# Participation of Enclave Dwellers in Non-Governmental Organization Activities in Omo-Forest, Ogun State

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**Abstract**

*This study assessed the level of participation of enclave dwellers in Non-Governmental Organizations' conservation practices in Omo-forest , Ogun state. Multi stage sampling method was used to select respondents for this study. The study site was stratified into three blocks considering the nearness of enclaves to each others. Fifty percent of enclaves in each stratum were purposefully selected based on the activities of the NGOs. Twenty respondents were randomly selected in each of these eight enclaves. which includes: Abeku1, Abeku2, Tamitami, Eseke,Sojukodoro, J4 area, Osoko and Etemi. The total of 150 respondents was sampled. Data was collected using interview schedule while descriptive and inferential statistics were used for data analysis. Results indicate that average age of the respondents was 33±8.69 years. Majorities (75.3%) of the respondents were male, married (86.0%) had no formal education (48.7%) and were engaged in farming (63.1%). Findings from the study further show that 88.0% and 85.3% of the respondents benefited from conservation education and environmental education respectively. Less than half (46.7%) of the respondents indicated high level of participation in the activities of the NGOs. Significant relationship existed between educational qualification ($\chi^2 = 4.643$, $p \leq 0.05$), benefit derived from NGOs activities ($r = 0.238$, $p \leq 0.05$), constraints faced by respondents ($r = -0.276$, $p \leq 0.05$) and participation in NGOs conservation activities.. Though, participation of enclaves dwellers is relatively fair however, the constraint facing respondents in participating in NGOs activities is technicality, therefore NGOs should intensify efforts in educating them on conservation practices.*

**Key words:***Enclave dwellers, Non- Governmental Organization, Conservation practices*.

## INTRODUCTION

In the past, some communities conserved forest within their settlement purposely for hunting expeditions while others establish sacred grooves for the worship of their traditional deities. In other cases, individual plant or animals species valued for a particular purpose such as medicine, shade or food were preserved through taboos (Aminu and Marguba 2002). However, with the increasing population, the pressure on natural resources has grown so high and these has led to the establishment of national parks, game reserve, forest reserve and wildlife sanctuaries. A substantial loss of species diversity (intra and infra-specific) is due to habitat destruction resulting from land clearance for various uses. Forest exploitation and vegetation clearance are the major causes of natural gene-pool loss as is occurring in many species including i*rvingia gobanensis* and *I. Wombulu* in the rainforest and Niger Delta. Most species that were originally diverse in Nigeria are becoming rare (David, et al.,2013). Natural and man-made threats, socio-cultural problems as well as direct and indirect consequences of socio-economic development have contributed to the erosion of biodiversity at all levels. Within the last 25 years, it is believed that about 43% of the forest ecosystem has been lost through human activities.

Nigeria with a population of over 140 million people constitutes nearly a quarter of the total population of sub-Saharan Africa. A population growth rate of more than 3% and increasing poverty (especially in rural areas) has put severe

demand on the country's natural resources, the institutional structures and the resources available to manage them. There has been a general institutional weakness and lack of technical capacity to effectively tackle the nation's environmental issues, including threat to biological diversity (FEPA 2010).

