

Introduction: This study investigated on knowledge and practices towards protective gear use by bio-medical waste pickers in Juba County.

Objectives: The study was guided by the following objectives: i) to determine the proportion of biomedical waste pickers who are using protective gears in Juba county; ii) to establish the type of protective gears being used by waste pickers in Juba County; iii) to determine the knowledge of waste pickers on the protective gears to be used when handling medical wastes in Juba County. The study used cross-sectional survey design using quantitative approach.

Methods: The study population included a total of 36 bio-medical waste pickers from nine (9) medical facilities in Juba County. Krejcie and Morgan (1970) was used to establish the sample size of 32 respondents. Data was collected using questionnaires and analyzed using graphs, frequency and percentage table.

Results: The study established that the proportion of the biomedical waste pickers not using protective gears was 100%. Similarly, the study also revealed that the most used type of protective gears being used by biomedical waste pickers was medical disposal gloves (75%); 18.8% medical sterile surgical gloves; and 6.3% heavy duty gloves. Furthermore, regarding the knowledge level of waste pickers on the protective gears to be used, use of boots was (59.4%), use of gloves was (37.5%), and use of masks was (3.1%).

Conclusion: The study concluded that the lack of knowledge on the use of protective gears by waste pickers was attributed to the lack of training and negligence on the side of the government to supply bio-medical waste protective gears to health facilities in the region.

Recommendations: The study recommended that the waste pickers should be trained on the use of different types of protective gears and that the government should make protective gears available to all public and private health facilities in Juba County.