

## **Environmental Adult Education Programmes as Strategies for Combating the Effects of Illicit Oil Activities in Selected Local Government Areas of Rivers State, Nigeria**

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### **Abstract**

This study investigated environmental adult education programmes as strategies for combating the effects of illicit oil activities in selected LGAs in Rivers State, Nigeria. The population of the study comprised 2,592 members of community based organisations in the study area. While the sample was 1151 respondents selected through purposive and random sampling techniques. Data were analysed through mean, standard deviation and rank order. Findings revealed that the causes of illicit oil activities in the study area were greed, ignorance, high rate of unemployment, and poverty, the quest to get rich quick and so on; that environmental adult education programmes such as conservative education, environmental literacy, climate change education programmes and so on, were effective strategies for combating illicit oil activities in the study area. The study concluded that it is imperative to vigorously pursue environmental adult education programmes as viable tool in addressing the challenges of illicit oil activities in the study area. The study recommended that the government should adequately fund environmental adult education programmes to increase people's knowledge on the dangers of illicit oil activities.

**Key Words:** Environmental Adult Education (EAE), Illicit, Oil, Pollution, Programmes, Strategies.

### **Introduction**

Nigeria is richly blessed in both human and natural resources with a vast arable hinterland suitable for variety of large-scale agricultural production and solid mineral kept in commercial quantities in different parts of the country. The richness of Nigerian human and natural resources are further complemented with huge crude oil (that is, black gold) and other gas reserves, conservatively estimated to last into the next century. The discovery of oil in commercial quantities in the early 50s resulted in a shift in the country's interest from agricultural activities to the oil exporting business (Ekpo and Umoh, 2014). However, due to crumbling infrastructure, persistent civil strife in the oil sector, illicit oil activities and corruption, oil production and export is operating below installed capacity.

Illicit oil activities are the unlawful appropriation of crude or refined oil products obtained from vandalized pipelines of multinational oil firms in Nigeria. Over the years, illegal oil bunkering, including vandalisation of crude and refined oil pipeline, oil theft, fuel scoping and illegal crude refining, have continued to be a clog in the wheel of growth of the economy with immense economic losses, adverse health problems associated with environmental pollution and degradation in oil producing communities. These illicit operations had continued to grow as result of the pragmatic co-operation between security outfits, the local community members, militia organizations, and some oil firm employees who have devise a variety of methods to steal oil from the multinational oil firms that are stationed within the country.

Illicit oil activities have for long become a menace to the economic development and environmental management of our country, especially in Rivers state. Hence, these activities in Rivers state pose a big challenge that threatens the foundation of the oil industry, the environment, the health of the people as well as the Nigerian economy (Garuba, 2012). The government of Rivers State have tried to combat these activities in so many ways, for example, seven illegal refining sites located in the creeks of B-Dere community in Gokana Local Government Area, and six in Bolo creeks in Ogu/Bolo Local Government Area in Rivers State were all set ablaze by the joint task force and these posed a major challenge and a very big threat to the Nigerian economy as well as human life and the environment.

Asuni (2009) identified the main players involved in these illicit businesses at its various levels: -He asserted that “at the local level, Rivers youth and community leaders play the leading role. As one moves up the network to the senior echelons, members of the Nigerian military, oil companies? employees, top politicians and retired military officers predominate the trade. The communities themselves are complicit in the trade as it provided employment for them”. Observably, one would have thought that with Amnesty and the Federal Government's efforts to integrate Rivers youths into the main stream of economic activities, education and human capacity development, the incidence of illicit oil activities in the area will reduce. Unfortunately, illicit oil activities and other spate of insecurity did not only continue but became more pronounced after then. Thus oil bunkering in the Niger Delta region is one of the perennial problems of Nigeria, which has grown in leaps and bounds.

In Rivers State the effects of these illicit oil activities are being felt every day in many homes. This is because most of the gases emitted from illegal refineries are harmful to humans and the environment, and can cause permanent damage and even death. The effects are so devastating and if not curbed could be detrimental to the future generation, this therefore calls for an urgent need to curb the menace of illicit oil activities, environmentalist identified education especially environmental adult education as one of the ways to positively respond to the problems of illicit oil activities and its effects. This is where and why environmental adult education comes to the fore.

