

The incessant act of open urination in our community: Is there nothing that can be done to stop this act?

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Abstract

It is a relatively common sight to see men pull down their trousers and underwear and quickly urinate at every and any available place. This is also sometimes done in public and open places, with no regard to decency, not minding who is looking at their indecent exposures. This act could be into stagnant gutters, by road sides, in market squares, in major parks etc. Even women are not left out in this indecent and unhygienic exposure, but are more discreet. This short exposure is to be regarded as a clarion call for the government to build public toilets in strategic places for the populace to use so as to prevent and reduce the irrational open urination that is rampant presently.

Keywords: Open urination; indecent exposure; Poor Town planning; Community

1. Introduction

The act of open defecation and urination is one practice that is very rampant in our society. Most men will confessed that they have had to zip down their trousers and urinate just about anywhere the urge came upon them. These times, they may find themselves in places where there were no facilities nearby to use and they cannot hold the urine back, and must ease themselves. So, they simply zip down, tried as much as was possible not to display their private parts to the public and urinated. As can be expected, there was no water available to wash their hands afterwards, and they walk away and may possibly shake the hands of any friend on their way with the same unwashed hands.

The medical science acknowledges that some helminthic infestations are transmitted through the passage of infected urine into any body or water such an infection person passes out a stage in the development of these parasites which further matures in a vector found in the polluted water. An uninfected person gets infected either by drinking unfiltered water directly or by eating infected sea foods and vegetables or by direct penetration of an advanced stage of the parasitic worm into the foot of a person wading through the water. All of these was made possible by the indiscriminating passage of urine by a person that was harbouring these worms in their urinary tract system. Also, the offensive odour that emanates from all these urinal sports can be overpowering sometimes. Incidentally, nobody notices, nobody complains, we simply tolerate it and move on, after all we may be the next persons urinating publicly .

This offensive odour in combination with environmental smoke from firewood used in our kitchens, from open gas flaring of oil-wells scattered in different places and from the numerous unchecked combustion of cars can be a great source of health hazard to the populace.

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We need to educate our people to stop these acts, and then provide public facilities where people can go to and urinate if need be. And then, with these in place only then can we enact laws and prescribe punishments for offenders if caught.

2. Discussion

It can be extremely alarming and disturbing to any on-looker when you see a well dressed man walking ahead of you, suddenly veer off the side of the road, unzip his trousers, brings out his private part and starts to urinate. Not minding if anyone is looking or not: after all he is answering to the call of nature and there is no provision anywhere nearby to do the needful. It is not a strange sight to see a moving vehicle suddenly pull-over to the side of the road, and both the driver and other occupants, come out and take different positions by the road side to urinate. Some may even go further and defecate in the bushes. Meanwhile other vehicles are speeding past with passenger, looking at these sights, and nobody seems to see anything wrong with all these.

But it is of a concern to urinate publicly because some infective bacteria may be present in such passed out urine. There exist some chances that one can get infected if one had a laceration or abrasion on ones foot and then unknowingly steps on the pool of infection carrying urine [1]. It is illegal to urinate in public as it is regarded as an act of indecent exposure or public lewdness and it may lead to a court conviction and earn an offender a possible registration as a sex offender where such law enactment exists [2, 3].

In the evidence of such a criminal offence, the offender is liable to be charged under the city's ordinance or state law as having constituted a public nuisance and if found guilty is liable to be imprisoned for about six months or even more [3, 4]. But this is where such laws exists, which makes it an offense to urinate or defecate in a public other than public toilet/restroom [3].

To this effect, health officials in Paris, France installed brightly coloured open-air urinals in several places throughout the city to help both to protect the environment from public urinating and the health hazards that may result from the acts [5]. The City's Mayor sarcastically said that if these urinals were not provided, that we may soon see people urinate even on the streets of Paris [5].

Not everyone welcomed this provision, as many residents protested their installation saying that they did not like their citing or locations and that they were too obvious [6, 7].

Despite this and several other attempts to stop the practice, the people continued to mess up the environment with their urine. This led some concerned citizens to suggest the introduction of heavy monetary fines that must be paid on the spot to be enacted. The inability to pay the fine on the spot will lead to jail terms [8].

But in our locality, there are no laws against open urination. Out of general determination by the people, at several places, sign posts saying "DO NOT URINATE HERE" are mounted. They are very legible and loud. But they are not reckoned with nor obeyed since they are not legally bound as men ignore them and urinate even against the sign posts [9].

Since there are no public toilets, the men simply empty their bladders in bushes, by the road side or even at dump sides adding to the already poor health hazard available that exists in such places [10].

All hope is not lost, as even in Lagos, Nigeria, the government reported some individuals for urinating openly on the street [11]. And one other victim was picked up for urinating over a kiosk in Lagos [12].

But the extreme was reported in the USA where a Nigeria man was shot to death by a man who said that he saw him (the victim) urinating on the street. Imagine been killed for doing what every single person does, every single day [12].

Therefore, the government is encouraged to provide public urinal to help prevent this environmental malady from progressing.

3. Conclusion

In conclusion, the incessant act of Open urination is a common occurrence and a public health concern in many developing countries. We therefore call on the Government, Public health officials and those involved in Town planning to do the needful.

Compliance with ethical standards

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Disclosure of conflict of interest

There are no conflicts of interest.

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