

Assessment of Solid Waste Management Practices in High-Density Residential Townships: A Case Study of Mtendere Township in Lusaka, Zambia.

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DOI:<https://dx.doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2024.803032>

Received: 06 February 2024; Accepted: 10 February 2024; Published: 02 April 2024

ABSTRACT

Solid waste management is critical to a country's economic and social growth, affecting public health, environmental stability, and economic advancement. The rising amount and complexity of trash generated by the contemporary economy endangers ecosystems and human health. This study was set out to assess the current state of Solid Waste Management practices in the densely populated residential areas of Mtendere Township in Lusaka district of Zambia. A mixed method study design comprising of qualitative and quantitative methods was utilized in this study. Quantitative data were collected through structured surveys which enabled statistical analysis to discern trends. Qualitative insights were derived from open-ended interviews with key stakeholders and site observations. 385 study participants were selected to participate in the study via purposeful sampling technique. The study disclosed that the majority of respondents were females (57.6%) and belonged to the age group of 25-34 (37.0%). A significant proportion of study participants were self-employed (34.8%) and most of them had attained secondary level of education (42.4%). The study also revealed that, the predominant method used for waste collection was door-to-door (44.2%), followed by open dumping (24.3%) and burning waste (19.9%). The study also uncovered that, the majority of respondents, (71.0%), reported waste collection every 3 days, indicating a relatively infrequent collection schedule. Also, a smaller portion of the sample, (13.8%), stated that waste collection occurred less than once a week. The study further revealed that, the majority of respondents (93.8%) were not aware about waste segregation and recycling programs in Mtendere Township, indicating a need for the development and implementation of waste management strategies that promote waste segregation and recycling. The study also disclosed that, only a small minority of respondents (1.1%) perceived that, there were sufficient waste disposal facilities in Mtendere Township in Zambia. In contrast, the majority of participants, (87%) believed that there was a lack of adequate waste disposal facilities in Mtendere Township. The study further disclosed that, most of the respondents (59.4%) described Mtendere township as dirty indicating a prevailing perception of poor hygiene while a small proportion of respondents (19.2%) regarded the township as very dirty.

The study further disclosed that, insufficient waste collection frequency (35.9%), lack of waste segregation and recycling programs (28.3%), and inadequate waste disposal facilities (40.6%) as major challenges faced

by Mtendere Township in the management of solid waste in Lusaka, Zambia. Also 28.6% of the respondents pointed out that poor enforcement of waste management regulations and lack of community awareness and participation on the proper waste management (60.5%) as other significant challenges faced by Mtendere Township in the management of solid waste. The study also exposed that every single respondent (100%) has personally experienced environmental or health effects of inadequate solid waste management in Mtendere Township. This study further revealed air pollution (36.2%), Water contamination (32.2%) which increased the risk of waterborne diseases like cholera and spread of diseases (64.9%) as environmental or health effects caused by in-adequate Solid Waste Management in Mtendere Township in Zambia. It also disclosed that, foul odors (86.6%), and aesthetically unpleasant surroundings (81.2%) as other environmental or health effects caused by in-adequate Solid Waste Management. It is therefore, recommended that, there is need to conduct a study to assess the impact of increased waste collection frequency on waste accumulation and hygiene conditions in the township. Also exploring the economic aspects of waste management, analyzing social and behavioural factors influencing waste management practices, and understanding the role of technology and innovation in enhancing efficiency will contribute to a holistic understanding of sustainable waste management practices and inform future strategies in this domain.

Key Words: Solid Waste Management Practices, Lusaka, Zambia.

INTRODUCTION

Solid waste management is vital for a nation's economic and social development, profoundly influencing public health, environmental stability, and economic progress. Proper waste management is crucial for community well-being and sustainable development, especially in densely populated areas like Mtendere Township in Lusaka. Inadequate waste management practices can lead to disease propagation and environmental pollution. Effective waste management strategies, such as segregation, collection, and disposal, can significantly reduce public health risks. Additionally, improper waste management can pollute soil, water bodies, and the atmosphere, causing ecological degradation (Chisanga et al., 2023). Conversely, recycling and composting can minimize waste sent to landfills, conserve resources, and mitigate environmental pollution. Addressing these challenges, as seen in Mtendere Township, can improve public health, protect the environment, stimulate economic opportunities, foster sustainable urban development, and contribute to societal prosperity (Moyo et al., 2018).

The global waste management crisis intensifies due to rapid urbanization and population growth, straining waste management infrastructure worldwide. Densely populated areas face challenges due to limited resources and ineffective waste management systems, leading to insufficient waste collection and improper disposal practices (Geng et al., 2012). Studies demonstrate the link between rapid urbanization, population growth, and increased waste generation. Inadequate waste management can breed disease vectors, causing the spread of diseases. Improper waste disposal can contaminate soil, water bodies, and air, leading to pollution and ecosystem degradation. To combat these challenges, sustainable waste management practices, technological innovations, and community engagement are essential. Recycling and waste-to-energy technologies reduce landfill waste, while community involvement fosters responsible waste management (Luken et al., 2016).

Solid waste management challenges extend beyond Mtendere Township and are prevalent in many Southern African cities. Studies in various cities highlight waste generation, infrastructure limitations, and ineffective waste management systems. Regional cooperation, such as the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Regional Waste Management Programme, promotes sharing best practices and pooling resources, driving innovative waste management strategies. Collaboration in waste management infrastructure upgrades attracts investments, promotes tourism, and enhances the region's image and competitiveness

(Chisanga, 2016). Therefore, addressing waste management issues in Mtendere Township is academically significant and practically relevant, reflecting broader challenges in densely populated urban areas globally and in Southern Africa (Moyo et al., 2018).

Inadequate waste management in Mtendere Township results in environmental, health, and socio-economic issues. Improper waste disposal, limited collection services, and community unawareness contribute to waste accumulation, leading to unsanitary conditions. Field surveys indicate unauthorized waste disposal areas, exacerbating the problem (Chisanga et al., 2023). Insufficient resources for waste collection lead to irregular schedules and inadequate coverage. Many households lack formal waste collection, resorting to alternative, often harmful, disposal methods. Lack of community awareness hampers waste reduction and recycling efforts. Empirical evidence underscores the urgency to address these challenges. This study aims to assess Mtendere Township's waste management, providing crucial evidence to identify key obstacles hindering effective waste management practices (Moyo et al., 2018).

The Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were subdivided into the general and specific objectives as follows:

General Objective

To assess the current state of Solid Waste Management in the Densely Populated Residential Areas of Lusaka: A Case of Mtendere Township.

Specific Objective

The main objectives of this study are as follows:

1. To assess the current practices and infrastructure for solid waste management in Mtendere Township.
2. To identify the challenges faced in the management of solid waste in Mtendere Township.
3. To evaluate the environmental and health impacts of inadequate solid waste management in the township.
4. To propose strategies and recommendations for improving solid waste management in Mtendere Township.

Research Questions

The study addressed the following specific research questions:

1. What are the existing practices and infrastructure for solid waste management in Mtendere Township?
2. What are the key challenges faced in the management of solid waste in Mtendere Township?
3. What are the environmental and health impacts of inadequate solid waste management in the township?
4. What strategies and recommendations can be proposed to improve solid waste management in Mtendere Township?