Indiscriminate hunting of wildlife for food to compliment subsistence farming and bush burning leads to loss of biodiversity and also depletes the ecosystem by causing death of wildlife; destruction of eggs and plant species, while illegal grazing of livestock in game reserves constitutes a threat to wildlife itself. Available evidence shows that biodiversity is being lost at a disturbing rate in Nigeria. The causes of biodiversity loss are largely related to human factors. These are due to interaction with the environment for development, improved quality of life resulting from industrialization, technological advancement and rapid growth in urbanization. The indirect causes of biodiversity loss in Nigeria include economic policies, rising demand for forest products, cultural practices, poor law enforcement and weak laws. Factors such as rapid urbanization, increasing human population and trade in forest products have collectively increased the demands for forest products. For example, increased export demands for primates and birds for research and trade in timber and non-timber species are indirect causes of biodiversity loss in various parts of the country. Low budgetary allocation to the forestry sub-sector has curtailed national efforts to reforest large areas that have been deforested. Consequently, the allowable timber cuts are not replaced hence sustained yield of the forests cannot be attained. Continued timber cut without replacement indirectly leads to biodiversity loss. Cultural practices that encourage the use of specific species for festivals often limit the population of species particularly occurring under narrow ecological range. Moreover, most of the laws that control the management of several species are outdated, and their enforcement is inadequate. This in turn leads to overexploitation of resources and subsequent loss of biodiversity. Awareness needs to be raised towards protection of the ecosystem considering its implication on man and the environment. Odun and Odun (1999) reported that the state government and federal government have been managing the resources for the people which have led to little or no result. This brought about the involvement of Non-governmental organizations to serve as a bridge between the government and the people so as to sensitize the people on ways to conserve the environment and the benefits of conservation. The NGOs present in the study site are Nigerian Conservation Foundation (NCF) and Pro-natural International (PNI). The aim of NGOs present in the study site are to conserve these resources by raising conservation awareness among inhabitant of the sites generally and also focus on improving the enclave dwellers' livelihood such that attention will be shifted from illegal exploitation of these resources. The activities of these NGOs re aimed at improving conservation practices of enclave dwellers. These NGOs achieve their aim through different activities which includes poverty reduction programme, environmental education, policy advocacy, mitigating environmental pollution, training, provision of incentives, skill acquisition. Each of these activities is geared towards ensuring effective conservation of resources by improving conservation practices of enclave dwellers so that consciousness is built in them to live in harmony with nature. There is however a need to assess the awareness and level of participation of enclave dwellers in Omo forest reserve on the activities of these NGOs The study objectives includes:

**Objectives**

The general objective is to assess the level of participation of enclave dwellers in NGOS conservation activities.

The specific objectives are to;

(1) determine the personal characteristics of enclave dwellers in Omo forest reserve
(2) identify the activities of the NGO benefited by enclave dwellers in Omo forest reserve
(3) examine the attitude of enclave dwellers toward NGOs activities
(4) ascertain enclave dwellers level of participation in these activities
(5) to ascertain the constraints of the enclave dwellers in participation in these activities

## METHODOLOGY

The study was carried out in Omo forest reserve in Ogun state, southwest region of Nigeria. Omo forest reserve is rich in biodiversity and contains various species of wildlife, trees, insects and birds. Omo forest reserve is the largest biosphere reserve and the first strict nature reserve in Nigeria (Tayo and Tayo, 2007). The reserve is covering about 1368.06km and forms parts of Ijebu North and Ijebu East Local Government Areas of Ogun state. The common tree species found in this site includes, *Brachystegia nigerica, Khaya invorensis, Sterculiarhinopetala,*

*Strombosapustulata, Triplochton scleroxylon* and *Cordial milleria*.

Multi stage sampling method was used to select respondents for this study. The study site was stratified into three blocks considering the nearness of enclaves to each others. Block A includes Abeku1, Abeku2, Idi Opepe, Aba balee, Block B includes: Tamitami, Eseke, Sojukuro, Gbonpa, Esiri ,Block C includes: J4 area, Osoko, Etemi, Imoba, Ori Apata, Ologuna. Fifty percent of enclaves in each stratumwere purposefully selected based on the activities of the NGOs. Two enclaves in strata A, three enclaves in strata B, and three enclaves in C, giving total of 8 enclaves. The names of the enclaves assessed were: Abeku1, Abeku2, Tamitami, Eseke, Sojukodoro, J4 area, Osoko, and Etemi. Twenty respondents were randomly selected in each of these enclaves except Eseke in srata B where 10 respondents were randomly selected because the enclave is a smaller one with few dwellers. The total of 150 respondents was sampled. Data was collected using interview schedule while descriptive and inferential statistics were used in data analyses and and interpretation

