



ASSESSMENT OF THE QUALITY OF PUBLIC FACILITIES IN BIDA: A CASE STUDY OF PUBLIC TOILETS IN NEW MARKET BIDA, NIGER STATE.

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ABSTRACT

The paper aimed at assessing the users' perception of the quality of toilet facilities in new market. The objectives are to assess the availability of water and hand washing materials in the toilets and observe the hygiene condition of the toilet surroundings in the study area. The study was adopted the sampling technique to sample 110 users. Analysis was conducted with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), and the data are presented with the aid of frequency tables, charts and graphs. This study revealed that public toilet facilities have not been effective in the delivery system of sanitation services to the users in New market, Bida, Niger State. Although the privacy of users is guaranteed in the public toilets and lack of alternative are the main reasons for using these toilets. The users express the willingness, readiness and ability to pay an average of N30 to use improved toilets in the study area. Therefore, involvement of the private sector in the provision of toilet facilities and further in-depth study on the health impacts of using public toilets in the study area is recommended.

Keywords: *Toilet facilities, Convenience, Hygiene, Sanitation and Privacy*

INTRODUCTION

Public sanitary facilities are crucial infrastructure necessary for the social wellbeing and dignity of city inhabitants (UN, 2008; Makama, 2015). Public convenience refers to toilets that are provided by public agencies to allow people meet their sanitary needs in public places such as markets, shopping

areas and transport centres (Njoku, 2006; Lenason, 2009). Asabia (2009) argued that the provision of properly managed and functional public convenience facilities will consolidate sanitary efforts of the government, as well as reduce sanitary-related health problems. This is in consonance with the submission of UNICEF (2009) that human excreta need to be properly disposed through modern methods that are socially and culturally acceptable to the people. Agbo *et al.* (2012) maintained that apart from its availability, the facilities should also meet both the subjective and objective demands of the end-users. However, Oyinloye and Oluwadare (2015) observed that there is a lack of improved public convenience facilities in most public places in Nigerian cities. They maintained that poor quality of public convenience facilities is responsible for open defecation and urination and the associated offensive odour in Nigerian public places. This assertion is corroborated by Awoyinfa (2012) and Eromosoesele (2012) in their studies of public convenience facilities in Lagos, Nigeria. Whereas Eromosoesele (2012) maintained that most public toilets in Lagos are unhygienic, decrepit and in a state of disrepair, Awoyinfa (2012) argued that using public convenience in Lagos is synonymous with 'purchasing infections'.

Statement of Problem

Access to decent and clean convenience facilities is a basic need (UNICEF, 2014) as well as a right (UN, 2010; WHO, 2011). The rights approach to the provision of public toilets recognised that public sanitary facilities are a right and its denial constitutes a gross violation of human rights (UN, 2010). Despite being a fundamental right, UNICEF (2014) observed that almost one-third of the world's population suffer on a daily basis from lack of access to clean, hygienic and functioning toilets. The situation is more worrisome in Nigeria, where FMWR and UNICEF (2016) citing World Bank (2012) noted that:

Around 46million people in Nigeria defecate in the open. Another 56million people are estimated to be added during the next ten years. This means a total of 102million million people or 20million households should have access to a toilet and use it.

...around 122,000 Nigerians and 87,000 children under the age of 5 die each year from diarrhoea; nearly 90% is directly attributed to water, sanitation and hygiene problems. A

comprehensive review of 21 studies, covering several countries found a

36% reduction in diarrhoeal morbidity due to improved sanitation. ...Nigeria loses

N455bn ... annually due to poor sanitation.

Goal 7 (target 3) of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) aimed at halving the proportion of the universal population without sustainable access to clean and safe drinking water and sanitation by 2015 (UN, 2000). Similarly, Goal 6 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is to ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all (Dodds, 2015). What this means is that sanitation has continued to occupy the forefront in global effort towards sustainable development. Bida is no exempt from this global sustainability agenda. It is against this background that this study seeks to assess the quality of public toilets/convenience in New Market, Bida

Aim and Objectives

The aim of this study is to assess the quality of public toilets in New Market, Bida.