Significance of the Study

This research holds paramount importance for diverse stakeholders. Firstly, residents of Mtendere Township stand to gain from improved waste management practices, fostering a cleaner and healthier living environment. Secondly, local authorities benefit by gaining valuable insights, enabling targeted strategies, efficient resource allocation, and informed policy formulation. Additionally, stakeholders in waste management, including companies, recycling organizations, and NGOs, can collaborate effectively,

addressing challenges and enhancing processes. Moreover, the academic community benefits from enriched knowledge, encouraging further research and innovation in global waste management solutions. This study propels progress in sustainable urban environments.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Solid waste management is a critical global challenge, particularly in densely populated residential areas such as Mtendere Township. This literature review synthesizes existing knowledge, focusing on challenges and potential solutions specific to Mtendere Township's solid waste management context.

Global Perspective

In densely populated residential areas worldwide, various waste management methods are employed, including door-to-door collection, communal bins, designated collection points, and landfill disposal (Ghinea et al., 2020). Door-to-door collection ensures regular waste removal, minimizing waste accumulation within residential areas (Ghinea et al., 2020). Communal bins provide a convenient waste disposal method but require proper management to prevent hygiene and environmental concerns (Kumar et al., 2017). Landfill disposal, prevalent in resource-limited regions, demands careful design and monitoring to minimize pollution and health risks (Wilson et al., 2015).

Waste management practices are influenced by cultural and behavioral factors, emphasizing the role of public awareness and participation (Kumar et al., 2017). Regional disparities in economic resources, governance, and infrastructure shape waste management strategies, necessitating targeted interventions (Hoorweg and Bhada-Tata, 2012). Investment in recycling facilities, circular economy principles, and waste reduction initiatives is vital for sustainable waste management in high-density residential areas (Kumar et al., 2017).

African Perspective

African high-density residential areas face challenges such as limited formal waste collection, reliance on open dumpsites, insufficient funding, and an unregulated informal waste sector (Wilson et al., 2013; Oleaniran and Nema, 2017). Open dumpsites pose significant environmental and health risks, demanding proper waste disposal facilities (Wilson et al., 2013). Integrating the informal waste sector into formal systems can enhance waste management outcomes (Tawia et al., 2017).

Addressing these challenges requires strengthening waste collection infrastructure, developing sustainable waste disposal facilities, exploring innovative funding mechanisms, engaging the informal waste sector, and strengthening policy frameworks (Simatele et al., 2019). Collaborative efforts involving government authorities, communities, and stakeholders are crucial for sustainable waste management practices in African high-density residential areas. This literature review underscores the complexity of global and African waste management contexts, emphasizing the need for localized strategies and collective actions for effective solutions (Chisanga and Lührmann, 2016; Ghinea et al., 2020; Kumar et al., 2017; Wilson et al., 2013; Oleaniran and Nema, 2017; Tawia et al., 2017; Simatele et al., 2019).

Local Perspective on Solid Waste Management in Zambia:

Solid waste management in high-density areas of Zambia faces critical challenges requiring urgent attention. Inadequate waste collection services result in waste accumulation in streets and open spaces, posing environmental and health risks (Ngambi, 2020). Limited disposal sites lead to improper waste disposal

methods like open burning and illegal dumping, contributing to air and soil pollution. Low public awareness and lack of education hinder effective waste management, emphasizing the need for behavioral change campaigns (Mwaba et al., 2017). Additionally, the absence of recycling infrastructure complicates waste management efforts. While informal waste pickers contribute to resource recovery, their integration into formal systems is essential for safety and environmental standards (Simwami et al., 2018).

Practices and Infrastructure for Solid Waste Management in High-Density Areas:

Researchers have identified key challenges in managing solid waste in high-density areas, including inadequate infrastructure, limited space for disposal, difficulties in waste segregation, and insufficient public awareness (Johnson et al., 2019). Waste-to-energy facilities, when properly managed, significantly reduce solid waste volume in high-density regions, but stringent emission control and public awareness are essential (Anderson, 2019). Community-led initiatives and active community involvement, along with tailored infrastructure, enhance waste management in high-density areas (Thompson, 2020). Informal waste pickers play a vital role but face challenges; inclusive policies are crucial for their integration into formal waste management systems (Davis, 2018). Technological innovations improve waste management in commercial areas, reducing littering and enhancing resource allocation (Lee, 2018).

Challenges in Solid Waste Management in High-Density Areas

Empirical studies conducted by Johnson et al. (2019), Anderson et al. (2020), Thompson et al. (2018), Rodriguez et al. (2017), and Chen et al. (2021) highlighted challenges like inadequate waste collection infrastructure, improper waste disposal, insufficient waste collection frequency, and limited space for waste storage. These studies emphasized the need for proper waste management practices to prevent environmental contamination and adverse health effects (Chisanga et al., 2023).

Environmental and Health Impacts of Inadequate Solid Waste Management:

Inadequate solid waste management leads to contamination of ecosystems, water bodies, and the release of harmful pollutants, posing risks to both the environment and public health (Johnson et al., 2017). Improper waste disposal practices result in hazardous emissions, leaching of toxic substances, and disease vector proliferation, adversely affecting communities near waste disposal sites (Anderson et al., 2020). Inadequate e-waste management leads to hazardous substance release, causing soil and water contamination and adverse health effects among workers and nearby communities (Chisanga et al., 2023).

Strategies for Improving Solid Waste Management:

Community-based waste management initiatives, technological interventions, and policy measures are crucial for improving solid waste management in high-density areas. Active community participation, technological innovations, and well-designed policies, such as extended producer responsibility and waste separation regulations, enhance waste management efficiency and promote sustainable practices (Anderson et al., 2020; Li et al., 2019). This comprehensive review thus underscores the multifaceted challenges and potential solutions in managing solid waste in high-density areas, emphasizing the need for integrated approaches involving communities, technology, and policy interventions (Kachinda et al., 2023).

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework employed in this study, centered in the densely populated residential areas of Lusaka, specifically Mtendere Township, drew upon various pertinent theories and concepts to comprehensively assess solid waste management practices. The following key elements were integrated into the framework:

Systems Theory

Systems Theory, applied in the study, offered a valuable lens for understanding the intricate nature of solid waste management in Mtendere Township. Acknowledging waste management as a complex system with interconnected components and processes, this approach facilitated a holistic evaluation. By adopting a systems thinking perspective, the study delved into the relationships among these components, including infrastructure, policies, community behaviors, and environmental and health impacts, enabling a nuanced analysis (Kaza et al., 2018).

Infrastructure

Infrastructure, encompassing waste collection, disposal sites, and recycling facilities, played a pivotal role. The study meticulously examined Mtendere Township's existing infrastructure, assessing the availability and adequacy of waste collection services, accessibility of disposal sites, and presence of recycling facilities (Simbeye et al., 2023). This examination was crucial in identifying gaps and limitations within the waste management system (Hopwood et al., 2005).

Policies and Regulations

The influence of policies and regulations on waste management practices was a key focus. Existing policies in Mtendere Township, including waste collection schedules and segregation requirements, were rigorously assessed. This analysis pinpointed gaps, inconsistencies, or inadequacies hindering effective waste management practices, guiding the identification of areas needing improvement (Schlosberg and Carruther, 2015).

Community Behaviors and Attitudes

Community behaviors and attitudes significantly impacted waste management practices. The study investigated residents' knowledge, attitudes, and practices related to waste management, identifying areas for targeted educational interventions. Understanding these community dynamics was essential for designing effective awareness campaigns and interventions aimed at improving waste management practices (Schlosberg and Carruther, 2015).