Mbalisi (2013) defined environmental adult education as a process in which adult individuals gain awareness of their environment and acquire knowledge, values, skills, experience and determination which enables them to act individually and collectively to solve present and future environmental problems, as well as meet their needs without compromising the possibility of future generations to meet their own needs with the same environmental resources.

Environmental adult education adopts a non-formal approach to solve environmental issues and challenges so that people can be sensitive to their environment through periodic workshops,

seminars, environmental outreach programmes and so on. It is against this background and the capacity of environmental adult education to deal with environmental issues and challenges. This study investigates the environmental adult education programmes capable of combating the effects of illicit oil activities in Rivers State, Nigeria.

### **Aim and Objectives**

This study examined environmental adult education programmes as viable strategies for combating the effects of illicit oil activities in Rivers State. The following specific objectives were guided by the study:

1. To find out the causes of illicit oil activities in the study area.
2. To identify the type of environmental adult education programmes that could be mounted to curb illicit oil activities in Rivers State.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What are the causes of illicit oil activities in Rivers State?
2. What are the environmental adult education programmes that could be mounted to curb illicit oil activities in Rivers State?

### **Literature Review: Concept of Environment Adult Education (EAE)**

Environmental adult education is not a new concept; its emergence could be traced back to the mid-1970s when it was first recognised as a distinct field of study/practice (Eheazu, 2016). Environmental adult education is recognised as a 'hybrid outgrowth of the environmental movement and adult education, combining an ecological orientation with a learning paradigm to provide a vigorous educational approach to environmental concerns (Sumner 2003). In layman's terms, environmental adult education refers to efforts in teaching environmental issues and how individuals and businesses can manage or change their lifestyles and their ecosystems in order to achieve sustainable existence.

According to Leona (2016), the overarching goal of this field of study is to educate global citizens in order for them to gain sustainable lives within their respective societies. The content could

also include ecological justice, integrating social concerns such as poverty, race, gender and sexual orientation among others. EAE is aimed at spreading knowledge about the environment and its related issues. The EAE movement came to light when environmental educators paired environmental education with adult education in order to reach the adult audience and to facilitate broader and more genuine change.

The African Association for Literacy and Adult Education (AALAE), as cited in Eheazu (2013), conceptualised EAE to mean the process of generating the means and creating the mechanism, for developing environmental literacy among various groups in Africa, with special emphasis on grassroots communities to acquire basic knowledge, understanding of human environment and its associated problems, skills to initiate elementary solutions to local environmental problems, motivation and commitment to the pursuit of environmental quality as a condition for ensuring quality of life.

Mbalisi (2016) defined EAE as the application of the theories, principles, programmes, methodologies and resources (material and human) of adult education in enlightening adults about the environment and its associated resources with the conscious intention of developing in them knowledge, attitudes and skills required to generate a sense of responsibility and commitment towards solving of some of the present environmental problems and the prevention of future ones. Oduro-Mensah, cited in Mbalisi, (2013), outlined some objectives of EAE as the follows, to:

- i. Develop knowledge and understanding of the environment, the forces that contribute to its deterioration and how environmental quality could be improved.
- ii. Develop skills for solving environmental problems and improving environmental quality.
- iii. Develop aesthetic values that will encourage a culture of environmental beautification and maintenance.
- iv. Plan appropriate action programme and mobilize citizens to activity participate in the protection and restoration of the quality of our environment.
- v. Promote among adults the practice and sustainable development to ensure a continuity of resource base.

### **Environmental Adult Education Programmes for Combating Illicit Oil Activities**

Environmental adult education programmes are those adult education programmes that are developed for adult learners for their development and participation in social practices that is likely to change the way they think about and act upon the environment Okorie (2016). These programmes are designed to solve a particular environmental problem. The environmental problem in this study is the negative impacts of illicit oil activities. The environmental adult education programmes examined in this study include the following:

