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Economic and Environmental Implications of Waste Recycling In Nigeria

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Abstract

The article provided an outline of Nigeria's trash recycling effects on the economy and ecology. It was designed to take into account the advantages waste recycling offers a population both economically and environmentally. Before discussing the ramifications and difficulties associated with waste recycling, it provided a greater knowledge of the concepts of waste management and recycling. The article was able to determine that waste management contributes to economic growth by generating jobs, income, and some tax revenue for the government. Recycling garbage contributes to a healthier, more beautiful environment and helps prevent illness epidemics. In its conclusion, the study made the suggestion that the government help the waste recycling sector by subsidized the costs of waste recycling facilities.

Keywords: Waste, Recycling, Environment, Economy, Implications

Introduction

Many communities have traditionally struggled with waste management. Okono (2009) estimates that each home in Nigeria produces roughly 1 tonne of waste yearly, totalling about 37.5 million tonnes for the nation as a whole. Due to the rise in packaged food consumption, this is increasing. As a result, new technology and packaging are being created. It has been determined that packaging waste makes up around a quarter of the rubbish in a typical trash can. More suicidal than the waste itself is the incapacity to manage these wastes. The government of any society places waste management at the top of its administrative priorities for this reason.

Recycling has been identified as one of the finest trash management strategies. Recycling is a technique for recovering resources that entails collecting and reusing waste products like empty beverage containers. The raw resources used to create the things can be used to create new goods. www.wikipedia.org/recycling

According to the definition given above, recycling focuses on reducing waste by reusing garbage to do more productive tasks. This means that recycling would significantly contribute to a cleaner environment for everyone, especially in Nigeria.

Recycling as a waste management strategy, however, has some effects on a society's economic and environmental aspects. This paper aims to evaluate this area. The reader will gain a better understanding of why it is essential that we adopt recycling as a habit after they are aware of the repercussions of recycling on our economy and environment. It is crucial to understand that recycling of waste can be formal or informal. Informal recycling occurs when we reuse trash products around the house, such as when we keep sugar in a mayonnaise bottle. Formal recycling, on the other hand, involves a concerted effort to gather significant amounts of waste in order to transform it into something useful. Typically, the government supports this.

The need to understand better waste management necessitated the researcher to embark on this paper.

Overview of Waste Management and Recycling

According to Walter (2015), waste management includes all of the actions and procedures necessary to control trash from the time it is created until it is finally discarded. It entails, among other things, the collection, transportation, treatment, and disposal of waste as well as supervision and regulation. It also involves the legal and regulatory framework for waste management, which includes instructions on recycling, etc.

Waste management encompasses a variety of waste types, including those generated by municipal (residential, institutional, and commercial), agricultural, and social activities (such as health care, household hazardous wastes, and sewage sludge). Waste can also be acquired through the mining of raw materials, processing of raw materials into by-products and final products, consumption or use of final products, or other human activities. trash management is expected to lessen the negative consequences of trash on the environment, human health, and aesthetics.

The way trash is disposed of has significant effects on the ecosystem and may result in serious problems. Waste reduction entails less energy and resource use, as well as higher economic value.

There are many things that people can take to reduce waste, and more local governments are implementing programmes, including door-to-door collections for glass, paper, and plastic recycling (Simeon, 2017).

On the other hand, recycling is a by-product of waste management because the two ideas are interrelated. In order to prevent the waste of potentially useful materials, minimize the consumption or utilization of fresh raw materials, energy usage, air pollution (from incineration), and water contamination, it is the process of turning generated waste into reusable materials. This reduces the need for "conventional" waste disposal and lowers greenhouse gas emissions compared to plastic production. According to Adebanji (2017), recycling is a key component of modern trash reduction and the third of the 3Rs (Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle) in the hierarchy of waste. One aspect of waste reduction is recycling. There are further strategies that can be used. The fundamental rule is to only recycle items that you are certain cannot be mended or used again.

There are numerous things that could be recycled, but what can be recycled essentially depends on the economics. For instance, metal is recyclable because it is inexpensive to recycle and is quickly transformed into new aluminium items. Steel can be recycled

easily but because it is less expensive to make, recycling it is not as important. This explains why certain programmes pay cash for aluminium cans but not steel ones. In general, recycling is more profitable if there is a market for products manufactured from recycled raw materials. So it is acceptable to say that supporting recycling by purchasing recycled goods.

All types of glass, plastic, paper, metal, tyres, textiles, and electronics are included in the category of recyclable materials. In most cases, recyclable products are gathered at a collection site or collected up from the side of the road, where they are arranged by type, cleaned, and reprocessed into new materials intended for production. Henry (2016)

Economic Implications of Waste Recycling in Nigeria

Recycling of waste materials has some economic impacts. This section seeks to assess some of these impacts.

Income: According to Clement (2017), among the financial advantages of waste recycling is the fact that it results in the gaining of basic earnings, which are absolutely necessary to provide for the survival of waste recyclers' households and families. The same feature was noted by Rockson (2013), and Chukwuedozie (2011) acknowledges that the average incomes earned by waste recyclers may be considerably higher than the minimum wage offered in any country by its government.

