Increase in healthcare facilities and rapid environmental degradation: A technological paradox in Nigeria’s urban centres


The scenario of waste management in many Nigerian cities has been complicated by the non segregation of healthcare wastes from domestic wastes in many healthcare facilities (HCFs). Incidentally, the healthcare facilities have soared in numbers over a 50 - year period in all the six geopolitical zones of Nigeria. The increase in the number of HCFs in Nigeria’s cities has led to environmental problems largely caused by poor management of generated wastes. At the same time, there has been a resurgence of several sanitation-related diseases in the country. It has thus become a technological paradox as HCFs have been linked with disease epidemics. This paper assessed the current waste handling practices of selected HCFs in a large city which will guide the planners in mitigating the improper practices. Thus, adequate healthcare waste management strategy coupled with training of all waste handlers should be integrated with HCF development at the inception so that the paradox of promoting the spread of diseases and degradation of the environment through increase in number of HCFs can be nipped in the bud.

Key words: Environment, healthcare, infrastructure, public health, urbanisation, waste.