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

### Personal characteristics of respondents

The age of respondents as shown in table 1 reveals that majority (68.0%) were within the age group of 21-40 years, 22.7% were within the age of 41-50 years of while 9.3% were above 50 years. This implies that young and middle age are of higher percentage. This can be traced to the fact that majority of these enclave dwellers are active farmers. This is in line with Akinbile 2007 that individuals within the ages of 21-40 years constitute the active work force. Majority of respondents were male (75.3%) while 24.7% of respondents were female. This finding corroborates Saker *et al* (2011) who reported that men are more than women in enclaves. Majority (86.0%) of farmers were married, 10.7%, 1.3% and 2.0% were single, divordec and widowed respectively. This implies that majority of the respondents have responsibilities, thus they engage in livelihood activities to meet their needs. This is in line with Akinbile *et al* (2008) that marriage confers responsibilities. The educational level of respondents in the study area as shown inTable 1 reveals that 48.7% of respondent had no formal education, while only 6.0% had tertiary. This implies that most of the respondents with low level of education will acquire a relatively low level of knowledge of conservation practices. This will also affect their level of adoption and their understanding on practices disseminated by the NGOs. This relates to the study of Osuji (2000) who reported that the lower the level of education of an individual, the lesser the level of knowledge acquired. Also it was revealed in table 1 that the respondents' major occupation (63.1%) was farming This is in line with Ojo (1999) who reported that farming is the major occupation of respondents in enclaves in the study site. The finding also corroborates Newmark *et. al*(1999) that residents of enclaves in protected areas depend mostly on agriculture.

**Table 1: Personal characteristics of respondents**

| Variable | Frequency | Percent ( %) |
|---|---|---|
| **Age** | | |
| 21-30 | 36 | 24.0 |
| 31-40 | 66 | 44.0 |
| 41-50 | 34 | 22.7 |
| 51-60 | 14 | 9.3 |
| **Sex** | | |
| Male | 113 | 75.3 |
| Female | 37 | 24.7 |
| **Marital status** | | |
| Single | 16 | 10.7 |
| Married | 129 | 86.0 |
| Divorced | 02 | 1.3 |
| Widowed | 03 | 2.0 |
| **Educational status** | | |
| Non-formal | 73 | 48.7 |
| Adult education | 10 | 6.7 |
| Primary | 40 | 26.7 |
| Secondary | 18 | 12.0 |
| Tertiary | 09 | 6.0 |
| **Occupation** | | |
| Farming | 95 | 63.1 |
| Trade | 26 | 17.0 |
| Artisans | 01 | 0.7 |
| Loggers | 15 | 10.0 |
| Teachers | 13 | 9.2 |

### Programmes benefited from NGOs activities

Table 2 explains the programmes of the NGOs that respondents benefit from and the period which they benefited from these activities. The result shows that 88.0% of the respondents benefited from conservation education from NCF and 85.3% benefited from environmental education from NCF. This suggests that majority of the respondents benefited from conservation education and environmental education. This finding is in line with Owusu (2001) who asserted that guaranteed support of local people in conservation will depend on how conservation actions are package in conservation and environmental education programmes. Table 2

also reveals that majority of the respondents (70.0%) benefited from conservation education and environmental education (72.0%) from PNI, while 55.0% of the respondents benefited from provision of incentives from PNI.

Comparing the two NGOs, it was discovered that most of the respondents benefited from conservation education (88.0%) and environmental education (85.5%) from NCF compared to PNI's 70.0% and 72.0% respectively. Table 2 further shows that most of the capacity building activities were carried out by PNI as most of the respondents reported that they benefited from PNI's skill acquisition, training, provision of alternative livelihood provision of incentives with 28%, 16%, 55%, and 37.3% respectively.

