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Noise pollution

Noise is from the Latin word Nausea meaning seasickness. Noise is unwanted sound considered unpleasant, loud and disruptive to hearing, noise is anything that interferes with communication. Pollution is the introduction of contaminants into the natural environment that cause adverse change, pollution can take the form of chemical substances or energy such as noise, heat or light. Noise pollution also known as environmental noise or sound pollution, is the propagation of noise with ranging impacts on the activity of human or animal life, most of them harmful to some degree.

The main sources of noise pollution in Nigeria are traffic noise, construction site, parties and night life, noise from religious institutions, electricity generating plants.

- Traffic noise: traffic noise is not only made by vehicles but also by planes. Car horns are not used anymore for their purposes but instead to signal street vendors and as such creating a ruckus.
- Construction sites: the construction of roads and buildings give way to noise pollution bulldozers, loaders and trucks are the sources of noise pollution in construction sites.
- Electricity generating plants: Nigeria's electricity power supply is very poor so people have no choice but to buy this generators or stay in darkness. Most households use generators and as such cause noise pollution to their neighbors and people living around them.
- Parties and night life: Nigerian people like parties a lot where they can just sit down relax, eat, drink, dance and laugh with friends in these parties music is essential and people go as far as hiring high sound systems which generates a lot of noise.
- Noise from religious institutions: in big cities there is a church in almost every street, this is a major constitute of noise, religious worships are held everywhere including residential area, in daytime and through out the night. The noise coming from this religious institutions is of significant level because of the use of heavy public system address and also the intensity of the worshippers coming from inside the church .

EFFECTS OF NOISE POLLUTION

HUMAN BEINGS

- The hearing limit of noise for a human is in the range of 120 - 140dB. Human ears feel fatigue if exposed to over 80dB for more than half an hour. It causes temporary loss of hearing if the loudness of the noise is 100dB. Temporary loss of hearing is a sudden deafness which is reversible; it occurs when the ear is exposed to excessive noise over a short period of time. If the intensity and duration of the noise is high, it leads to permanent loss of hearing.
- Difficulty in sleeping: noise can prevent sleep because of psychological effect. Having noise around can disturb peaceful sleep as it causes stress.
- Reduced cognitive functioning: The ear is connected to the brain which coordinates the body's stimulus; therefore, all the sound waves that hit the ear are sent to the brain for interpretation. This means noise gets to the brain and according to scientific reports, such kind of noise dulls the brain and contributes to a lower response rate of the brain. Due to this, cognitive reasoning reduces and so is the ability to solve problems normally.
- Cardiovascular problems: Noise excites the heart, too much noise means the heart is also disturbed and ends up beating faster; increasing blood pressure. In loud noise, stress hormones such as adrenaline and cortisol are also released.
- Emotional and behavioral changes: Too much means disturbance of sleep which may lead to annoyance and anger. People in this state tend to get constant headaches which may intensify if the noise is continuous.
- Reproduction problems: research has shown that pregnant women who are exposed to noise pollution during the course of their expectancy tend to give birth to children with less body weight.

ANIMALS

- Reduction of feeding habits: some birds and animals like bats, whales and dolphins use their sharp hearing ability known as echolocation for movements, foraging and avoiding prey. There is an increase in migration of animals from their natural habitats to quieter places where they feed comfortably.
- Reproduction problems: Animals use unique voice to know where their mates are and stay away from danger. Birds use lower pitched sounds to attract mates. A noisy environment

would prevent this leading to near extinction of various species of birds and animals as it makes it difficult for them to mate and breed. Without breeding it means there is no new offspring.

- Reduction in production: Noise prevents the productivity of animals both wild and domesticated. Cows produce less milk if there is any noise around them milking. They get agitated and tend to withdraw the milk due to fear and discomfort. Chickens are also affected there is a drastic drop in the production of eggs in the layers in noisy environments.

Emission of smoke into the environment by electricity generating plants has also contributed to ozone layer depletion.

To prevent noise pollution there should be public enlightenment and education on the hazards, health implications and dangers. There are also policies put in place on pollution such as

- The National Environmental Standards and Regulations Enforcement Agency
- National Policy on the Environment and Noise Pollution
- National Environmental Protection
- National Guideline and Standards for Environmental Pollution Control in Nigeria.