Environmental and Health Impacts

The study meticulously evaluated the environmental and health impacts stemming from inadequate waste management in Mtendere Township. This assessment encompassed analyses of water and air quality, as well as disease prevalence. Recognition of these impacts underscored the urgency of enhancing waste management practices, emphasizing the critical need for effective waste management (UNEP, 2021).

Sustainable Development Lens

From an environmental perspective, the study examined the impact of current waste management practices on the natural environment, encompassing pollution, resource depletion, and waste generation (Chisanga et al., 2024). Opportunities to minimize environmental harm and enhance resource conservation were identified. Strategies included waste reduction, promoting recycling and resource recovery, and exploring eco-friendly disposal methods such as composting or energy generation from waste (Pinder, 2017).

Social Sustainability

The social dimension of sustainable development focused on public health, equity, and community involvement. The study rigorously evaluated potential health risks due to inadequate waste management and

assessed community participation levels. Strategies ensuring equitable access to waste management services and fostering community empowerment and cohesion were identified, prioritizing the well-being and empowerment of the local community (Jackson, 2014).

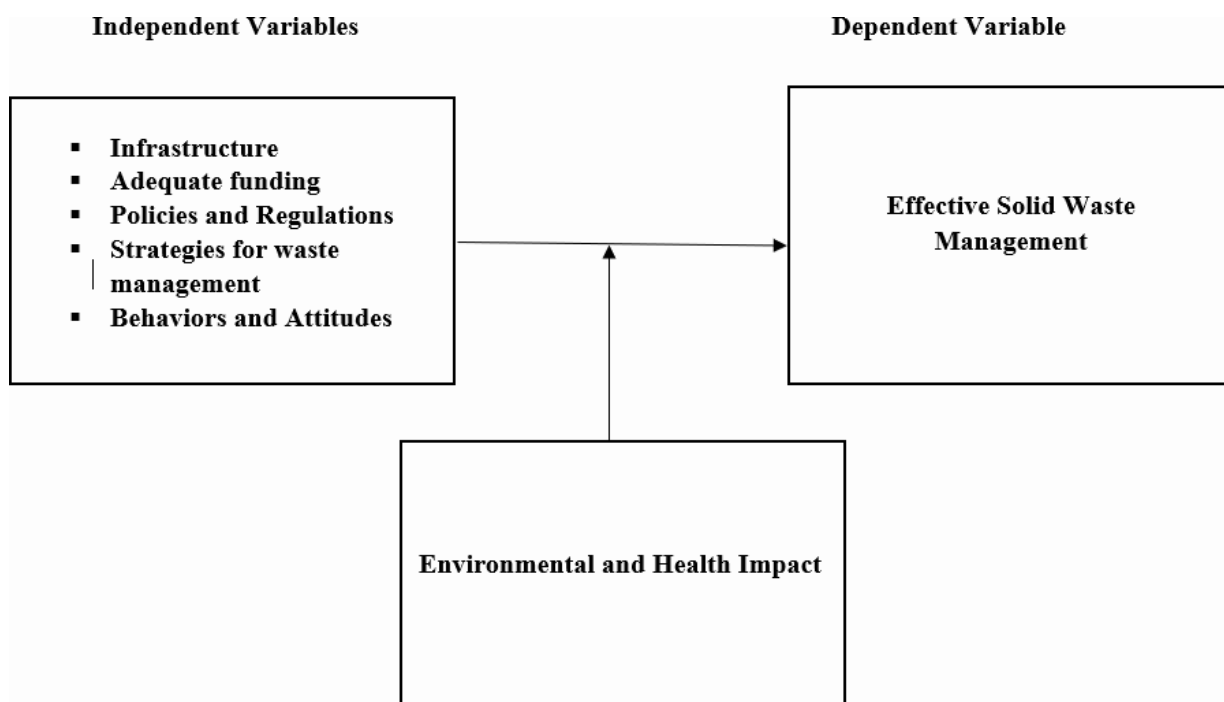
Economic Sustainability

Economic sustainability involved evaluating the financial aspects of waste management. The study meticulously examined costs associated with waste collection, transportation, and disposal, while also exploring economic opportunities, such as recycling initiatives. Strategies aimed at optimizing resource allocation, promoting economic growth, and generating sustainable livelihoods were identified, ensuring the viability of waste management practices (Mohai et al., 2009).

Thus, the application of sustainable development principles ensured a holistic approach, addressing the interconnectedness of environmental, social, and economic aspects. Recognizing that sustainable waste management requires a balanced approach, the study provided strategies and recommendations for solid waste management in Mtendere Township that were environmentally sound, socially inclusive, and economically viable. This detailed approach, grounded in sustainable development principles, provided a comprehensive framework for addressing the complex challenges of solid waste management in Mtendere Township, contributing significantly to the realization of a more sustainable future at local, national, and global levels.

Conceptual Framework

Solid waste management is a critical issue faced by many densely populated residential areas, and Mtendere Township in Lusaka is no exception. In order to address the challenges and develop effective strategies for improvement, a detailed conceptual framework is necessary. This conceptual framework examines the interplay between independent variables, including infrastructure, policies and regulations, and behaviors and attitudes, and their impact on the dependent variable, which is the engagement and involvement of stakeholders in designing and implementing effective waste management systems. The mediating variable of environmental and health impacts helps to elucidate the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable. The diagram below shows the Conceptual Framework:



Independent Variables

The following are the key independent Variables:

1. **Infrastructure:** This variable represents the existing waste management infrastructure in Mtendere Township, including waste collection and transportation mechanisms, disposal sites, and recycling facilities.
2. **Adequate funding:** This variable encompasses sufficient allocation of funds towards effective management of solid waste
3. **Policies and Regulations:** This variable encompasses the policies and regulations related to waste management in Mtendere Township, such as waste collection schedules, segregation requirements, and penalties for non-compliance.
4. **Strategies for solid waste management:** This include the various strategies and means through which solid waste can be effectively managed in high density areas.
5. **Behaviors and Attitudes:** This variable refers to the knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors of the community members regarding waste management, including their awareness of waste segregation, recycling practices, and the importance of proper waste disposal.

Dependent Variable

Effective Solid Waste Management System: This variable represents the engagement and involvement of various stakeholders, including the local community, government agencies, waste management companies, and non-governmental organizations, in the design and implementation of effective waste management systems in Mtendere Township.

Mediating Variable

Environmental and Health Impacts: This variable represents the environmental pollution and health risks associated with inadequate waste management practices in Mtendere Township, including air and water pollution, soil contamination, and the spread of diseases. It mediates the relationship between the independent variables (infrastructure, policies and regulations, behaviors and attitudes) and the dependent variable (stakeholders in waste management).

The conceptual framework illustrates the interrelationships among the independent variables, mediating variable, and the dependent variable. It acknowledges that the existing infrastructure, policies and regulations, and behaviors and attitudes influence the environmental and health impacts of waste management practices. These impacts, in turn, influence the engagement and involvement of stakeholders in designing and implementing effective waste management systems.

By assessing the current state of solid waste management in Mtendere Township based on the independent variables, the study will evaluate the infrastructure, policies, and behaviors that shape waste management practices. It will also examine the environmental and health impacts resulting from inadequate waste management. Through this analysis, the study will identify the strengths, weaknesses, and gaps in the waste management system, which will inform the proposed strategies and recommendations for improvement.

