



**DEFORESTATION AND ITS ASSOCIATED CLIMATE RISKS ON RURAL
HOUSEHOLD INCOME IN NKWELLE EZUNAKA, OYI LOCAL GOVERNMENT
AREA, ANAMBRA STATE**

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Abstract

Nkwelle Ezunaka has witnessed severe forms of deforestation which have been a source of worry to environmentalists and decision-makers. This study evaluated the consequences of deforestation and its associated climate risks on rural household income in Nkwelle Ezunaka. The study employed the survey design approach through its data collection procedure with the use of a structured questionnaire, participant interview, and observation to elicit data from the field. Using purposive sampling, the researcher distributed a well-structured questionnaire to a sample size of 400 consisting of households found within a 200m/250m radius of area in Nkwelle with more probable risks of deforestation and forest loss across the communities. The result of the descriptive statistics and frequencies formulated out of the Likert scale questionnaire responses: it was found that the forest-related livelihood activities that exist in the area include hunting (34%), crop production (25%), animal production (26%), relaxation centres (9%) and traditional medicine practitioners (6%). The study also discovered the underlying causes of deforestation in the area, which include urbanization, agriculture and timber/wood logging. The consequences of deforestation on household income were a decrease in crop productivity and yield (12%), a decrease in rural household income (25%), loss of arable land (10%), sudden extinction of games (10%) and loss of biodiversity (18%). The study also identified the environmental effects of deforestation which include flooding (23%), global warming (9%), erosion (19%) loss of biodiversity (22%), and loss of plant/ animal species (26%). The coping strategies identified from the study area include the use of improved seedlings, adoption of organic manure and environmentally friendly chemicals and agroforestry. Pearson product-moment correlation was used to test the hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between deforestation and rural poverty. The study among other things recommended: the adoption of environmental education and campaigns, reforestation exercise and agroforestry, adoption of appropriate methods of timber harvesting, skill acquisition and grants as the main ways of reducing consequences of deforestation on household income in the study area.

Keywords: Deforestation, household income, rural poverty