

IMPACT OF ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION ON GENDER IN ORU- IJEBU COMMUNITY OF OGUN STATE, NIGERIA.

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Abstract: *The study investigated the impact of environmental degradation on gender in the Oru-Ijebu community of Ogun State. It is descriptive survey research, with a population of 162 respondents drawn from the district. Eighty-nine (89) men and (73) women were used for the study. A self-designed questionnaire titled Gender Involvement in Environmental Sustainability (GIES) was used. The reliability was ensured using the test-retest method. The instrument was administered to 20 respondents that were not part of the sample on two different occasions in two weeks intervals. The study's result showed a significant difference between the involvement of men and women in environmental damage and that men contribute more to environmental damages in the area than women. There was also a significant difference between the impacts of environmental degradation on women and men in the community. Women felt the impacts of the ecological damage more than men in the area of health hazards caused by air pollution. The study also revealed a significant difference between men and women in their involvement in environmental sustainability practice. The study concluded that men and women need to be oriented to sustain their environment. The researcher advised the government to monitor laws enforced on environmental education in schools, and some recommendations are listed in the body of the paper.*

Keywords: Impacts, Gender, Environmental Degradation, Value Education, Sustainable Development.

INTRODUCTION

Environmental degradation is one of the significant challenges in Nigeria. The reason is that people are involved in air, water, and land pollution. This work aims to examine the impacts of environmental degradation on the people and the contributions of individuals to sustaining the environment. The National Policy on Education for environmental sustainability integrates the conservation of natural resources, which is vital to ecological sustainability, according to Fayemi (2017). Research also revealed manifestations of Nigeria's environmental problems, including erosion, sheet, gully, coastal, marine and

urban, drought and deforestation, oil pollution, saunter settlement, industrial pollution and waste, all of which have caused problems to various social institutions in the country. Jubril (2016) cited that desertification, soil erosion, flooding and pollution are the causes of these environmental problems, which have been well documented to show that they are highly traceable to human activities and interactions. Adesanya (2014) opined that bad agricultural practices, e.g. bush burning and depletion of young forests, bad mining practices, and unsystematically dumping of local and industrial waste, also contributed to environmental problems. Despite the

introduction of environmental education in the curriculum, the problem of making the environment habitable for human existence is a significant problem in society, especially in the Oru Ijebu community of Ogun State, Nigeria. Men and Women are faced with environmental issues as a result of concerns of pollution, indiscriminate disposal of refuse, felling of trees that could prevent the environment from solid wind, public health issues, lack of clean water and a lot of environmental problems which make the environment unsafe for men and women to dwell.

Kinda (2013) defined environmental damage as the deterioration of the environment through depletion of resources such as air, water and soil, the destruction of the ecosystems and the extinction of wildlife. Okunola (2014) stressed that environmental degradation is any change or disturbance to the environment perceived to be undesirable. Ogboru (2015) cited that ecological degradation occurs when the earth's natural resources are depleted, and the atmosphere is compromised by the extinction of species, pollution in the air and water and rapid population growth.

According to Sarrat (2004), Sustainability is meeting the present generation's needs without compromising the future generation's ability to meet their demands. Coker (2015) argued that sustainability could be defined as development without growth through regenerative capacity, while Kinda (2013) asserted that sustainability includes values attached to peoples' social, economic, religious, and political environment. Nigeria has witnessed degradation in the background due to value deprivation, which consists, among others, of the ground contamination of the domain. Therefore value education is essential for an individual to become more responsible and sensible in handling the environment.

Gender is a significant factor in the construction of social vulnerability concerning the risk of natural disasters and the differential impact of developing an adequate response to hazards and disasters. gender refers to socially defined and learned male and female behaviour that shapes the opportunities someone is offered in life, the roles one may play and the kind of relationships that one has.

John (2012) stressed that gender is different from sex, a biologically determined and fixed set of characteristics that differentiate men and women.