Opportunities for Employment: It is no longer unexpected that many Nigerians work in garbage management and recycling. There are individuals who roam the streets every day collecting recyclables from citizens with the intention of selling them to sectors of the economy that require them. Bottles, aluminium, steel, and copper are a few of the recyclable resources that are in demand.

Cost Benefit: For a given corporate product, creating new containers is more expensive than recycling an existing one. For instance, it would have cost more if bottled beverage manufacturers were required to utilise new bottles for every batch of their

manufacturing rather than recycling bottles from previous batches. As a result, the companies' profits would suffer greatly, and waste managers will have it even harder.

Revenue Generation: The government uses taxation as one method of generating revenue. A significant source of income for the Nigerian government might come from taxing waste management and recycling businesses. To avoid discouraging investors in this industry, the government must be cautious in how it charges for services.

Environmental Implications of Waste Recycling in Nigeria

It can be very difficult to deal with waste in an environment. In addition to being an eyesore, it poses a health risk to the community. The general strategy for addressing waste's negative environmental effects is to reduce it, reuse it, recycle it, and extract resources as little as possible in order to enhance the quality of both water and air and contribute to a decrease in greenhouse gas emissions. From a Nigerian perspective, this section examines the environmental effects of recycling garbage.

1. **Cleaner Society:** The most obvious result of recycling garbage is a cleaner society. Recycling rubbish reduces the amount of waste that pollutes our environment. This results in a more peaceful and lovely environment.

2. **Reduction in Diseases Outbreaks:** In the past, various outbreaks of illness have been linked to unclean environments (see George, 2017, p. 23). Environmental squalor is believed to be the root cause of cholera outbreaks. The likelihood of an outbreak is reduced when wastes are recycled.

3. **Saved Land Spaces:** Wastes consume a significant amount of land, particularly solid trash, which typically contains recyclable resources. Glass and polythene garbage can take up to 500 years to completely decompose (Akanimo, 2014). It could be challenging to farm the land and engage in various other activities there if there are solid wastes buried beneath the soil. This takes up usable land areas. But

recycling these solid wastes makes sure that just a little amount of land is utilised for garbage disposal

4. **Beautification of the Environment:** The majority of recyclable resources are employed in environmental beautification. For example, painted used tyres are used to spruce up playgrounds for kids and other recreational spaces. Baked plastics are currently employed in South Africa to create the building blocks for homes. (Uwalaka,2014)

Factors Militating Against Waste Recycling in Nigeria

Waste recycling does not come without its challenges. Some of the challenges are the focus of this subsection.

1. **Cost:** In comparison to other industrialized nations, waste management and recycling are relatively expensive in Nigeria. In Nigeria, recycling is mostly done manually, which necessitates expensive labour. When compared to other climates, the expense of purchasing equipment is similarly high.

According to Morgan (2018), most state governments in Nigeria put off dealing with waste for a very long time before acting because doing so is so expensive. Waste management requires time, effort, and zeal; it is not an easy endeavour that anybody can engage in.

2. Technical Support: In Nigeria, there is no infrastructure or technological support for handling trash recycling. Numerous recycling-related tasks necessitate the use of machines. It needs large organisations to be able to buy equipment like bottle washers, smelting facilities, and plastic melting machines. The growth of the recycling industry in Nigeria has been hampered by this.

3. Poor Disposal Habits: Disposing of trash is a bad habit for Nigerians. Most people donot discard their rubbish at the approved areas. They would rather throw

them into bushes than dump them somewhere where recyclers could easily access the rubbish and separate the recyclables.

4. Limited Recycling Companies: Only a small number of people are interested in the industry in Nigeria because of the stigma associated with trash management and recycling. For the few companies who undertake the "dirty" job, this makes the work tiresome. Waste management and recycling are highly stigmatised professions in Nigeria, where many people consider persons who engage in such activities to be lowlifes, claims Adebanke (2016). They give them insulting names like "agbegbo,""akodoti," etc. People need to be aware that garbage management and recycling are lucrative businesses with annual revenues in the millions of naira.

5. Government Regulations and Policies: In the majority of nations, the government sets rules for where, when, and how waste is to be disposed of, sometimes for a price. As necessary as these restrictions are, it is crucial to remember that most people might not be able to afford the cost and instead choose to dispose of their trash in places other than the specified locations, which would worsen the environment.

Recommendations

Having considered the economic and environmental implications of waste recycling in Nigeria, including its challenges, the researcher strongly recommends that:

1. To encourage additional investors to enter the sector, the government at all levels should subsidise the costs of waste management and recycling facilities.
2. Employees should receive training on how to use trash recycling equipment. Waste management is a serious industry, thus they may be shipped abroad if necessary.

3. People need to be made aware of the risks associated with careless garbage disposal and should be compelled to face the law if they do so.

4. To address the ever-growing waste concerns in our societies, more waste management and recycling businesses should establish themselves.

5. In order to discourage alternative garbage disposal, which is bad for society, the government should make sure that the fixed charge for waste collection is affordable for the populace.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the more garbage we can control, the better for the environment. Recycling continues to be the principal method of trash management in contemporary culture. This is because using this strategy only slightly puts us in danger. The government now has more money, income, and job prospects thanks to recycling. In light of this, the researcher comes to the conclusion that recycling should be highly valued if our society is to manage garbage efficiently.

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