**Table 2 Activities Benefited from and period of the year that respondents benefit from NGO's activitiesN=150.**

| | NCF | | | | | | | | PNI | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Freq. | % | Yearly | | Monthly | | Anytime | | Freq. | % | Yearly | | Monthly | | Anytime | |
| | F | % | f | % | f | % | f | % | | | f | % | f | % | f | % |
| CONSERVATION EDUCATION | 132 | 88 | 30 | 20 | 64 | 42.7 | 56 | 37.3 | 105 | 70 | 75 | 50.3 | 36 | 23.7 | 39 | 26 |
| Skill Acquisition | 22 | 14.7 | 36 | 24 | 2 | 1.4 | 112 | 74.7 | 42 | 28 | 130 | 86.7 | - | - | 20 | 13.3 |
| Environmental Education | 128 | 85.3 | 30 | 20 | 120 | 80 | - | - | 109 | 72.7 | 58 | 38.7 | 75 | 50 | 1 | |
| Community based conservation | 52 | 34.7 | 15 | 10 | - | - | 135 | 90 | 56 | 37.3 | 115 | 76.7 | - | - | 35 | 23.3 |
| Training | 37 | 24.7 | 30 | 20 | - | - | 120 | 80 | 42 | 28.0 | 60 | 40 | | - | 90 | 60 |
| Provision of alternative livelihood | 20 | 13.3 | 3 | 2.0 | - | - | 147 | 98 | 24 | 16 | 6 | 4 | - | - | 144 | 96 |
| Provision of incentives | 62 | 41.3 | 5 | 3.3 | 1 | 0.7 | 144 | 96 | 82 | 55 | 11 | 7 | - | - | 139 | 93 |

**Respondents' level of participation in NGOs activities**

Table 3a shows that 36.7% of respondents participated regularly in conservation education, 28.7% rarely participated. However, majority of the respondents never participated in activities that involve provision of alternative livelihood (81.3%) and provision of incentives (59.3%) respectively. This implies that the enclave dwellers level of participation in NGOs conservation education activities is regular compared to other activities in the study area.

**Respondents' overall level of participation in NGOs activities**

Table 3b shows that less than half ( 46.7%) of the respondents had an overall high participation in all the NGOs activities , 28.7 % had low participation while reported that they did not participate in any of the NGOs activities. This suggests that NGOs need to sensitize the enclave dwellers on their activities.

**Table 3 a: Distribution of respondents based on level of participation in NGOs activities N=150**

| Activities | Regularly | | Rarely | | Never | | Mean | Rank |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | F | (%) | F | (%) | F | (%) | | |
| Conservation education | 55 | 36.7 | 43 | 28.7 | 52 | 34.7 | 1.5267 | 1 |
| Skill acquisition | 21 | 14 | 33 | 22 | 96 | 64.0 | 0.7933 | 3 |
| Community based conservation | 12 | 8 | 43 | 28.7 | 34.7 | 63.3 | 1.3000 | 2 |
| Training | 8 | 5.3 | 30 | 20.0 | 112 | 74.7 | 0.6867 | 4 |
| Provision of alternative livelihood | 7 | 4.7 | 20 | 15 | 122 | 81.3 | | |
| Provision of incentives | 15 | 10 | 46 | 31.7 | 89 | 59.3 | | |
| Environmental education | 35 | 23.3 | 54 | 36 | 61 | 40.7 | | |

**Table 3b: Distribution of respondents' level of participation in NGOs activities**

| Category | Frequency | (%) | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Standard deviation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| No participation | 38 | 25.5 | | | | |
| Low participation | 42 | 28.7 | 37 | 120 | 5.8865 | 5.18 |
| High participation | 70 | 46.7 | | | | |

**Constraints to participation in NGOs activities**

Table 4 shows that most (71.3%) of the respondents indicated technicality of conservation practices as constraint militating against their participation in NGOs conservation activities. This can be traced to their low level of education because level of education affects the rate at which an individual adopts new technology. Time is also a major constraint faced by respondents in the study area (71.3%). This may be due to the nature of their job since majority of them are farmers and would need to rest after their daily activities. Lack of knowledge and political instability were also constraints to participation. The table also shows that cultural(51.3%) and religious beliefs (25,3%) are the least ranked constraints to participation.