The objectives of the study are as follows:

- i. Assess the availability of water and hand washing materials in the toilets
- ii. Observe the hygiene condition of the toilet surroundings.
- iii. Evaluate the level of satisfaction of the toilets users with toilet facilities in the study area

The Study Area

Bida is located on the [A124 highway](#) (a regional road) that linked Ilorin to Minna and Abuja. The Local Government Area (LGA) has an area of 1.698 km² and a population of 266,008 (NPC, 2006) with [9°05'N,6°01'E](#), / [9.083°N, 6.017°E / 9.083; 6.017,Coordinates](#). Bida is the second largest town after Minna in [Niger State](#). It is located southwest of [Minna](#), capital of [Niger State](#), and is a dry, arid town. The major ethnic group is the [Nupe](#). Bida is the headquarters of the [Nupe Kingdom](#) led by the Etsu Nupe and consisting of many districts, such as [Katcha](#), [Mokwa](#), Enagi, Baddeggi, Lemu, [Kutigi](#), and others (World Gazetteer, 2007).

The leadership style of the ancient town of Bida is emirship, and the head of the town is addressed as [Etsu Nupe](#). The town is known for its production of traditional crafts, notably glass and brassware. Bida is also known for its Durbar festival. It is also the home of the Federal Polytechnic, Bida ([Mohammed and Aremu, 2017](#)). The locational map of Bida is shown in Figure 1.

