

Assessing Solid Waste Management Practices in Port Harcourt City, Nigeria

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Abstract : Solid waste management is one essential area for urban administration to achieve environmental sustainability. Proper solid waste management (SWM) improves the environment by reducing diseases and increasing public health. On the other way, improper SWM practices negatively impact public health and environmental sustainability. This article evaluates SWM in Port Harcourt, Nigeria, with the goal of determining the current solid waste management practices and their health implications. This study used secondary data, which relies on existing published literature and official documents. The Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis (PRISMA) statement and its four-stage inclusion/exclusion criteria were utilized as part of a systematic literature review technique to locate the literature that concerns SWM practices and the implementation of solid waste management policies between 2014-2023 in PortHarcourt and its health effects from specific databases (Scopus and Google Scholar). The results found that despite the existence and implementation of the Rivers State Waste Management Policy and the formulation of the National Policy on Solid Waste Management in Port Harcourt, residents continued to dump waste in drainages. They were unaware of waste sorting and dumped waste haphazardly. This trend has persisted due to a lack of political commitment to the effective implementation and monitoring of policies and strategies and a lack of training provided to waste collectors regarding the SWM approach, which involves sorting and separating waste. In addition, inadequate remuneration for waste collectors, the absence of community participation in policy formulation, and insufficient awareness among residents regarding the 3R approach are also contributory factors. This caused the emergence of vector-borne diseases such as malaria, lassa fever, and cholera in Port Harcourt, increasing the expense of healthcare for locals, particularly low-income households. The study urges the government to prioritize protecting the health of its citizens by studying the methods other nations have taken to address the problem of solid waste management and adopting those that work best for their region. The bottom-up strategy should be used to include locals in developing solutions. However, citizens who are always the most impacted by this issue should launch initiatives to address it and put pressure on the government to assist them when they have limitations.

Keywords : health effects, solid waste management practices, environmental pollution, Port-Harcourt

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