk from natural disasters like unsafe urban areas, poorly built houses that can easily be damaged by natural disaster, these countries are not equipped with early warning systems and also these countries have few assets and weak social safety network to help in coping with these disasters between 1991 and 2005. According to Matija (2018) nearly 90% of disaster-related deaths and 98% of people affected by disasters were in developing countries. Jos metropolis the state capital of plateau state has over years received its own share of these disasters. Ishaq (2012) a BBC correspondent reported a flood disaster that rocked the town were at least 39 people were killed by flood in Jos after heavy rainfall in that report a Red Cross spokesman said that about 200 homes, many of them made from mud, were submerged and destroyed adhering to city master plan.

Why the Need for City Master-Plan

City master plans are tangible and often visible statements of what a city would be in the future and what is required to get there. Inadequately planned and managed cities creates risks that threatens or erode current development gains. The inadequate infrastructure and services, poorly constructed houses, inadequate and poor health services can turn natural hazard into disasters. The growing concentration of people and assets in high-hazard areas, along with the marginalisation of the urban poor in particularly unsafe areas drives exposure to environmental disaster. lack of enforcement of building codes, planning permission and regulatory investment, as a result of corruption, allow the transfer of risk from construction companies to those who live and work in the buildings. The most vulnerable groups, typically living in poverty, are the ones that settle and build homes in unsafe (informal) locations and are without adequate provision of infrastructure and critical services. It is a known fact that a well planned City, have many advantages among which are; serving as a framework for growth; expressing a status of a well prepared city; positively impacting the urban economy; allowing a lasting relationships within the city; giving the city a broader territorial perspective helps it to attain economies of scale; and it is more cost effective than reacting to problems or disasters.

Environmental Disasters and Economic Losses in Nigeria

Environmental disasters are abnormal situations that occur as a result of an abnormal occurrence in the environment. In other words, it is the deviation from the normal happenings in the environment as a result of unusual activities that are beyond human control. These environmental disasters can be caused as a result too much rain that results into floods and gully erosions, wind which comes as a result thunder storms that destroys humans and resources, air pollution that results into epidemic or pandemic etc.

These natural disasters when they occur they leave behind a lot of economic losses that most a times cannot be quantified but most a times estimated which runs into billions of naira. Many victims of these environmental disasters end up losing their means of livelihood, some out of frustrations end up committing suicide, leaving behind orphans that find it difficult to survive.

The painful part of all these things is that, some of these disasters are avoidable, but because of human actions or inactions leaves the society with the agony of managing the disaster that has ravaged the society (Dang & Kankani 2020).

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of the study is to evaluate the attitude of the residents of Jos metropolis on common human activities that affects the environment. Specifically, the objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To ascertain the extent to which residents of Jos metropolis adhere to the city master plan.
2. To ascertain the level at which residents of Jos metropolis show concern in clearing drainages around their vicinity
3. To ascertain the residents' level of compliance to proper refuse disposal strategies.
4. To examine the residents' understanding of the dangers of refuse burning indiscriminately

5. To determine the residents' adherence to government policies towards the environment

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

1. To what extent have residents of Jos Metropolis raise structures outside the Jos master plan?
2. To what extent are the residents of Jos metropolis unconcerned about the clearing of water ways?
3. To what extent do residents of Jos metropolis pay attention to proper disposal of refuse?
4. To what extent do Jos metropolis residents understand the danger of burning refuse as it affects the environment?
5. How do the residents of Jos metropolis adhere to government policies towards safeguarding the environment?

Methodology

Research Design

The design adopted for this study is survey research design.

Population for the study

The population for the study is made up of the entire residents of Jos metropolis. Jos is metropolitan settlement where people from different works of life are living there. The population of Jos metropolis is Nine hundred and forty two thousand (942,000) residents, according to United Nations (2022). The Jos metropolis comprises of two major Local Government Areas (Jos North and Jos South). This forms the population of the study.

Sample for the study

For the study, three thousand (3,000) respondents were randomly selected from the population of Nine hundred and fourty two thousand (942,000) residents. These sample cut across the various locations of the Jos metropolis.