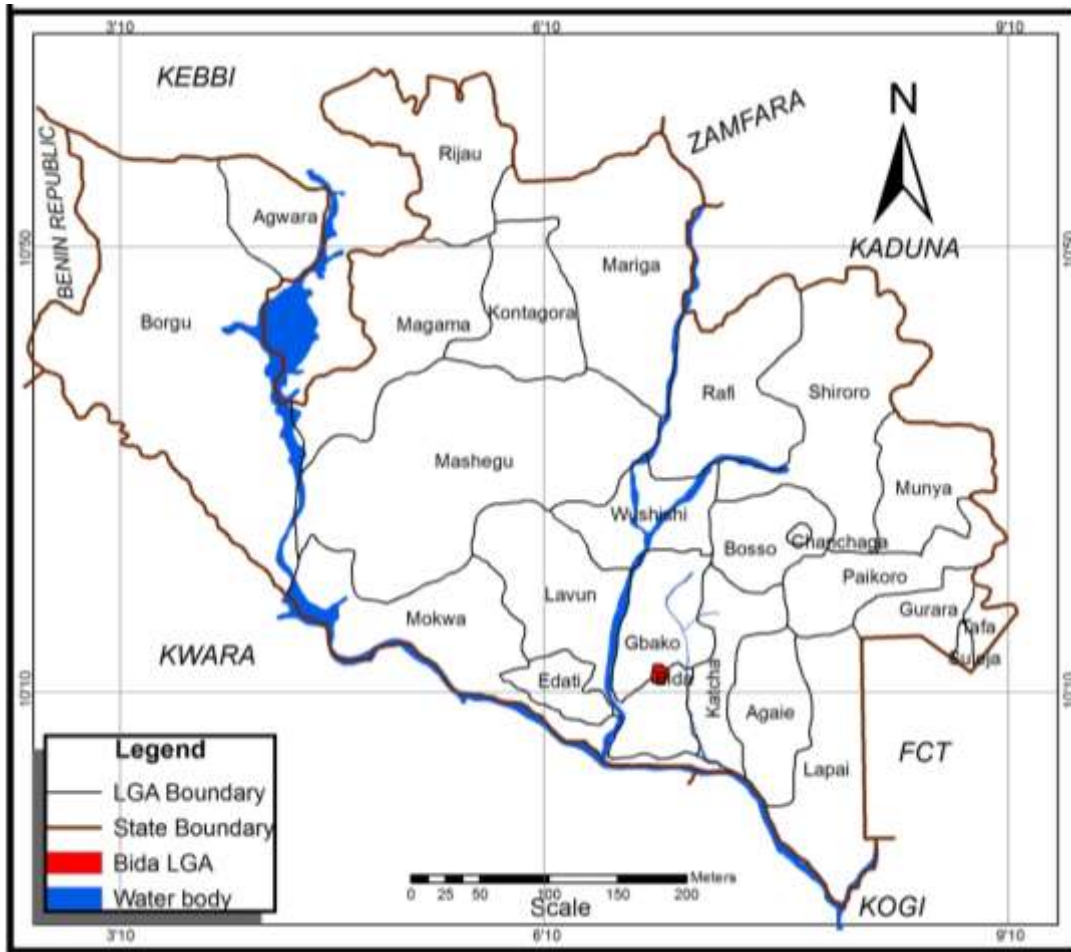


Figure 1.2: Location of Bida Local Government Area, Niger State

Source: Niger State Ministry of Lands and Housing, 2019

LITERATURE REVIEW

Toilets are significant components of the Goal 7 (target 3) of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Goal 6 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) whose aim is to halve the proportion of the universal population without sustainable access to clean and safe drinking water and sanitation (UN, 2000; Dodds, 2015). The significance of the provision of adequate, safe and accessible

public toilets have been recognised by Makama (2015) who noted that toilets are not just sanitary facilities but that they are also a symbol of the level of development. However, the task of achieving this target has assumed a Herculean nature. In spite of being a right, more than 30% of the global population experience lack of access to clean, hygienic and functioning toilets (UN, 2010; UNICEF, 2014). This poses a great number of health risks to the users of public toilets. UNICEF (2014) has also observed the danger of lack of clean, safe and accessible public toilets. For example, FMWRN & UNICEF (2016) traced 90% of infant mortality in Nigeria to water, sanitation and hygiene problems.

The World Bank (2012) cited in FMWR & UNICEF (2016) observed that the risk of diarrhoeal-related deaths reduces by about 36% with an improvement in toilet facilities. The situation becomes worse in urban areas where alternative means of convenience is usually by open defecation and urination (WHO, 2011; UNICEF, 2014). Open defecation and urination is usually with a plethora of health issues such as air pollution through bad odour. This menace was clearly captured by Awoyinfa (2012) who observed that inadequate provision and poor maintenance of toilet facilities is a serious problem in urban areas of Nigeria, arguing that this has led to the adoption of open defecation practices by those who are pressed. Precisely, Oyinloye and Oluwadare (2015) maintained that most, if not all, urban centres in Nigeria experiences lack of improved public convenience facilities, emphasising that this is responsible for open defecation. This is in consonance with World Bank's (2012) observation that more than 46million Nigerians defecate in the open (cited in FMWR & UNICEF, 2016). It is against this background that this study seeks to study the quality of public toilets in New Market Niger State.

METHODOLOGY

Sources and methods of data collection

The data for this study were collected from primary and secondary sources. The secondary sources include data obtained from books, journals, conference proceedings and reports on the global state of sanitation as well as the state of sanitation in Nigeria. The primary data, on the other hand, were collected directly from the field through a well-structured questionnaire as well as direct personal observation.

Sampling technique

Convenience sampling was adopted to sample 110 participants for the study. The choice of convenience sampling was based on the fact that people who are pressed exhibit similar characteristics. Convenience sampling was necessary since there is no available register of the population of the users of the public toilets in the study area.

Method of data analysis

Both descriptive statistical techniques were used to analyze the data obtained from the questionnaire survey. The study data are presented in form of frequency tables, charts, graphs and plates. Analysis was carried out with the aid of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

Gender of the Respondents

Table 1 indicates that majority of the users of public toilets in the study area 69 of (62.73%) are female(s). Consequently, men account for 37.27% of the users of public toilets in New Market, Bida. This female dominance in the usage of public toilets in the study area may be linked to the fact that women tend to exhibit lesser retention when they are pressed. Thus, they tend to make use of the available toilets in order to ease themselves.