- i. Conservation Education Programme:** conservation simply means the preservation and careful management of the environment and of natural resources. According to Okorie (2016), conservative education programmes are education programmes designed for adult members of a community to educate them on how to identify natural resources in their environment, and how they can harness these resources for today's use without jeopardizing the future use of the resources. Therefore, Conservation Education Programme has to do with facilitating the adults on how best to preserve, use and manage the environment and natural resources within their localities. These target group need to know how to conserve local resources such as the crude oil amongst others.
- ii. Environmental Literacy Programme:** Environmental literacy simply is the process whereby people are exposed to understand issues in their environment in order to develop skills for solving the problems. Roth (1992) described environmental literacy as a set of understanding skills, attitudes and habits of mind that compels individual to relate with their environment in a positive fashion and to take day-to-day and long-term actions to maintain or restore sustainable relationship with other people and the biosphere.
- iii. Climate Change Education:** Climate change refers to a change in the state of the climate that can be identified by changes in the average and or the variability of its properties such as temperature and precipitations and that persist for an

extended period (Flint in Okorie, 2016). Adults need education on how to prevent them from those activities that will promote the rising of temperature like illegal refinery, droughts and desertification heavy precipitation, flooding and rising sea levels. Moyinlowa, in Okorie (2016), contends that we must educate the populace properly about climate change so that they are able to take actions that are needed to prevent climate change.

- iv. Pollution Management Education Programme:** Pollution management education programme is a programme that is designed to teach adult residents on the control of emission and effluents into the air, water and soil. It is an educational programme that teaches adult on the practices that reduces, eliminates or prevents pollution from its sources. Pollution management education programmes help reduce both financial costs (waste management and cleanup) and environmental cost (health problems and environmental damages). This programme sensitizes adult on how to protect the environment by conserving and protecting natural resources while strengthening economic growth through efficient production in industries and less need for households, business and communities to handle waste and spillages.
- v. Poverty Alleviation Programme:** The high rate of poverty in Nigeria contributes in one way or the other to environmental degradation. According to Bakare, in Okorie (2016), poverty remains the root cause of most environmental degradation, along with lack of adequate information. There exists relationship between poverty and environmental issues, the poor are forced to address short term needs even if their actions contribute long term depletion and degradation of the environmental resources. Poverty and illiteracy are causes as well as consequences of illicit oil activities.

### Research Methodology

The study adopted descriptive survey method. The population of the study comprised 2,592 members of community-based organisations

who are directly involved and affected by illicit oil activities in the three Local Government Areas of Rivers State. This study was carried out in three Local Government Areas, Degema, Gokana and Ogu/Bolo of Rivers State. A sample of 1,151 respondents was used for the study. The instrument was validated, and the coefficient index of 0.81 was obtained and this was considered reliable for the study. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics of mean, standard deviation and rank order was used in testing the reliability of the instrument.

### Results

Research question 1: What are the causes of illicit oil activities in Rivers State?

Table 1: The causes of illicit oil activities in Rivers State

S/N	Items	Gokana (N=297)		Degema (N=586)		Ogu-Bolo (N=268)		Grand Mean ( $\bar{x}$ )	Decision
		$\bar{x}$	SD	$\bar{x}$	SD	$\bar{x}$	SD		
1	Most people go into illicit oil activities because of greed.	3.20	.79	3.06	.77	3.04	.83	3.10	Agree
2	Ignorance of the impacts of these activities on man and his environment.	3.19	.65	3.19	.69	3.14	.78	3.17	Agree
3	The high rate of unemployment and poverty is yet another cause of illicit oil activities in Rivers state	3.52	.74	3.49	.71	3.48	.85	3.50	Agree
4	The quest to get rich quick is a reason for involving in illegal bunkering.	3.27	.80	3.22	.85	3.21	.90	3.23	Agree
5	Neglect of the state by government and multinational companies operating in the state is one of the reasons for illicit oil activities.	3.26	.75	3.30	.71	3.19	.89	3.25	Agree

Table 1 above shows the mean response of the causes of illicit oil activities in the study. Responses to all the items were accepted because they are above the criterion mean of 2.5. This indicates that the causes of illicit oil activities are high rate of unemployment and poverty, greed, ignorance of the impacts of these activities, the quest to get rich quick and negligence of the host communities by government and multinational companies operating in the state among others are the major causes of illicit oil activities in Rivers State.

Research question 2: What are the environmental adult education programmes that could be mounted to curb illicit oil activities in Rivers State?