Instrument for Data Collection

Description of the instrument

The questionnaire used for this study is titled Attitude Evaluation Questionnaire (ATEQ). The questionnaire is made up of sections A and B. Section A contains the background information about the respondent such as gender, location, and educational qualification. Section B is subdivided into five (5) different parts according to the five research questions. The five point Likert scale is used ranging from Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Undecided (U), Disagreed (D) and (E) Strongly disagreed (SD).

Procedure for Instrument Development

The instrument was developed by the researcher with great deal of constructive inputs from professionals from the field of Test and Measurement from the department of Educational Foundation, in the Faculty of Education, University of Jos. The inputs from these professionals is aimed at strengthening the quality of the instrument in ensuring that it is adequate to collect the data needed for this study.

Method of Data Analyses

To analyse the five research questions, the researcher used mean scores. The respondents' responses are analysed under each research question and where the mean score is equal to or greater than 3.00 it implies that the response to the question is positive and hence the degree of the positivity is determined by the value of the mean to ascertain whether it is high if it varies more towards 5.00 or low when it is closer to 3.00 and also the response to the research question is determined to be negative if the mean score is less than 3.00, this negativity can be ascertained to be high degree if the value varies more towards 1.00 and also ascertained to be lower if it varies closer to 3.00.

Analyses of Research Questions

Research Question One: To what extent have residents of Jos Metropolis raised structures outside the Jos master plan?

Table 1: Responses on adherence to city master plan

S/N	ITEM	SA	A	U	D	SD	TOTAL	$\bar{x}$
1	It is not necessary for my house building adhere to the Jos master plan	1846	1153	0	0	0	3000	4.56
2	Financial implication and bureaucratic nature of seeking authorization is the major reason why many residents don't bother with seeking approval for their buildings	1725	1050	225	0	0	3000	
TOTAL		3571	2203	225	0	0	6000	

With the mean score of 4.56 it can be clearly understood that to a greater extent, structures don't adhere to the city master plan. The implication of this is that, people raise their structures based on their convenience rather than based on the city master plan as designed by the city planners who put into consideration the nature of the land and its terrain. This is one of the major reasons that these houses are exposed to dangers especially of floods

Research Question Two: To what extent are the residents of Jos metropolis unconcerned about the clearing of water ways?

Table 2: Responses on clearing of water ways

S/N	ITEM	SA	A	U	D	SD	TOTAL	$\bar{x}$
3	I care less on clearing water ways around my house	1425	975	225	225	150	3000	4.29
4	I don't actually know the danger of not adequately clearing water ways around my house	1800	1050	0	75	75	3000	
TOTAL		3225	2025	225	300	225	6000	

The mean score of 4.29 clearly shows that, there is an unconcerned attitude by the residents regarding the clearing of their water ways. This action is what is evident in the blockage of the drainages that doesn't allow for free flow of water. This action is one of the obvious one that has led to the flooding disaster experienced in the metropolis. Such result is a bad one looking at how common is the clearing of drainages which the residents are unconcerned about.

Research Question Three: To what extent does residents of Jos metropolis pay attention to proper disposal of refuse?

Table 3: Responses on refuse disposal

S/N	ITEM	SA	A	U	D	SD	TOTAL	$\bar{x}$
5	I am unconcern on how wastes are disposed around my vicinity	1575	1125	75	150	75	3000	4.50
6	am unconcern on the need to do the needful in terms of disposal of waste	2025	975	0	0	0	3000	
TOTAL		3600	2100	75	150	75	6000	

With the mean score of 4.50 it shows that to a greater extent the residents of Jos metropolis don't pay attention to the way and manner in which they dispose off their waste. This is a negative response that needs a serious attention by the agency shouldered with the responsibility of ensure adequate sanitation within the metropolis. Most of this negative response can easily come up as a result of lack of proper places where these waste can be properly disposed.

Research Question Four: To what extent do Jos metropolis residents understand the danger of burning refuse as it affects the environment?

