



Sanitation and Hygiene among Nursing Mothers in Igbo Imabanna of Cross River State, Nigeria: Community Sensitization and Survey

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ABSTRACT

The community sensitization and survey were conducted on sanitation and hygiene among nursing mothers. The study focused on how Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) prevent hygiene-related diseases in Igbo Imabana of Cross river state. The study anchored on the nightingale environmental theory in explaining the relative concept. The respondents were sensitized on WASH and the imperatives to a healthy living and the need for proper waste management. The survey research design was further adopted and the questionnaire instrument was used to gather responses from 210 nursing mothers out of the 500 estimated nursing mothers in the 7 wards of Igbo Imabana. Descriptive statistics showing frequencies and simple percentages were used to analyse the data. The findings of the study showed that nursing mothers in Igbo Imabana have above-average knowledge of what water, sanitation and hygiene imply. The finding also showed that nursing mothers agreed to the practices of sorting out refuse into strata to prevent littering and fly breeding. Though the practice is not pronounced in the community, above-average nursing mothers agree to bury waste as a healthier option while in practice they have resulted in dumping waste in compounds and gutters for convenience and the assertion that modern waste bin is expensive and the outcome of rain will wash off the refuse. Though this has been the practice, the nursing mothers agreed to the fact that rain washes the germs from the refuges to the streams further causing sicknesses like typhoid, hepatitis, poliomyelitis cholera. The study thus recommends that Government should establish educational units in clinics and Hospitals, especially in rural areas, in other to promote personal hygiene among nursing mothers which will reduce the high rate of morbidity and mortality among mothers and children. Both environmental and health care personnel should work hand in hand in other to promote good hygiene in the community and among individuals. Government should not leave sensitization in the hands of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) alone; they should also help in creating more awareness in the rural communities for the benefit of nursing mothers.

Keywords: Sanitation; Hygiene practice; Nursing mothers; Awareness

INTRODUCTION

In 2020, the globe experienced a great hit by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) and its causative virus severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). It was first reported in China in late 2019, and it was declared a Public Health Emergency of International concern by the World Health Organisation (WHO) on 30 January 2020 (World Health Organisation, 2020a).

In the context of the new normal that requires compliance with COVID-19 protocol to control the rapid spread of the virus, the situation of sanitation and hygiene in both the urban and rural areas require more close attention and re-orientation of citizens.

Observed by previous submissions, the effect of sanitation and hygiene among nursing mothers can never be over-emphasized because lack of proper maintenance and observation of sanitation and hygiene will promote the spread of both communicable and non-communicable diseases and will also increase the rate of morbidity and mortality among children and mothers.

Global statistics have also shown that over 1.8 billion people use unimproved drinking water which consequently increases the risk of contracting diseases such as polio, diarrhoea, typhoid, dysentery, cholera and other water-borne diseases [1]. Estimates from World Health Organization further report that poor access to WASH facilities has been linked to 10% of the total disease burden and

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94% of the diarrheal burden. The Nigeria Health Demographic Survey (NDHS) (2019) recorded that 46.4% and 42.1% still use unimproved drinking water sources and sanitation facilities, leaving about 100 million people without access to improved sanitation.

In Nigeria, over 70,000 children under five years die annually due to their increased vulnerability to water-borne diseases. Estimates have shown that over 73% of enteric disease and diarrheal disease burden is largely associated with poor access to WASH facilities. Access to improved WASH facilities not only improve the health condition of the people but also positively affects the economy of a country as ill-health drastically affects labour, productivity and earning potential of individuals.

In order to effectively combat COVID-19, water supply, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) have played a crucial role. WASH has done this primarily by promoting good hygiene and by ensuring frequent and effective handwashing. It seems, however, that availability of essential water services is not the only limiting factor for having a hand washing facility with soap and water at home. According to UNICEF/WHO data, only 60% of the world's population has at least a basic handwashing facility in the household, defined as a location where both soap and water are available that is either fixed.

The worldwide COVID-19 pandemic has significantly strained hospital staffing levels and healthcare infrastructure. Families will nevertheless continue to have children, give birth, and breastfeed despite all of this.

Aim of this study

The aim of this study focuses on the effect of sanitation and hygiene among nursing mothers in Igbo Imabana, Abi local government Area, Cross River State, Nigeria. That was adopted a community practical sensitization and survey approach. Specifically, this study seeks to;

- Identify sources of water supply in Igbo Imabana, Abi Local Government Area;
- Focused on how Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) prevent hygiene-related diseases.
- Determine the methods of solid waste disposal among households in the study area.