Table 2: The environmental adult education programmes mounted to curb illicit oil activities in Rivers State

S/N	Items	Gokana (N=297)		Degema (N=586)		Ogu-Bolo (N=268)		Grand Mean ( $\bar{x}$ )	Decision
		$\bar{x}$	SD	$\bar{x}$	SD	$\bar{x}$	SD		
1	Conservative education programme is designed to curb illicit oil activities in the state.	3.33	.71	3.42	.70	3.40	.85	3.38	Agree
2	Environmental literacy programme is required to educate residents in the study on how to curb illicit oil activities.	3.35	.77	3.42	.72	3.30	.93	3.36	Agree
3	Climate change education programme is required to curb illicit oil activities in Rivers state.	3.28	.85	3.41	.71	3.28	.92	3.32	Agree
4	Pollution management education programmes is designed to sensitize people on how to preserve their national resources.	3.29	.82	3.42	.72	3.26	.94	3.32	Agree
5	Poverty alleviation programme which discourages adult on illegal oil activities should be encouraged.	3.15	.81	3.18	.82	3.21	.90	3.18	Agree

Table 2 above for research question two shows the mean response of environmental adult education programmes mounted to curb illicit oil activities in Rivers State. Responses to all the items were accepted because they were above the criterion mean of 2.5. Item 2 with the highest mean score of 3.8 should be highly encouraged because it shows that Conservative education teaches people how to preserve their natural resources. While other programmes like Environmental literacy, Climate change education, Pollution management education and Poverty alleviation programmes are also relevant in combating illicit oil activities.

## Discussion of Findings

The results showed that greed, ignorance, high rate of unemployment, and poverty, the quest to get rich quick as well as negligence of the state by government and multinational companies operating in the state among others are the major causes of illicit oil activities in the study. The findings in this study is in agreement with reports from previous studies (*Adegbite, 2013; Igbuku, 2014; Boris 2015; Adishi, & Hunga, 2017; Bodo & David, 2018; Bodo, 2019; Bodo, Gimah, & Seomoni, 2020*). Bodo et al. (2020) reported that ignorance, high rate of unemployment, and poverty, marginalisation and neglect, and weak institutional structure are the major causes of illicit oil activities in the Niger Delta.

The difference between the oil producing states and non-oil producing can be seen in the level of developments in Abuja and Lagos, where the oil of the Niger Delta region has been allegedly used to develop these cities, whereas the region where oil is being explored is neglected, and its wealth transferred to cities of Lagos and Abuja. Bodo and David succinctly submitted that villages in the Niger Delta region where oil exploration takes place are equally where one will find some of the poorest people on earth, as their means of survival has been taken from them, with the destruction of their farmlands and the rivers where their income comes from.

The findings also agreed with Adegbite (2013) when he submitted that there are many other causes why people engage in illicit oil activities. Though the reasons vary from one individual to another, however, the cause could be from the mundane to the absurd. These include greed, poverty, lack of gainful employment, quest to get rich syndrome, lack of respect for national economic survival, ignorance, and weak institutional structure to checkmate criminals just to mention a few (*Adegbite, 2013; Boris 2015; Adishi, & Hunga, 2017*). Igbuku (2014) identified some of the underlying reasons to include poverty, corruption, unemployment, community-industry expectation mismatch, poor governance and ineffective law enforcement.

Igbuku (2014) further added that high unemployment rate has created a huge population of idle people who are easily lured to oil related crimes. Thus, there is no doubt that some people engage in illicit oil activities in their quest to get rich and majority of the people in Rivers State who are engaged in illicit oil activities are engaged in it because of unemployment and poverty. The findings from the results in the study have reiterated the opinions of many individuals who have attributed the illicit oil activities to government inability to provide jobs. The implication of our findings send a strong message to government to provide jobs for millions of unemployed graduates, and establish strong institutions, especially adult education as a means of alleviating rural poverty and as a way to reduce or mitigate the problems of illicit oil activities in the study area.