The involvement of stakeholders in designing and implementing effective waste management systems is the ultimate goal. This variable represents the extent to which stakeholders, including the local community, government agencies, waste management companies, and non-governmental organizations, actively participate and collaborate in decision-making processes, policy formulation, and the implementation of waste management initiatives. The study will explore the factors that influence stakeholder engagement,

such as the level of awareness, community empowerment, and the presence of supportive policies and regulations.

By considering the theoretical frameworks of systems theory, sustainable development, and environmental justice, the study takes a comprehensive and critical approach to assess the current state of solid waste management in Mtendere Township. It recognizes the inter connectedness of various components and dimensions, such as infrastructure, policies, behaviors, environmental and health impacts, and stakeholder engagement. This holistic framework will guide the research process and provide valuable insights for addressing the challenges and improving waste management practices in Mtendere Township in a sustainable, equitable, and inclusive manner.

METHODS AND MATERIALS

Introduction

This section delineates the research design, study setting, target population, sample size, sampling technique, data collection methods, analysis procedures, and ethical considerations employed in investigating solid waste management in Mtendere Township.

Research Design

A mixed methods approach amalgamating qualitative and quantitative methods was utilized. Quantitative data were collected through structured surveys, enabling statistical analysis to discern trends. Qualitative insights were derived from open-ended interviews with key stakeholders and site observations. This multifaceted approach facilitated a holistic understanding of waste management dynamics.

Study Setting

Mtendere Township was chosen due to its representative challenges in waste management. Its accessibility, diversity in waste practices, and the involvement of various stakeholders made it an ideal setting. Examining this diversity offered insights into effective waste management strategies and hindrances.

Target Population

The study targeted Mtendere Township's diverse population, capturing varied waste management practices, demographics, and socioeconomic backgrounds. Inclusive sampling ensured a comprehensive understanding of the community's perspectives and behaviors related to waste management.

Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

A sample size of approximately 385 respondents was determined using a formula considering Mtendere Township's population size, confidence level, margin of error and assumed variability in waste practices. Purposive sampling was employed for interviews, selecting key informants from the Lusaka City Council due to their expertise in solid waste management.

Method of Data Collection

Data collection methods encompassed questionnaires, interviews, and site observations. Surveys provided structured data on current practices, while interviews with key stakeholders offered nuanced insights. Site observations and visual documentation provided firsthand understanding of infrastructure and practices.

Method of Data Analysis

Qualitative data underwent thematic analysis, identifying recurring themes and challenges. Quantitative data were analyzed using statistical software, employing descriptive statistics such as frequency distributions, pie charts, and histograms to present findings comprehensively.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical precautions included informed consent, confidentiality, privacy, voluntary participation, minimization of harm, beneficence, and researcher integrity. Participants' well-being and rights were prioritized, ensuring trust and validity of research outcomes. Upholding ethical standards was integral to the study's integrity and credibility.

RESULTS

Introduction

This section presents the study's key findings, derived from rigorous analysis aligning with research objectives and questions. Through comprehensive data analysis, the study identified crucial insights pertaining to solid waste management in Mtendere Township. These findings offer an in-depth understanding of challenges in waste management practices, alongside the associated environmental and health impacts due to inadequate management.

Background Characteristics:

Table 1: Background Characteristics of Respondents

Background Characteristics	Freq.	Percent
Gender		
Male	117	42.4
Female	159	57.6
Age		
18-25	67	24.3
25-34	102	37.0
35-44	65	23.6
45-55	39	14.1
Above 55	3	1.1
Occupation		
Student	30	10.9
Employed (Private sector)	61	22.1
Employed (Public sector)	25	9.1
Self-employed	96	34.8
Unemployed	64	23.2
Education		
Primary	109	39.5
Secondary	117	42.4

Tertiary	50	18.1
Years of experience		
Less than 1 year	10	3.6
1-3 years	96	34.8
4-6 years	112	40.6
7-10 years	44	15.9
Above 10 years	14	5.1
Total	276	100

In Table 1, it is evident that a majority of respondents were females (57.6%) and belonged to the age group of 25-34 (37.0%). Self-employed individuals represented the largest occupational group (34.8%), and most respondents had secondary education (42.4%). The residents of 4-6 years' tenure in Mtendere Township were the most prevalent (40.6%).

Existing Practices and Infrastructure:

Figure 4.1 illustrates respondents' perceptions of waste management in Mtendere Township. The predominant method reported was door-to-door waste collection (44.2%), followed by open dumping (24.3%) and burning waste (19.9%). Community collection points were used by 9.8% of respondents, while only 1.8% mentioned waste disposal bins. Recycling centers or alternative methods were not mentioned. The prevalence of door-to-door collection, alongside limited community points and recycling options, highlights the necessity for enhanced waste management initiatives, emphasizing recycling promotion and accessible disposal solutions in Mtendere Township.

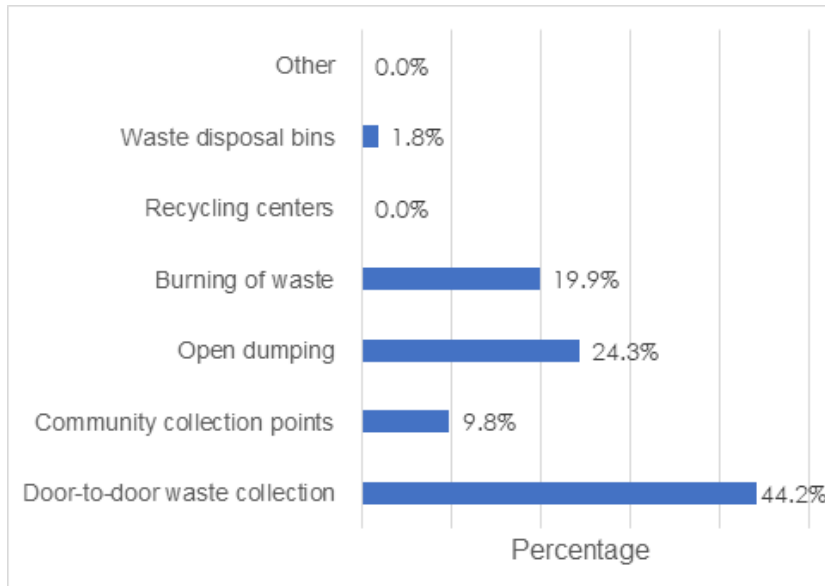


Figure 4.1: Perceptions of Waste Management Practices in Mtendere Township

The insights from key informants shed light on the existing state of waste management in Mtendere Township. Waste collection primarily relies on a door-to-door system conducted by local government or private waste management companies. However, concerns were raised about the inconsistency and inadequacy of collection, leading to waste accumulation in residential areas. Inadequate communal waste collection points and open dumping sites were highlighted, posing environmental and health risks. Community participation and awareness were deemed crucial; while some residents actively participate, there's a lack of engagement in certain segments. Informants stressed the importance of educational

campaigns and community mobilization to promote proper waste management practices.

Challenges identified included insufficient funding, limited resources, inadequate infrastructure, and population growth. Despite these challenges, informants suggested opportunities for improvement such as establishing a comprehensive waste management system, increasing collection frequency, investing in treatment facilities, implementing recycling programs, and strengthening regulations. Collaboration with local businesses and community organizations was emphasized. These insights underscore the need for collective efforts to enhance waste management, emphasizing the importance of community engagement and sustainable initiatives.

