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An Investigation into People's Perceptions, Attitudes, Lifestyles and their Effects on Waste Management in Masaka District: A Case Study of Namirembe Landing Site in Kyanamukaaka Sub-County.

Proper management of solid waste is critical to the health and well-being of people and the environment at large. At Namirembe landing site, several tons of solid waste including human excreta is left uncollected on the streets, corridors and lake shores each day, acting as a feeding ground for pests that spread disease, clogging drains and creating a myriad of related health and infrastructural problems. The researcher undertook the study so as to find out the effects of people's perceptions, attitudes and lifestyles on waste management. Primary and secondary data were collected from 140 respondents who included; fishermen, fish smokers, residents, restaurant owners, district inspector of health, and district fisheries officer. This data was collected by use of interviews, questionnaires, non-participant observation and documentary analysis. People at the landing site easily notice a stranger in the area and start to develop suspicion. The researcher successfully penetrated the research area through the district inspector of health who authorised in writing. Key findings of the study include absence of a solid waste management policy whereby there is no clear plan of action and a regulatory framework to guide community members on how to manage waste. The study also revealed that solid waste awareness campaigns were not conducted by the authorities and there is lack of community involvement in the formulation and implementation of bylaws and district ordinances. The study also revealed that the Beach Management Unit (BMU) committee has got a role to play in as far as keeping the beach clean but it is constrained by finances and inadequate communication from the Masaka district administration. The data was analysed under three sub-themes; people's perceptions on waste management; effects of people's attitudes on waste management and lastly; Influence of lifestyles on waste management. The researcher recommends change of attitudes right from the district leaders, community leaders as well as individual community members. Sensitisation of community members, construction of more toilets, involvement of community members in bylaw and policy formulation are also recommended for proper waste management at Namirembe landing site. In conclusion, people's perceptions are stored within individual human beings in the form of beliefs and attitudes which are eventually put into action. Similarly, lifestyles of a particular community are partly explained by the kind of attitudes that people hold. Hence the three variables are vital and can affect waste storage, collection, transportation and final disposal.

Key Words: People's Perceptions, Attitudes, Lifestyles, Waste Management, Masaka District.