Table 1: Gender of the respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	41	37.27
Female	69	62.73
Total	110	100

Source: Authors' Field Survey (2019)

Age Distribution of the Respondents

Table 2 shows the age distribution of the users of public toilet users in the study area. Table 2 shows that 70% of the toilet users (representing the majority) fall within the age bracket of 21-30years old. Those between the age brackets of 31-40years and 11-20years account for 12.73% and 11.82% of the respondents respectively. Furthermore, those above 40years old and less than 10years old account for 3.64% and 1.81% of the respondents respectively. This implies that those between 21-30years old uses public toilets more, while those below 10years old use public toilets less in the study area.

Table 2: Age distribution of the respondents

Age (years)	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 10	2	1.81
11-20	13	11.82
21-30	77	70.00
31-40	14	12.73
Above 40	4	3.64
Total	110	100

Source: Authors' Field Survey (2019)

Highest Educational Qualification

As depicted in Table 3, SSCE is the highest educational qualification of majority (44.55%) of the users of public toilets in New Market. This was followed by those whose highest educational qualification is primary certificate, representing 24.54% of the respondents. It also shows that 11.81% of the respondents have only attained informal education, 11.82% are holders of OND/ND/NCE, while 4.55% have attained BSc/HND. However, only about 2.73% of the respondents have attained postgraduate degrees. In essence, the result in indicates that those with higher level of educational qualification have a lower propensity to use public toilets in the study area.

Table 3: Highest educational qualification

Educational level	Frequency	Percentage
Informal education	13	11.81
Primary certificate	27	24.54
SSCE	49	44.55
OND/ND/NCE	13	11.82
HND/BSc	5	4.55
Postgraduate Degree	3	2.73
Total	110	100

Source: Authors' Field Survey (2019)

Users' Perception of the Condition of Public Toilets in New Market

Figure 2 shows that majority of the users of Public toilets in New Market (50%) is that the toilets are in poor condition . Similarly, about 22.31% of the users reported that the toilets are in a very bad condition. However, 21.54% of the respondents perceive that the toilets are in fair condition. On the contrary, only about 2.31% and 3.85% of the respondents perceive the condition of the toilets as very good and good, respectively. Consequently, it can be inferred that about 57% of the respondents are dissatisfied with the condition of public toilets in the study area.

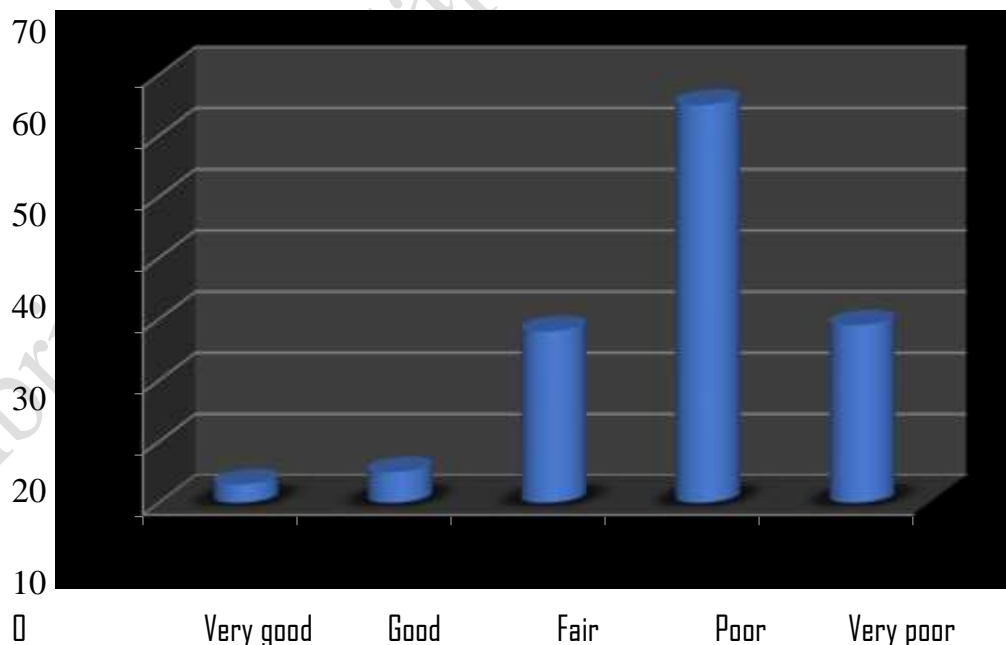


Fig.2: Users’ perception of the condition of public toilets in Kasuwan-Gwari
Source: Authors’ Field Survey (2019)