Akanle (2020) posited that gender affects masculine and feminine qualities in the following ways: Roles, Status and values, Responsibilities and Expectations, Sexuality and Distribution of responsibilities and rewards. Babatunde (2021) observed that inequality between men and women is created and reinforced by gender roles which have made women vulnerable to diseases. Many people use gender interchangeably, and sociologists believe there is a significant difference in their meanings, according to Collins (2010). Gender is defined as culturally and socially constructed differences between males and females based on a man's beliefs and practices that a group or society associates with femininity or masculinity. Gender is defined by Joint United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS. (UNAIDS, 2016) in two ways; firstly, as a biological and behavioural science examined as a personal attribute, the focus is on how differences between males and females explain the gap in their performance levels. Secondly, when gender is defined in socio-cultural sciences, it is viewed as a social issue. The focus is on analysing how plays, games, and sports have been socially constructed to produce and legitimise male hegemony. According to the report, gender as an issue of sex differences explains the gaps in performance capabilities. It, therefore, focussed on the problem of resource allocation and the distribution of opportunities as issues of gender inequality. Coker (2015) opined that gender roles dictate how men and women differ since gender is a social construct, and the difference between men and women varies from place to place. Aina (2015) observed that inequality between men and women is created and reinforced by gender roles which have made women vulnerable to diseases. In conclusion, gender defines the roles played by men and women, boys and girls, which must be involved in developing practical responsibilities in any society.

Purpose of the Study

The study examined the impacts of environmental degradation on gender in the Oru – Ijebu community of Ogun State. The

study also examined the involvement of gender and the ecological damage to the people.

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested in the study.

H₀₁: There is no significant difference between men and women in their involvement in environmental damage in Oru-Ijebu Community.

H₀₂: There is no significant difference between the impact of environmental degradation on men and women in the Oru-Ijebu community.

H₀₃: There is no significant difference between the roles played by men and women in environmental sustainability in Oru-Ijebu Community.

METHODOLOGY

Descriptive survey research was used for the study. The population consisted of one hundred and sixty-two (162) respondents (89 males and 73 females) drawn from men and women from the Oru-Ijebu community.

through a random sampling technique. The sample selection was drawn through random sampling from the target population. The instrument for the study was a self-constructed questionnaire titled community involvement in environmental sustainability (CIES). The face and content validity were ensured by an expert in Test and Measurement, while the instrument's liability was confirmed by using the test-retest method. It was administered to twenty (20) respondents that were not part of the study population. The collected data were coded and prepared for data analysis using a statistical package for social sciences (SPSS).

Data analysis

The data collected were analysed using t-test statistics. The hypotheses were tested at 0.05 significant levels.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Hypothesis I: There is no significant difference between the involvement of men and women in environmental damage in the Oru-Ijebu Community.

Table 1: T-test analysis of men's and women's contribution to environmental damage

Variable	N	X	Sd	Std Error meals	T	Df	Sig
Ed (male)	89	27.67	4.81	0.38	7.077	322	0.000
Ed (female)	73	23.98	4.56	0.36			

The result from table 1 showed that 89 men contributed 27.67 per cent to environmental damages, while the standard deviation of 4.81 per cent was recorded. The 73 female participants recorded a Mean of 23.98 and a standard deviation of 4.56. The table showed that a 0.05 level of significance with 322 degrees of freedom, t - value, calculated is 7.077, which is significant at 0.000 alpha. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected,

which means there is a considerable difference between men's and women's involvement in environmental damage in the Oru-Ijebu community.

Hypothesis II: There is no significant difference between the impact of environmental degradation on men and women in the Oru-Ijebu Community.

Table 2: T-test analysis on Impacts of environmental degradation on men and women in Oru Ijebu Community of Ogun State.