Frequency of Waste Collection in Respondents Area of Residence

Figure 4.2 below illustrates the frequency of waste collection as reported by the respondents. None of the participants indicated daily waste collection in their area. The majority of respondents, 196 (71.0%), reported waste collection every 3 days, indicating a relatively infrequent collection schedule. Every other day waste collection was mentioned by 22 (8.0%) participants, while 20 (7.2%) respondents reported waste collection once a week. A smaller portion of the sample, 38 (13.8%), stated that waste collection occurred less than once a week.

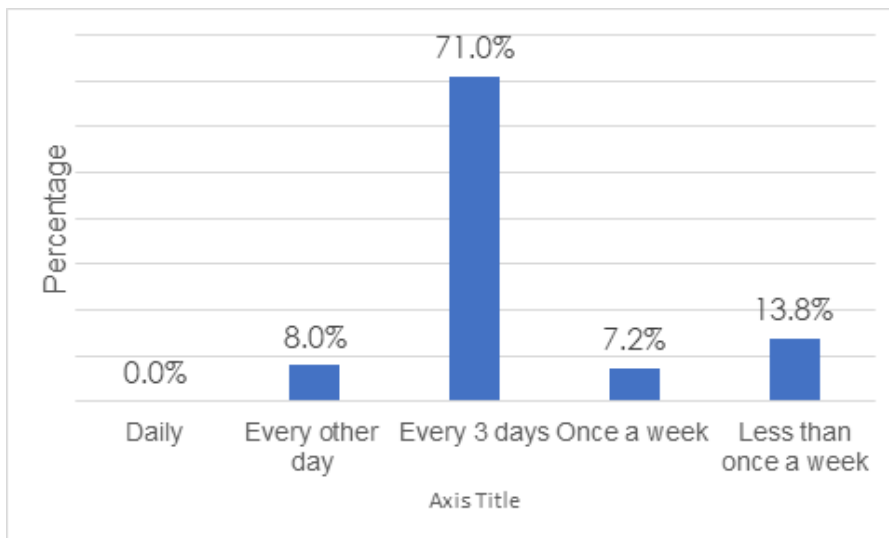


Figure 4.2 Frequency of Waste Collection in Respondents Area of Residence

Existence of waste segregation and recycling programs implemented in Mtendere Township

Figure 4.3 presents the responses of the participants regarding the implementation of waste segregation and recycling programs in Mtendere Township. None of the respondents answered “YES” to the presence of such programs, indicating that there are no established waste segregation and recycling initiatives in the township. The majority of participants, 259 (93.8%), responded with “NO,” indicating a lack of awareness or knowledge about the existence of these programs. Additionally, 17 (6.2%) respondents were unsure about the implementation of waste segregation and recycling programs.

The data suggests that waste segregation and recycling programs are currently not implemented in Mtendere Township. The overwhelming majority of respondents reported a lack of these initiatives, indicating a need for the development and implementation of waste management strategies that promote waste segregation and recycling. The presence of uncertainty among a small portion of participants further highlights the need for improved communication and awareness campaigns to educate the community about waste management practices.

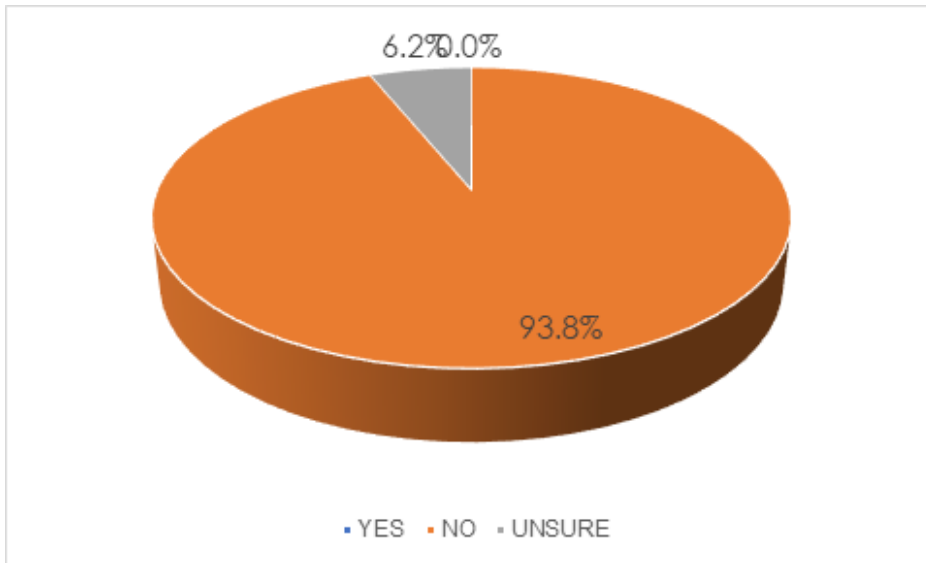


Figure 4.3: Existence waste segregation and recycling programs implemented in Mtendere Township

Presence of waste disposal facilities in Mtendere Township

Figure 4.4 presents the responses of the participants regarding the availability of adequate waste disposal facilities, such as landfills, in Mtendere Township. Only a small minority of 3 (1.1%) respondents answered “YES,” indicating that they perceive the existence of sufficient waste disposal facilities in the township. In contrast, the majority of participants, 240 (87.0%), responded with “NO,” suggesting that they believe there is a lack of adequate waste disposal facilities in the area. Additionally, 33 (12.0%) respondents expressed uncertainty about the availability of such facilities.

The data suggests that there is a perception among the majority of participants that Mtendere Township lacks adequate waste disposal facilities. This indicates a potential issue in the waste management infrastructure, as the majority of respondents perceive a deficiency in this aspect. The presence of uncertainty among a portion of participants further highlights the need for improved information dissemination and awareness regarding waste disposal facilities in the township.

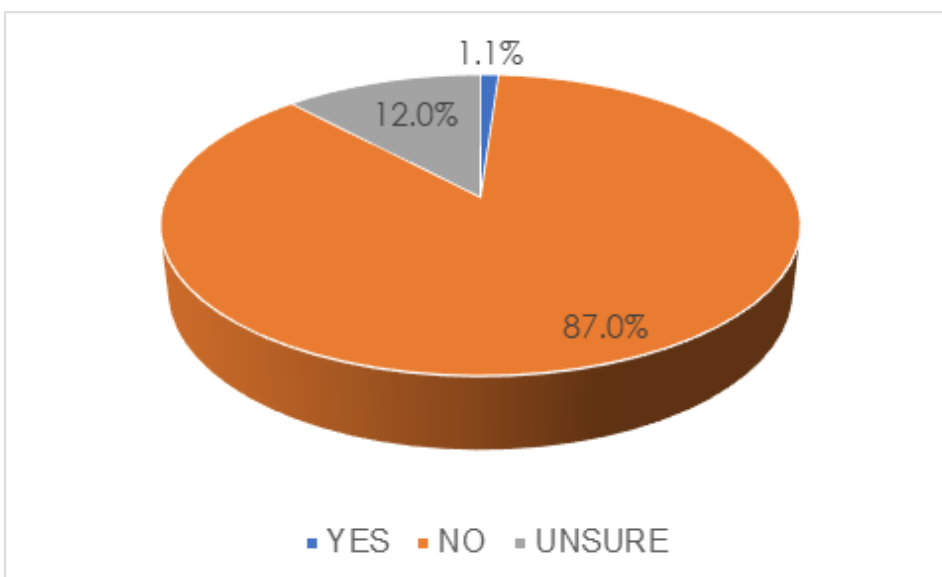


Figure 4.4: Presence of adequate waste disposal facilities in Mtendere Township

Cleanliness Perception of Mtendere Township

Figure 4.5 illustrates the respondents’ perceptions of the cleanliness of Mtendere Township. Notably, no participants rated the township as “Very clean” or “Clean.” The majority of respondents, 164 (59.4%), described the township as “Dirty,” indicating a prevailing perception of poor hygiene. Additionally, 53 (19.2%) respondents regarded the township as “Very dirty.” In contrast, a smaller proportion of 59 (21.4%) respondents perceived the township as “Moderately clean.”