METHODOLOGY

A survey design was adopted by using primary data to test the effectiveness of the independent variable on the dependent variable. The population of this research was 500 nursing mother residents in all 7 wards of Igbo Imabana community in Abi LGA Cross River State. For this research study, simple random sampling techniques were used in selecting the nursing mothers that will participate in the study. 30 mothers were randomly selected. Thus, the sample of the study was made up of 210 nursing mothers. The instrument for collection of data was a well-structured questionnaire titled Questionnaire on the Effect of Sanitation and Hygiene among Nursing Mothers (QESHANM) which was designed by the researcher, with the help of the supervisor, the questionnaire had three sections "A" was designed to collect data such as personal demographic information from the respondent such as sex, age,

"B" focused on the variables under study and it consisted of 20 items. Descriptive statistics were used in analysing the responses of the respondent showing frequencies and percentages.

From Figure 1 above 20 respondents representing (10%) are between 10-20 years and 135 respondents representing (67.5%) are between the ages of 21-30, while 45 respondents representing (22.5%) are between the ages of 31-60. Furthermore, out of the total respondents 132, 99 respondents representing (49.5%) are singles, while 101 respondents representing (50.5%) are married, however, concerning the educational qualification of the respondents. 32 respondents representing (16%) are primary qualifications, 105 respondents representing (52.5%) are Secondary holders, and 39 respondents representing (19.5%) are NCE holders, while 24 respondents representing (12%) are Degree holders. Subsequently, the table shows that all the respondents are Christian. Finally, the table also shows that 31 respondents representing (15.5%) are Teachers by occupation, 27 respondents representing (13.5%) are health workers by occupation, and 76 respondents representing (38%) are Traders by occupation, while 66(33%) of the respondents are farmers by occupation.

Research question one

What is the knowledge level of Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) among nursing mothers in Igbo Imabana?

The result in Figure 1 shows from question one that, 68 (34%) respondents strongly agree, while 132 (66%) respondents agree. However, question number two shows that 71 (35.5%) respondents strongly agreed, 109 (54.5%) respondents agreed, and 20 (10%) respondents are neutral. Furthermore, responses from question three show that 42 (21%) respondents agreed, 121 (60.5%) disagreed, and 37 (18.5%) strongly disagreed. Subsequently, responses to question four from the table above show that 55 (27.5%) respondents agreed, 95 (47.5%) respondents disagreed, and 50 (25%) respondents strongly disagreed. Finally, the response to question five shows that 79 (39.5%) respondents strongly agreed and 98 (49%) respondents agreed, while 23 (11.5%) respondents are neutral.

Research questions two

Does the practice of WASH have any effect on the prevention of hygiene-related diseases among nursing mothers in Igbo Imabana?

Furthermore, the result in Figure 2 above shows from question one that, 39 (19.5%) respondents strongly agree, while 116 (58%) respondents agree, and 45 (22.5%) respondents are neutral. However, question number two shows that 26 (13%) respondents strongly agreed, and 123 (61.5%) respondents agreed, while 32 (16%) of the respondents are neutral, also 19 (9.5%) respondents disagreed. Furthermore, responses from question three show that 39 (19.5%) respondents strongly agreed, 102 (51%) agreed, and 59 (29.5%) disagreed.

Subsequently, responses to question four from the table above show that 108 (54%) respondents agreed, 34 (17%) respondents are neutral, and 58 (29%) respondents disagreed. Finally, the response to question five shows that 133 (66.5%) respondents strongly agreed and 33 (16.5%) respondents are neutral, and 34 (17%) respondents disagreed.