Findings on research question two, which examined the environmental adult education programmes designed for curbing illicit oil activities in the three LGAs in Rivers State, clearly indicated that conservative education, environmental literacy, climate change education, pollution management education and poverty alleviation programmes are the major environmental adult education programmes designed for curbing illicit oil activities in Rivers State. The finding is in agreement with reports from previous studies (Okorie, 2016; Eheazu, 2017; Gimah & Bodo, 2019; Bodo, & Gimah, 2019).

Gimah and Bodo (2019) observed that environmental adult education enhances people's level of awareness on environmental related issues. The authors added that environmental adult education, programmes are designed to sensitise individuals on both public issues and policy making. Several environmental education programmes have been developed as tools to combat environmental challenges including problems associated with illicit oil refining (Okorie, 2016; Eheazu, 2017; Bodo, & Gimah, 2019; Essien, 2019). Eheazu (2017) succinctly submitted that environmental adult education programmes occupy an indispensable place and as such the role of environmental adult education proponents is to transform learning into action by using the programmes in addressing the root causes of environmental related challenges and proffer solutions.

The implication of the findings in this study is a clear indication that environmental adult education programmes can help foster environmental laws and policies, help the people from oil producing communities to understand the imminent dangers of operating illicit oil activities and embolden people from these areas to act in an environmentally friendly ways, and because environmental adult education is centred on improving quality of the environment through the efforts of environmental programmes (which is propagated by individuals, groups, and society), it is pertinent that the government lay emphasis on the promotion of environmental adult education programmes for environmental sustainability.

### **Conclusion**

This research study explored environmental adult education programmes as strategies for combating the effects of illicit oil activities in selected LGAs in Rivers State. The identified causes of illicit oil activities in the study were greed, ignorance, high rate of unemployment, and poverty, the quest to get rich quick as well as lack of corporate social responsibility and negligence of the government and multinational oil firms operating in the study areas. Further results indicate that environmental adult education programmes such as conservative education, environmental literacy, climate change education, pollution management education and **poverty** alleviation programmes were identified as viable tools for curbing illicit oil activities in the state. Based on these findings, the study has shown that environmental adult education is integral to addressing environmental challenges presented by illicit oil activities. Thus, it is imperative to vigorously pursue environmental adult education programmes as viable tool in addressing the challenges of illicit oil activities in the study area.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study it is imperative to make the following recommendations:

1. Government should address the foundation of illegal bunkering by attacking rural poverty and unemployment through the establishment of modular refineries in oil

producing communities of Rivers State to create job opportunities targeted at the youth who must be made to come out of the creeks.

2. Government and multinational companies should provide funding and empowerment programmes such as skills acquisition for the people in the study area, to get community members gainfully employed, thereby shunning illicit oil practices.
3. Multinational oil companies operating in host communities should be made to carry out developmental projects in these communities to compensate them and also by getting community members involved in decision making concerning the natural resources derived from these communities. These can be done by getting them involved in keeping surveillance over pipelines and fuel stations.

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### **School Indices as Correlates of Pupils' Motivation towards Learning in Junior Secondary Schools in Lagos State, Nigeria**

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#### **Abstract**

Pupils' motivation is usually caused by several factors of which school indices could play a major role. Hence this study investigated school indices (class size and school types) as correlates of pupils' motivation towards learning in junior secondary schools in Lagos State. Descriptive survey research design was adopted. This design is considered suitable because it allows the researcher to examine the relationship amongst the variables. Two hypotheses were raised. Study population consisted of all junior secondary school teachers (30,735) and students (337,724) in Lagos State. Simple random sampling technique was used to select 941 teachers and 1261 pupils. Two self-constructed questionnaires titled "School Indices Questionnaire (SIQ)" and Pupils' Motivation towards learning Questionnaire (SMQ)" were used to collect data for the study. Cronbach's Alpha gave reliability coefficient values of 0.89 and 0.81 respectively. Hypotheses were tested with Multiple Regression. There was a joint significant influence on pupils' motivation towards learning in junior secondary schools in Lagos state ( $F_{(4, 936)} = 6.397, P < 0.05$ ). From relative perspective, class size ( $\beta = 0.078, t = 2.397, p < 0.05$ ) and school type ( $\beta = -0.132, t = -4.093, p < 0.05$ ) significantly influenced pupils' motivation towards learning in junior secondary schools in Lagos state. Findings of the study revealed frequent (good)