The data suggests a significant concern regarding the cleanliness of Mtendere Township, with a majority of participants perceiving the area as either dirty or very dirty. This perception indicates potential issues in waste management, sanitation practices, or other factors contributing to the cleanliness of the township. It highlights the need for effective measures to address cleanliness issues and improve the overall hygiene and sanitation conditions in the community.

The absence of respondents rating the township as “Very clean” or “Clean” underscores the need for targeted interventions to enhance cleanliness and promote a healthier and more aesthetically pleasing environment in Mtendere Township. Efforts should focus on waste management, proper disposal practices, and community engagement to raise awareness and encourage active participation in maintaining a clean and hygienic living environment.

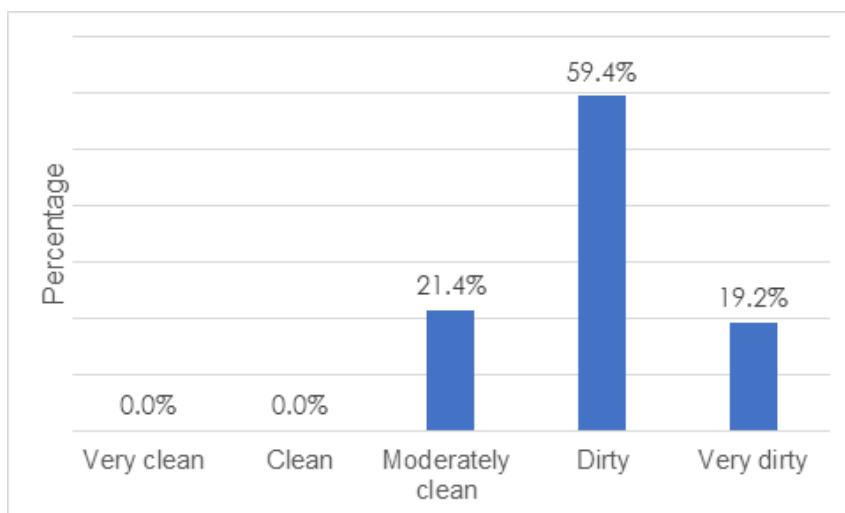


Figure 4.5: Cleanliness Perception of Mtendere Township

Major challenges faced in the management of solid waste in Mtendere Township

Figure 4.6 presents the key challenges faced in the management of solid waste in Mtendere Township, as perceived by the respondents. The data shows that multiple challenges contribute to the ineffective waste management in the township. The most prominent challenge identified is the “Insufficient waste collection frequency,” with 99 (35.9%) respondents highlighting this issue. This suggests that the current waste collection schedule is inadequate to meet the demands of the community, leading to accumulation and improper disposal of waste.

Another significant challenge is the “Lack of waste segregation and recycling programs,” cited by 78 (28.3%) respondents. This indicates a lack of initiatives to promote waste segregation and recycling practices within the community, resulting in a missed opportunity for sustainable waste management. The data also reveals that 112 (40.6%) respondents perceive “Inadequate waste disposal facilities” as a key challenge. This suggests a shortage of proper waste disposal infrastructure, such as landfills or recycling

centers, which hinders effective waste management efforts.

Furthermore, 79 (28.6%) respondents point to the “Poor enforcement of waste management regulations” as a significant challenge. This indicates a lack of effective monitoring and enforcement mechanisms to ensure compliance with waste management regulations and guidelines. A majority of 167 (60.5%) respondents highlight the “Lack of public awareness on proper waste management” as a challenge. This suggests a need for educational campaigns and community engagement to enhance awareness and understanding of proper waste management practices among residents. Additionally, a small portion of respondents, 4 (1.4%), identified “Other” challenges not specified in the options provided.

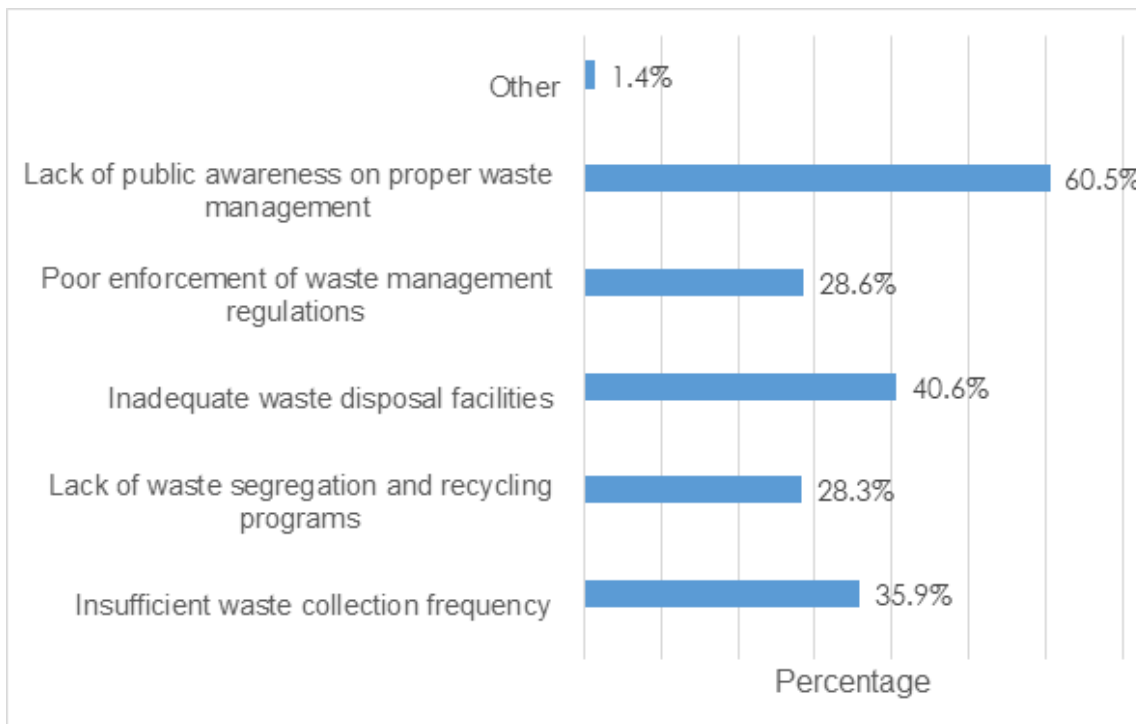


Figure 4.6: Major challenges faced in the management of solid waste in Mtendere Township

Key informants in Mtendere Township highlighted several challenges in solid waste management. Inadequate waste collection infrastructure and services, leading to irregular collection and waste accumulation, were significant issues. Lack of community awareness and participation in waste management practices, resulting in improper waste handling, was another challenge. Limited financial resources hindered essential waste management initiatives and equipment procurement. Rapid population growth intensified waste generation, straining existing systems. To address these challenges, comprehensive strategies encompassing infrastructure development, community engagement, sufficient funding, and adaptability to population growth are crucial for Mtendere Township to achieve effective and sustainable solid waste management practices.