Challenges Faced by the Respondents in Using Public Toilets

Table 4 present the information on the challenges faced by the respondents in using public toilets in the study area. Majority of the respondents see dirty environment as a challenge, with more 55.46% of the respondents strongly agreeing and 37.27% agreeing that dirty environment pose a challenge to them in using public toilets in New Market. Similarly, bad odour appear to be a major challenge to public toilet users as 51.82% and 26.36% of the respondents strongly agreeing and agreeing respectively that bad odour is a challenge to them. Furthermore, 67.27% and 11.82% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed respectively that nuisance from flies is a serious challenge to them while using public toilets in the study area. However, 0.91% of the respondents disagreed and 0.91% strongly disagreed that flies constitute a nuisance to them in using public toilets in the study area.

It is, however, worthy of note that despite the aforementioned challenges, privacy of users is guaranteed in the use of public toilets in the study area. For instance, 48.18% and 42.73% of the respondents strongly disagreed and disagreed respectively that there is privacy invasion while using public toilets in New Market , Bida. Niger State

Table 4: Challenges faced by the respondents in using public toilets

Challenges	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Dirty Environment	41(37.27%)	61 (55.45%)	5 (4.55%)	2 (1.82%)	1 (0.91%)
Bad odour	57 (51.82%)	29 (26.36%)	14 (12.73%)	7(6.36%)	3 (2.73%)
Nuisance from Flies	13 (11.82%)	74 (67.27%)	21 (19.09%)	1 (0.91%)	1 (0.91%)
Poor Maintenance	64 (58.18%)	41 (37.27%)	1 (0.91%)	3 (2.73%)	1 (0.91%)

Privacy invasion	1 (0.91%)	5 (4.54%)	4 (3.64%)	47 (42.73%)	53 (48.18%)
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Source: Authors' Field Survey (2019)

Reasons for Using Public Toilets

Table 5, indicates that the toilet users cited proximity to the toilets is the major reason for using public toilets as responded by 59.09% of the users. However, 35.38% of the users of the public toilets in the study area are actually using those toilets because they have no other alternative available to them. More so, 3.63% of the users cited privacy as the reason for using public toilets in the study area. Worthy of note is that free access (1.82%) and cleanliness 1.82%) are the lowest reasons for the use of public toilets in the study area by the respondents. In order words, the free access and cleanliness are cited by the respondents as lesser reasons for using public toilets in New Market It can be inferred from this that the users are willing to pay if better sanitation services are rendered to them.

Table 5: Reasons for using public toilets

Reason	Frequency	Percentage
Proximity	65	59.09
Free access	2	1.82
Lack of alternative	37	35.38
Cleanliness	2	1.82
Privacy	4	3.63
Total	110	100

Source: Authors' Field Survey (2019)

Availability of Sanitary and Other Cleaning Materials

As can be observed from Figure 3, majority (78.46%) of the respondents stated that water is the most available sanitary material available in the toilets. Furthermore, 16.15% of the respondents stated that toilet soaps are provided to them in the public toilets that they use. Worthy of note is the fact that 4.6% of the respondents stated that there are disinfectants in the public toilets that they use. However, only 0.77% of the respondents reported that there are cleaning

towels in the public toilets that they use. The high level of water availability may be linked to low cost of providing water in the public toilets in the study area, as oral interview revealed that 20liters of water is around N20-N30 in the area.

