

WOMEN, ENVIRONMENT DEGRADATION AND FOOD SECURITY: THE CASE OF OLOIBIRI COMMUNITY OF BAYELSA STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

Environmental degradation as a consequence of natural resources exploitation in oil rich communities has been well documented in the literature. This study makes a significant contribution to this body of knowledge by investigating how environmental degradation impacts on the ability of women to confront the challenge of food security in an oil producing community in Nigeria. With the use of extensive field survey in Oloibiri, an oil producing community of Niger delta region in Nigeria, this paper uses three basic criteria, availability, accessibility and utilization to quantitatively investigate how women cope with challenges of food security. This study finds that environmental degradation impacts negatively on food availability and utilization. However, there is no established effect on food accessibility. On the other hand, education of women has no relationship with food security in Oloibiri, whereas income does, while employment and social status of women affect food availability than its utilization. Government should therefore empower the women such that their level of income can be enhanced in order to attain food security in Oloibiri community.

Keynotes: Women, Environment Degradation, Food Security.