Environmental or Health impacts that have been Experienced due to Inadequate Solid Waste Management in Mtendere Township

Figure 4.7 presents the results on the environmental or health impacts that have been experienced due to inadequate solid waste management in Mtendere Township. The data reveals that every single respondent 276 (100.0%) has personally experienced environmental or health impacts as a result of the inadequate solid waste management in Mtendere Township. This indicates the significant and widespread consequences that arise from the current state of waste management practices. The fact that every respondent has encountered these impacts underscores the urgency and severity of the situation.

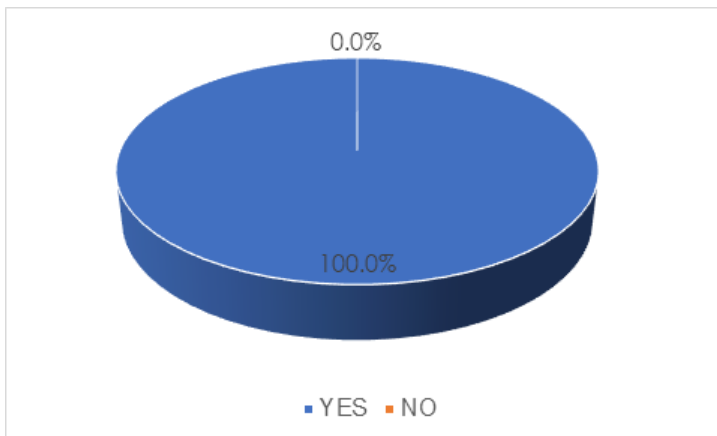


Figure 4.7: Environmental or Health impacts Experienced due to Inadequate Solid Waste Management in Mtendere Township

Nature of Environmental or Health Impacts have been Experienced due to Inadequate Solid Waste Management in Mtendere Township

This study further revealed significant consequences arising from improper waste management practices. A substantial portion of respondents (36.2%) reported experiencing air pollution due to practices like burning or open dumping, leading to compromised air quality and potential respiratory issues. Water contamination, cited by approximately 32.2% of respondents, posed threats to public health and increased the risk of waterborne diseases like cholera. The majority (64.9%) observed the spread of diseases, facilitated by improperly managed waste attracting disease-carrying vectors. Foul odors, noted by 86.6% of respondents, negatively impacted residents’ quality of life. Additionally, 81.2% reported aesthetically unpleasant surroundings due to waste accumulation, diminishing the overall livability of the township. A small percentage (2.9%) mentioned other impacts, indicating diverse issues like soil contamination or adverse effects on local businesses. These findings emphasize the urgent need for effective waste management practices to mitigate environmental, public health, and overall quality of life concerns in Mtendere Township.

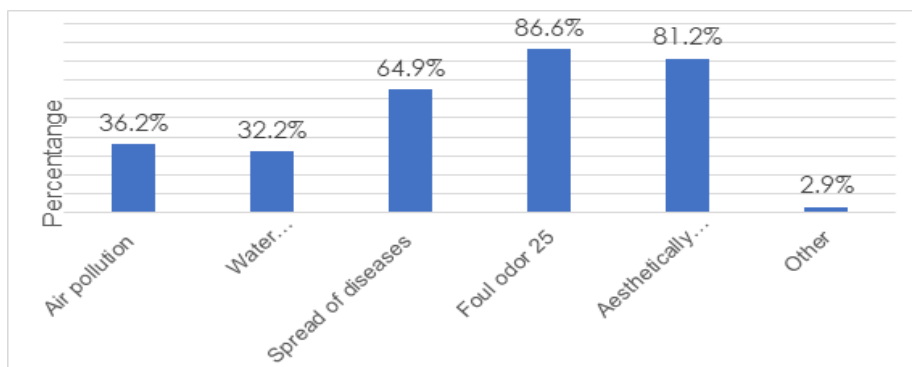


Figure 4.8: Environmental or Health Impacts Experienced due to Inadequate Solid Waste Management in Mtendere Township

Key informants, including local government officials, waste management personnel, community leaders, and affected residents, provided vital insights into the environmental and health repercussions arising from inadequate solid waste management in the township. Indiscriminate waste disposal practices and open dumping sites were identified as significant contributors to environmental degradation, contaminating land and water sources, thus harming ecosystems and wildlife. The presence of litter and unmanaged waste also negatively impacted the township’s overall cleanliness and visual appeal, highlighting aesthetic concerns.

In terms of health impacts, informants raised substantial worries. Improper waste management practices were linked to the proliferation of disease-carrying vectors like mosquitoes and rodents, increasing the threat of diseases such as malaria and dengue fever. Waste burning was identified as a potential source of air pollution, leading to respiratory problems among residents. Additionally, the accumulation of waste attracted stray animals, creating breeding grounds for pests, thereby elevating the risk of infections and injuries. These indirect health hazards, combined with the direct threats, emphasized the urgent need for effective waste management strategies. Informants stressed the importance of improving waste collection systems, promoting proper waste disposal practices, and enhancing awareness among residents to mitigate the environmental and health risks associated with insufficient solid waste management.

Strategies and Recommendations Proposed to Improve Solid Waste Management in Mtendere Township

The survey responses from Mtendere Township residents underscored several key strategies and recommendations to enhance solid waste management. A substantial majority (68.5%) advocated for increased waste collection frequency, highlighting the community’s urgent need for regular and timely waste removal services to prevent waste accumulation. Additionally, a significant proportion (76.4%) stressed the importance of implementing waste segregation and recycling programs, emphasizing the community’s support for sustainable waste management practices. Furthermore, an overwhelming majority (71.0%) of respondents recognized the necessity of improving waste disposal facilities, emphasizing the importance of constructing proper landfills to address waste management challenges effectively. Notably, a vast majority (86.2%) emphasized the critical role of strengthening the enforcement of waste management regulations, indicating a strong desire for stricter implementation and monitoring to deter improper waste disposal practices.

Public awareness campaigns emerged as a vital component, with 76.8% of respondents supporting educational initiatives on proper waste management. This underlines the community’s understanding of the importance of awareness in fostering responsible waste disposal practices. Lastly, a smaller but notable percentage (8.0%) of respondents offered innovative recommendations, including incentivizing waste reduction, promoting composting, and engaging local communities and organizations in waste management efforts, suggesting a diverse range of approaches to address the issue comprehensively.