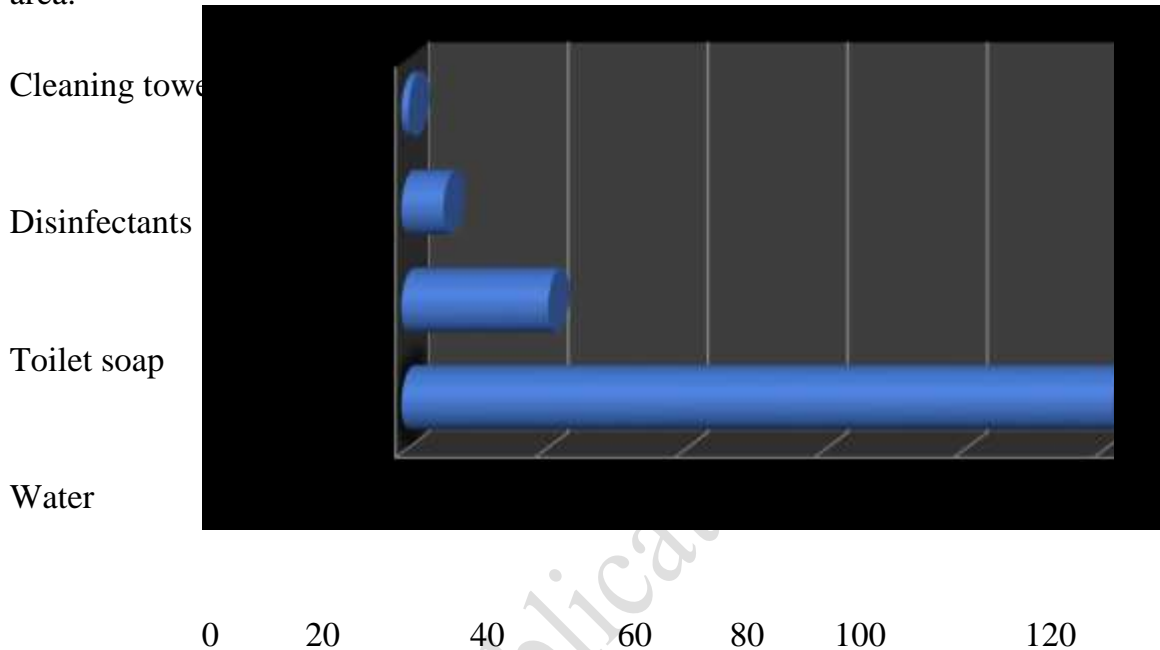


Fig. 3: Availability of sanitary and other cleaning materials
Source: Authors’ Field Survey (2019)

Willingness to Pay for Cleaner Toilets

Table 6, indicates that, 29.09% of the respondents expressed willingness to pay for cleaner toilets, while 56.36% emphasized their wiliness to pay for subsidized sanitary services only. However, 3.85% of the respondents expressed that they are not willing to pay for toilet services, 10% feeling that it is the responsibility of the State to provide such services to the masses free of charge. Overall, about 85.45% of the respondents are willing to pay for cleaner toilets.

Table 6: Willingness to pay for cleaner toilets

Willingness	Frequency	Percentage
Willing to pay	32	29.09
Willing to pay only if subsidised	62	56.36
Not sure	11	10
Not willing to pay	5	3.85

Total	110	100
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Source: Authors' Field Survey (2019)

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As UN (2000) and Dodds (2015) have noted, sanitation is one of the key elements of the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and consequently, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Access to sanitation is seen as a right (UN, 2010). This study has, however, unveiled that public toilet facilities have not been effective in the delivery of sanitation services to the users in New Market, Bida. Niger State. Although the privacy of users is guaranteed in the public toilets, they expressed strong dissatisfaction with these facilities as a result of dirtiness, bad odour nuisance from flies and poor maintenance of the facilities. Proximity and lack of alternative are the main reasons for using these toilets. The users express the willingness, readiness and ability to pay an average of N30 to use improved toilets in the study area. Therefore, stemming from these findings, the study recommends the following measures:

- a) Provision of adequate and toiletries to the users by the government in order to improve the satisfaction of the users with the existing toilet facilities
- b) Engagement of the private sector in the provision of improved toilet facilities to the users in the study area. This will be favourable to both the providers and the users, since the users are willing to pay certain amount for using the toilets.
- c) Further studies into the health impacts of using public toilets in New Market, Bida. are highly recommended.

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