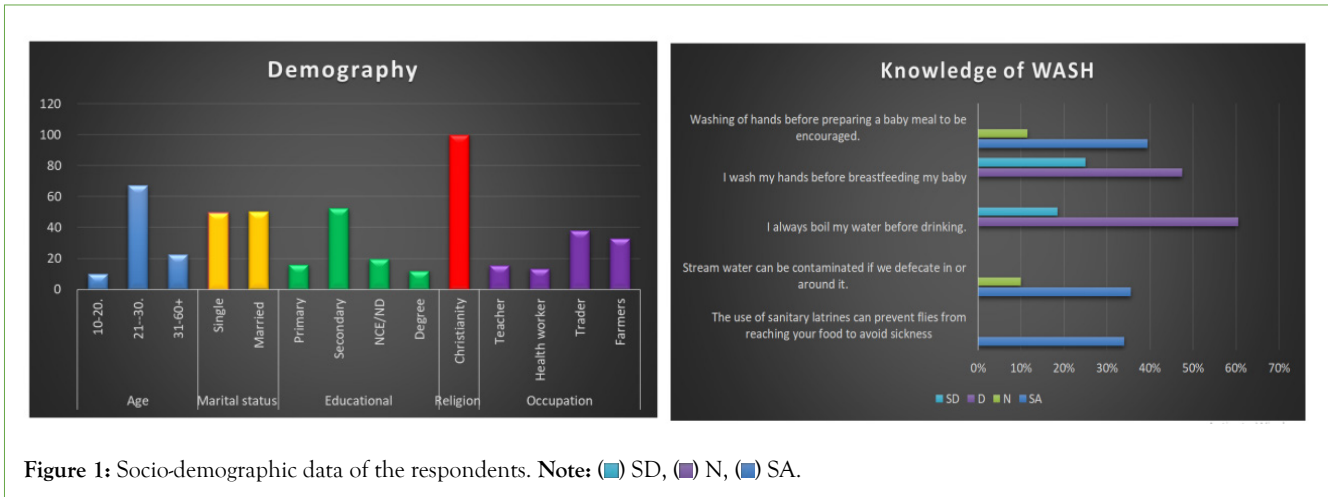


Figure 1: Socio-demographic data of the respondents. Note: (■) SD, (■) N, (■) SA.

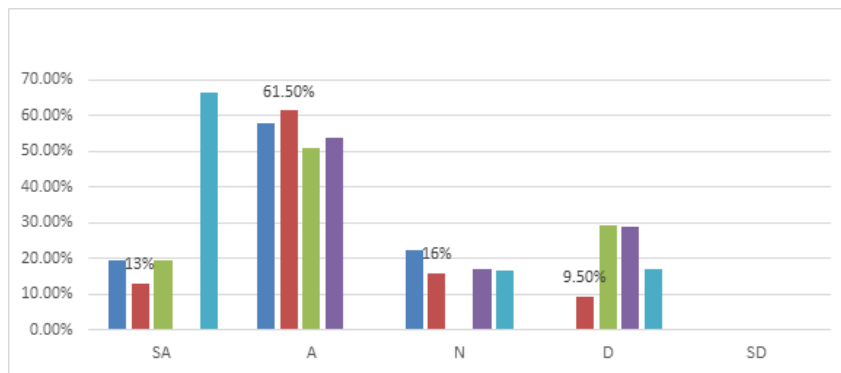


Figure 2: Practice of WASH Post COVID -19. Note: (■) Refuge can be properly managed by sorting them out at home into different types and put in different containers to prevent littering and fly breeding; (■) It is more convenient for refuse to be disposed of by burying to remove the offensive odour that attracts flies, which contaminate our foods; (■) It is more convenient for refuse to be disposed of in different locations of our compounds, roadside and gutters; (■) Keeping waste bins is expensive and time-wasting after all, when rain falls, it washes away the littered refuse; (■) When rain falls, it washes the germs from the refuse dumps into our water and it makes us get sick of typhoid, hepatitis, poliomyelitis etc.

Research question three

How will adequate sanitation facilities reduce hygiene-related diseases among nursing mothers in Igbo Imabana?

Finally, the result in Figure 3 above shows from question one that, 59 (29.5%) respondents strongly agree, while 141 (70.2%) respondents agree. However, question number two shows that 142

(71%) respondents strongly agreed, and 58 (29%) respondents disagreed. Furthermore, responses from question three show that 153 (76.5%) respondents agreed, and 47 (23.5%) disagreed. Subsequently, responses to question four from the table above show that 81 (40.5%) respondents strongly agreed, and 119 (59.5%) disagreed. Finally the response to question five shows that 147 (73.5%) respondents disagreed while 53 (26.5%)

