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Pattern of use of sachet water and related antecedent factors among Eleyele residents, Ibadan, Nigeria**Rachel Obonose Titus**

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Inadequate potable water supply is a major public health concern which largely accounts for the use of sachet water in Nigeria. Although sachet water consumption is very common in Ibadan, its pattern of use and related antecedent factors have not been sufficiently investigated. This study was therefore designed to assess the patterns of sachet water use, knowledge and perceptions of sachet water among Eleyele residents, Ibadan. A three-stage random sampling technique was used to select 432 male and female heads of households from the 13 communities which constitute Eleyele area. A semi-structured questionnaire which included a 29-point knowledge scale and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were used for data collection. Overall, six FGDs were conducted among heads of households (three each for males and females). Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Chi-square, t-test and ANOVA while the qualitative data were subjected to content analysis. The mean age of respondents was 35.6 ± 10.5 years, 66.0% were females and 44.7% had secondary education. Nearly all (99.8%) had ever taken sachet water, 99.3% were current users with median daily intake of five sachets and a range of 1-20. Educational level, marital status and family size were not significantly associated with current sachet water use. Frequencies of sachet water use by male/female differentiation were as follows: Always (31.9%, 68.1%); occasionally (44.8%, 58.2%) and rarely (28.9%, 71.1%) ($p < 0.05$). Reasons for using sachet water included inadequate potable water supply (60.6%) and ready availability of sachet water (34.7%). Respondents' mean knowledge score was (17.4 ± 3.2) . Mean knowledge scores by educational level were: Non-formal education (19.6 ± 3.0), primary (21.0 ± 0.0), secondary (19.0 ± 3.3) and tertiary education (19.5 ± 3.4) with no significant difference. The mean knowledge scores of the females and males were 14.01 ± 2.6 and 13.5 ± 3.2 , respectively ($p < 0.05$). Few respondents (8.5%) correctly mentioned two months as the expiry duration for sachet water. Some respondents (44.4%) always checked water sachets for printed health-related information recommended by the national agency for food and drug administration and control before use. Reasons given for failure to comply with the recommended practice included familiarity with brand being used (39.4%) and urgent need to quench thirst (7.4%). Most respondents (91.4%) had ever perceived sachet water to be a possible source of ill-health. The belief of 42.1% was that most sachet water products had fake registration numbers. Most (95.5%) had never reported cases of sachet water perceived to be of poor quality to law-enforcement authorities. The view of many FGD participants was that sachet water use was a common practice in their communities. The use of sachet water for drinking, cooking, ablution and entertainment of guests cuts across the groups. Most participants were of the opinion that sachet water was not always safe for drinking. Use of water in sachet for various purposes was common among the respondents. However many of them did not comply with the health information on sachet water labels as advocated by national agency for food and drug administration and control. Public enlightenment programs aimed at promoting safe sachet water use is therefore recommended.

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