**Table 5: Distribution of respondents' constraints to participation in NGOs activities (n=150)**

| Items | Frequency | (%) | Mean | Rank |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Language barrier | 54 | 36.0 | 0.3600 | 7 |
| Technical know-how of conservation practices | 107 | 71.3 | 0.7133 | 1 |
| Cultural belief | 77 | 51.3 | 0.513 | 6 |
| Time consuming | 107 | 71.3 | 0.7133 | 1 |
| Political instability | 90 | 60.0 | 0.600 | 3 |
| Lack of knowledge of conservation practices | 90 | 60.0 | 0.600 | 3 |
| Financial constraints | 80 | 54.7 | 0.5467 | 5 |
| Religious beliefs | 38 | 25.3 | 0.25303 | 9 |
| Unfriendly attitudes of officials | 48 | 32.0 | 0.3200 | 8 |

**Relationship between personal characteristics of respondents and their participation in NGOs activities**

Table 6 reveals that there was no significant relationship between respondents' age ($\chi^2$=0.137, p > 0.05), sex ($\chi^2$ = 0.589, p >0.05), occupation ($\chi^2$ = 7.956,p> 0.05), marital status ($\chi^2$ = p> 0.05) and their participation in NGO activities. This implies that the respondents' age, sex, occupation and marital status of do not influence the participation of enclave farmers in NGOs conservation activities. However, there was a significant relationship between respondents' educational qualification ($\chi^2$ = 4.643, p≤ 0.05) and their participation in NGO activities.

Data on Table 7 shows that there was a positive correlation between the benefit derived from NGOs conservation activities (r = 0.238, p≤ 0.05) and respondents' level of participation in NGOs activities. The positive correlation suggests that the more the benefit derived by enclave dwellers in NGOs conservation activities, the more they will be willing to participate in NGOs activities. Also, there was a correlation between constraints (r = - 0.276, p≤ 0.05) faced by the respondents in participating in NGOs activities and their level of participation. This implies that the level of constraints faced by the respondents was sufficient enough to limit their participation in NGOs conservation activities.

**Table 6: Relationship between personal characteristics of respondents and their participation in NGOs activities**

| Variable | $\chi^2$ | Df | p-value | Decision | Remark |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Age | .137 | 3 | .094 | Accept Ho | Not Significant |
| Sex | 0.589 | 1 | 0.443 | Accept Ho | Not Significant |
| Educational level | 3.740 | 4 | 0.042 | Reject Ho | Significant |
| Major occupation | 7..956 | 6 | 0.241 | Accept Ho | Not Significant |
| Marital status | 4.643 | 3 | 0.200 | Accept Ho | Not Significant |

**Table 7: Correlation analysis between benefits derived, constraint to participation and respondents' participation in NGOs conservation activities**

| Variable | r-Value | P-Value | Decision | Remark |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Benefit | 0.238 | 0.001 | Reject Ho | Significant |
| Constraints | -0.276 | 0.000 | Reject Ho | Significant |

## CONCLUSION

It is concluded that the enclave dwellers are mostly males, middle aged, married, with no formal education and engaged in farming as their primary occupation. Most of the enclave dwellers benefited from conservation education and environmental education on a monthly basis and considerably participated in NGOs conservation practice. Technicality of conservation practices and time were major constraints militating against enclave dwellers participation in NGOs conservation practices. Educational qualification, benefit derived from conservation practices and constraints faced in participating in conservation practices have influence on the level of participation in NGOs conservation activities among enclave dwellers.

## RECOMMENDATION

Based on the conclusions drawn in this study, it is recommended that;

- NGOs should sensitize the female enclave dwellers on the need to participate in conservation practice activities.
- NGOs should simplify conservation practices such that it will be easy for the enclave dwellers to understand and to adopt.
- NGOs should ensure that their activities gets to all the enclaves in the forest so some people will not feel left out. These will increase participation level of the people.

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