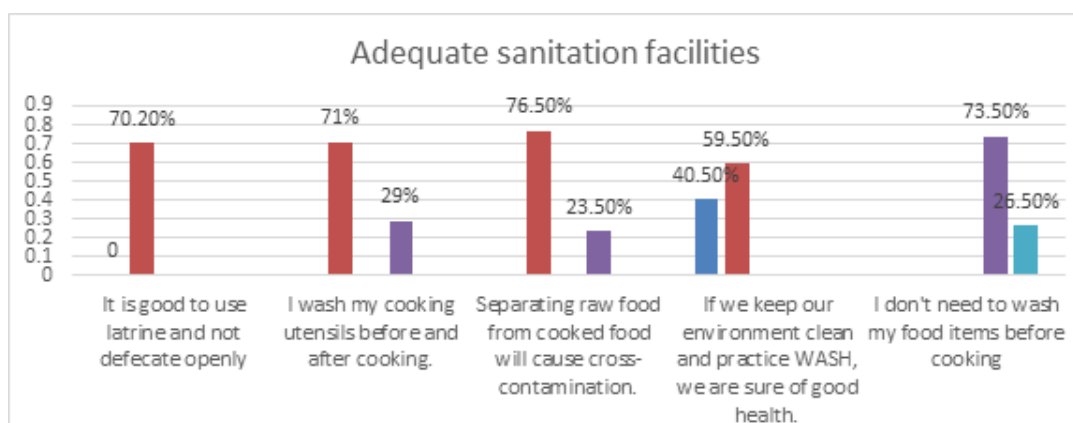


Figure 3: Responses on sanitation, facilities and reduction of disease. Note: (■) SA; (■) A; (■) N; (■) D; (■) SD.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study focuses on the effect of sanitation and hygiene among nursing mothers in Igbo Imabana, Abi local government Area, Cross River State. A total of 210 respondents were selected for the study.

The provision of WASH facilities is essential to promote Healthiness, Improve Hygiene standards and accelerate Socio-Economic development. Evidence has shown that Nigeria and other developing countries have progressively achieved universal access to WASH facilities over the past decade, but significant challenges still exist regarding the maintenance, standard requirements, and functionality of WASH facilities in households [24]. The data collected were analysed and presented on tables showing frequencies and percentages of various responses.

Knowledge of nursing mothers regarding water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH)

The findings revealed that nursing mothers in Igbo Imabana have above-average knowledge of what water, sanitation and hygiene imply. Furthermore, the nursing mothers agreed that the use of sanitary latrines and not defecating around streams prevents flies and possible contamination of usable water in the community. These practices will mitigate sickness among nursing mothers and the community at large. Also, only about 23% of nursing mothers pay attention to boiling water before drinking while as low as 19% give interest in washing hands before breastfeeding a baby. This is to show that the practices which advance healthy living among nursing mothers are not popular in the community [5].

Practice and effect of water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH)

The study further shows that nursing mothers agreed to the practices of sorting out refuse into strata to prevent littering and fly breeding. Though the practice is not pronounced in the community, above-average nursing mothers agree to bury waste as a healthier option while in practice they have resulted in dumping waste in compounds and gutters for convenience and the assertion that modern waste bin is expensive and the outcome of rain will wash off the refuse. Though this has been the practice, the nursing mothers agreed to the fact that rain washes the germs from the refuges to the streams further causing sicknesses like typhoid, hepatitis, and poliomyelitis [6,7].

Effect of adequate sanitation facilities for the prevention of hygiene-related diseases among nursing mothers

More also, the study found that the availability of sanitation facilities like waste bins, good toilets, suitable drinking water and proper WASH orientation will advance healthy living and help reduce the high rate of morbidity and mortality among nursing mothers and children in Igbo Imabana and the wider community. Mothers should learn to keep themselves and their environment clean which will help maintain a good life, good health and healthy living for a better and long-lasting society [8].

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The present study showed that mothers had poor hygienic practices

during the child nursing period.

Improving environmental sanitation largely requires adequate availability and accessibility of WASH facilities. Lack of accessibility to WASH facilities perpetuates the cycle of disease outbreaks and underdevelopment in any polity. Findings in the current study confirmed a significant lack of access to improved WASH facilities and handwashing practice was poorly reported. It was also observed that the hygiene standard of available WASH facilities was poor. Hence, rural communities should synergize with the government and other relevant stakeholders to ensure adequate provision of WASH facilities in their communities.

In this study, attitude, access to media, household private latrine ownership, presence of a handwashing facility on their doorstep, and residence of the study participants were significantly associated with the good hygienic practice of mothers during the child nursing period. It is recommended that the health sector shall work greatly on providing health education and training on the health consequence of poor hygienic practice during the child nursing period.

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

- Government should provide the community with a safe place for toilets or encourage the building of individual toilets.
- Determining the appropriate means to dispose of and treat human waste, whether through individual household or community network sanitation systems.
- Provision of safe drinking water for the community.
- Government should establish educational units in clinics and Hospitals, especially in rural areas, in order to promote personal hygiene among nursing mothers which will reduce the high rate of morbidity and mortality among mothers and children.
- Both environmental and health care personnel should work hand in hand in order to promote good hygiene in the community and among individuals.
- Government should not leave sensitization in the hands of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) alone; they should also help in creating more awareness in the rural communities for the benefit of nursing mothers.

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