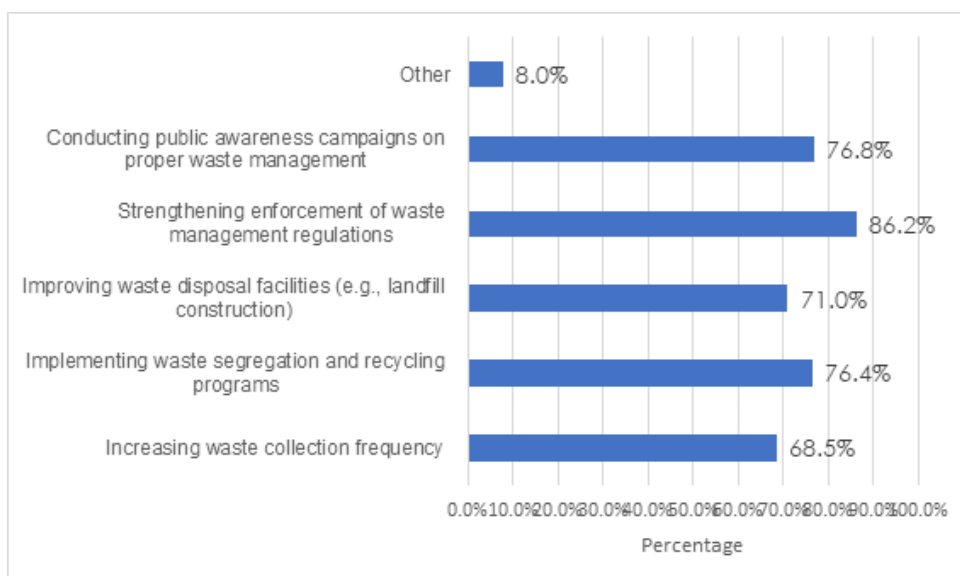


Figure 4.9: Strategies and Recommendations Proposed to Improve Solid Waste Management in Mtendere Township

The interviews with key informants in Mtendere Township revealed critical strategies for enhancing solid waste management. Strengthening waste collection systems emerged as a priority, emphasizing the need for increased collection frequency and organized, predictable schedules. Informants stressed the importance of promoting waste segregation and recycling through education and establishing recycling facilities within the township.

Community engagement and awareness campaigns were highlighted to instill a sense of responsibility among residents, educating them on waste reduction, proper disposal, and recycling benefits. Enhancing waste management infrastructure, including strategically located collection points and treatment facilities, was identified as crucial. Informants emphasized stricter enforcement of regulations, regular inspections, and penalties for improper disposal to discourage irresponsible practices.

Collaborations and partnerships with local businesses and community organizations were also seen as opportunities to provide resources and expertise. Direct quotations from informants emphasized these strategies, offering valuable insights for improving solid waste management in Mtendere Township.

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

Introduction

This section critically discusses the findings derived from the study's objectives and existing literature, providing a comprehensive understanding of the challenges in solid waste management in Mtendere Township. The research illuminates the urgency and gravity of the issues, emphasizing their environmental, health, and social ramifications. It not only identifies challenges but also proposes effective strategies and recommendations based on respondents' and key informants' insights.

Existing Practices and Infrastructure

The study revealed a reliance on traditional waste collection methods in Mtendere Township, with door-to-door collection predominant. Limited community collection points and disposal bins indicate gaps in waste management infrastructure, leading to improper disposal practices such as open dumping and burning. Challenges in waste collection frequency and a lack of segregation and recycling programs were identified. Similar challenges have been observed in studies by Johnson (2017) and Anderson et al. (2020), emphasizing the need for advanced sorting, regular collection, and public awareness initiatives in densely populated areas.

Key Challenges Faced

Inadequate waste collection frequency, absence of segregation and recycling initiatives, insufficient disposal facilities, poor enforcement, low public awareness, and financial constraints pose significant challenges. These findings align with research by Rodriguez et al. (2017), emphasizing the importance of community participation, proper infrastructure, and financial resources in waste management.

Environmental and Health Impacts

Inadequate waste management leads to air and water pollution, disease spread, foul odors, and aesthetic degradation. Key informants echoed these concerns, emphasizing environmental degradation and health risks, consistent with studies by Thompson et al. (2018) and Kim et al. (2019), highlighting the need for effective waste management strategies and public awareness campaigns.

Strategies and Recommendations

Recommendations from respondents and key informants stress the need for increased waste collection frequency, waste segregation and recycling programs, strict enforcement, and community engagement. Investing in infrastructure, strategic partnerships, and awareness campaigns, as suggested by key informants, echo the importance of collaborative efforts and strategic planning. These findings underline the urgency to implement comprehensive waste management strategies to mitigate impacts and create a healthier living environment in Mtendere Township.

CONCLUSION

This study embarked on a comprehensive examination of solid waste management practices within densely populated regions, using Mtendere Township in Lusaka as a case study. The research meticulously analyzed the challenges faced in solid waste management in Mtendere Township, emphasizing the urgent need for improved practices and infrastructural developments to counteract the far-reaching environmental, health, and societal ramifications ensuing from inadequate measures. The predominant waste management method observed in the township was door-to-door collection, although a glaring absence of comprehensive infrastructure, including recycling centers and community collection points, was noted. Pervasive improper waste disposal practices such as open dumping and burning were prevalent, leading to alarming levels of environmental pollution and health hazards.

The challenges identified encompassed inadequate waste collection frequency, absence of waste segregation and recycling programs, insufficient waste disposal facilities, feeble enforcement of waste management regulations, limited public awareness, financial constraints, and rapid population growth within the township.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To surmount these challenges, this study proposes a set of pragmatic strategies and recommendations:

1. Local authorities should increase waste collection frequency. They can address the issue of insufficient waste collection frequency by implementing a more frequent and regular schedule. This proactive measure will deter waste accumulation, foster cleanliness, and enhance hygiene conditions within the township.
2. Local authorities should come up with pioneer initiatives aimed at educating and promoting waste segregation and recycling among residents. These endeavors can be achieved through comprehensive awareness campaigns, community workshops, and the distribution of educational materials.
3. Local authorities should invest in the development of robust waste disposal facilities, comprising both landfills and recycling centers. Adequate infrastructure is pivotal in facilitating efficient waste management practices, providing residents with accessible and convenient options for responsible waste disposal.
4. Local authorities should heighten public awareness regarding the critical importance of proper waste management, elucidating its far-reaching environmental and health impacts. Launching community-wide awareness campaigns through diverse channels such as media, community meetings, and localized events will engage residents actively, fostering their participation in waste management efforts.
5. Local authorities should also allocate substantial financial resources towards waste management initiatives and infrastructural development. Adequate funding is an indispensable linchpin for implementing sustainable waste management practices, facilitating the acquisition of essential

infrastructure and equipment.

Suggestions for Future Research

1. **Assess the Impact of Increased Waste Collection Frequency:** Undertake a meticulous study to evaluate the effects of implementing a more frequent and regular waste collection schedule on waste accumulation and hygiene conditions within Mtendere Township. This research endeavor promises valuable insights into the effectiveness of heightened collection frequency in ameliorating waste management practices.
2. **Evaluate the Implementation and Outcomes of Waste Segregation and Recycling Programs:** Delve into the intricate landscape of the implementation process and assess the effectiveness of waste segregation and recycling initiatives within the township. This research thrust could scrutinize factors influencing residents' participation, ascertain the level of waste diversion achieved, and gauge the overarching impact on sustainable waste management.
3. **Conduct a Cost-Benefit Analysis of Waste Management Strategies:** Execute an incisive economic analysis to evaluate the costs and benefits associated with diverse waste management strategies within Mtendere Township. This research initiative is poised to yield invaluable insights into the financial viability of various approaches, aiding in the identification of the most cost-effective solutions to the complex challenges of waste management.

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