Variable	N	X	Sd	Std Error Meals	T	Df	Sig
Male	89	29.34	5.22	0.41	0.654	322	0.513
Female	73	29.76	6.28	0.49			

Table 2 revealed that 89 males felt the impact of environmental degradation with a mean of 29.34 and a standard deviation of 5.22, the t-value calculated was 0.654 at a 0.05 significance level. The table also showed 73 females with a mean of 29.76 and a standard deviation of 6.28, t-value calculated of 0.654 at a 0.05 level of significance. This implies that the female participant slightly felt more impact of environmental damage than their male counterpart. Hypothesis 2 is therefore rejected, which means there is a significant difference between the impact of ecological

damage between the males and the females in the environment. This result is in line with the finding of Fayemi (2017) and Babarinde (2018), who agreed that females experience more hardship than their male counterparts in environmental issues. Furthermore, the results negate the finding of Adesaya (2014), who found out that men suffer more than women during pollution.

Hypothesis III: There is no significant difference between men and women in ensuring environmental sustainability practice

Table 3: T-test analysis of men and women in their ensuring ecological sustainability practices

variable	N	X	Sd	Std Error Meals	T	Df	Sig
Male	89	29.43	5.79	0.46	5.082	322	0.000
Female	73	26.12	5.93	0.47			

Table 3 above shows that 89 men with a mean score of 29.43, a standard deviation of 5.79, t-value calculated is 5.082, which 322 degrees of freedom at a 0.05 level of significance showed men's willingness to ensure environmental sustainability in Oru Ijebu Community. The men and women shown above showed a significant difference at p (0.000). The null hypothesis is therefore rejected, implying a substantial difference between the roles played by men and women in ensuring environmental sustainability.

The findings of this work showed different results of men's and women's views on environmental damage, impacts and

sustainability of ecological degradation in the Oru-Ijebu community. The result of hypothesis one (H_{01}) showed a significant difference, which made the null hypothesis to be rejected; this implies that men often contribute to environmental damage more than women by farming and burning bushes. The result also showed that the problem of environmental damage in the community is caused by how people manage their environment. The result of hypothesis 1 indicated that men more to ecological damage in the community, as seen in table 1 that 89 men contributed 27.67 per cent to environmental damage. At the same time, 73 females recorded a mean of 23.98

cents to ecological damages in the area. This implies that both men and women contributed significantly to environmental damages in the area. This agrees with Jokes (2012) and Carolline &Toba (2015), who decided that men are more involved in ecological damage than women because of the nature of their work. The findings negate the results of Dokun (2015) and Jubril (2016), who, in their different studies, agreed that women contribute more to environmental damage than me. Hypothesis two (H_{02}) was rejected at 322 degrees of freedom at a 0.05 level of significance, showing men's willingness to ensure environmental sustainability in the community. The result also showed that 73 females recorded a mean score of 26.12, a standard deviation of 5.93, and a t-value of 5.082 with 322 degrees of freedom at a 0.05 level. The result also shows that both men and women showed interest in ensuring environmental sustainability practices, with a man showing more interest in providing the environment is well sustained. These findings may be since men are primarily involved in ensuring environmental sustainability by curbing erosion, raising ecological awareness and enforcing environmental sanitation. Another reason for the conclusion may arise from the fact that the environment was handed over to men from creation, as seen in the book of Genesis 1 in the holy bible. This is supported by Nneji (2013), who asserted that men authorities believe they must maintain the ecological balance of the world.

CONCLUSIONS

This study showed that men are more involved in environmental damage than women because men are more engaged in burning bushes, cutting trees, using chemicals to kill fish, digging the ground and polluting the air with smoke. On the other hand, women felt the impact more than men because health hazard caused by air pollution has a significant effect on women; the physical condition of women is easily noticed during an environmental disaster, and they are also more prone to death due to environmental pollution.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusion, it is recommended that men and women in Oru-Ijebu Community need to be oriented on how to sustain their environment.

2 Local Government should organise workshops and seminars for all people in the area. This should include formal, informal and non-formal institutions.

3 The study result could be helpful to curriculum developers as a basis for developing additional information on how the environment can be sustained.

4 Public enlightenment campaigns should be organised for men and women to improve their belief system on environmental sustainability and ensure the effectiveness of value teaching on the environment.

5 The study findings could also be helpful to all stakeholders and other researchers for further studies.

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