Table 4: Responses on the dangers of refuse burning

From the mean score of 2.94, it shows that good understanding of the dangers of burning

S/N	ITEM	SA	A	U	D	SD	TOTAL	$\bar{x}$
7	Burning accumulated refuse is the best way to reduce refuse accumulation within our vicinity	675	1350	375	375	225	3000	2.94
8	There is no any environmental danger with burning of refuse	75	375	375	1575	600	3000	
TOTAL		750	1725	750	1950	825	6000	

refuse is not evident among the residents of Jos metropolis. This shows the reason why there is indiscriminate burning of refuse all over the metropolis

Research Question Five: How do the residents of Jos metropolis adhere to government policies towards safeguarding the environment?

Table 5: Responses on adherence to Government policies on environment

S/N	ITEM	SA	A	U	D	SD	TOTAL	$\bar{x}$
9	In our location residents adheres to the government policies on environment	225	525	450	1500	300	3000	2.63
	TOTAL	225	525	450	1500	300	3000	

The mean score of 2.63 it shows that residents don't adhere to the government policies on environmental protection. This attitude is the major factor that affects the implementation of policies put forward by the government in ensuring that the metropolis is safe.

Discussion of Findings

The result from the research questions above clearly shows that there is a lot of grounds to cover in terms of ensuring that the negative attitude of the residents are corrected in ensuring that the environment is properly protected.

The research question one from the result obtained indicates that residents build their structures without adhering to the government put forward city plan which is the plan that shows how the city should be organised. That is the reason we see people building on water ways, pipe lines that distribute water around the city and ensure that there is free flow of sewage and water.

From the research question two, the result clearly shows that clearing of water ways and drainages is of less concern to the residents. This is a serious concern that needs an immediate action to curb it. With the flood experiences in the metropolis naturally one would have expected a better attitude towards clearing of water ways and drainages.

Furthermore, the result from research question three shows that proper disposal of waste is becoming a major challenge. This is one of the major reasons why a lot of avoidable diseases are affecting a lot of the residents. This is a common act that can help everyone to live in a safe and hygiene environment. Research question four also shows that there is poor attitude towards understanding the dangers of burning of refuse. This is because most of the residents feel that is the best method of disposing the waste.

The fifth research question gave us an understanding that adherence to government policies with respect to protection of the environment is very poor. This goes further to say more regarding the saying that government always comes up with good policies but when it comes to implementation it is a different ball game. This attitude is a very bad one and clearly shows that law enforcement agencies of government are not lining up their expectations of ensuring that government laws and policies are adequately adhered to by the populace.

Summary

Man depends on the environment for his survival. As noted by Ahmed and Ali (2020) for the planet to serve human life both now and in the future, sustaining its capacity is necessary. The way to sustain the capacity of the planet for human existence is by action in a manner that favours the existence of the planet. It is a known fact that nature cannot be cheated, you may continue to act the way you like but when it is over stretched its reaction is what always manifest in the environmental disasters that rocks the world all over.

Human attitude towards the environment is key to averting the negative consequences of the reaction of the environment as a result of human insensitive activities that frustrates it. The government and individuals end up losing millions and millions of hard earned resources as a result of failure to act responsibly in handling activities that are detrimental to the survival and sustainability of the environment. This study X-rays the common attitudes of residents of Jos metropolis towards the environment, specifically the study was able to ascertain the extent to which residents of Jos metropolis adhere to the city master plan; to ascertain the level at which residents of Jos metropolis show concern in clearing drainages around their vicinity; to ascertain the residents level of compliance to proper refuse disposal strategies; to examine the residents understanding of the dangers of refuse burning indiscriminately; to determine the residents adherence to government policies towards the environment.

From the study it was clearly revealed that individual attitude towards some common activities towards the environment are among the causes of environmental disasters that leads to loss of life and hard earned resources both for the individual and the government. Making careful analyses of one's actions and inactions towards the environment is key towards protecting the environment.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were proffered based on the findings this study:

1. There should be deliberate effort put in place by the government to ensuring that all structures in the city centre adhere strictly to the laid down city master plan
2. Residents should take up the challenge of ensuring that all water ways and drainages are always kept clean, to ensure a free flow water during rainy season.
3. There is need for both government and individuals to put in more proactive efforts in ensuring that waste is properly disposed.
4. Indiscriminate burning of waste anyhow within the metropolis should be strongly discouraged as doing so adds more environmental problems.
5. There is need for law enforcement agencies to make sure that all policies of government regarding the protection of the environment are adequately adhered to.

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