

PIPELINE VANDALIZATION IN AUCHI AND AGBOR AREAS OF EDO STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

Since the discovery of oil in the Niger Delta, the Nigerian petroleum industry has passed through various challenges such as militancy, sabotage and especially pipeline vandalization. This has led to massive loss of lives and properties, destruction of the ecosystem and aquatic life and environmental degradation in the affected areas. However, this study examined the environmental impact of pipeline vandalization in Auchi and Agbor communities of Edo state, Nigeria. Primary data was collected through administration of questionnaires, physical observation, oral interview and soil test analysis while secondary data was collected from hospital records, maps, relevant organization and internet. In this study, 350 questionnaires were administered in which data on socio-economic characteristic of the respondents, causes of pipeline vandalization and its effects on crop yield including health issues were collected and analysed. Soil test analysis was also carried out to determine soil fertility of the affected area. The findings showed that 50% and 40% of the respondents attributed poverty and sabotage to pipeline vandalization. However, 87% of the respondents attributed the effect of pipeline vandalization to crop yield to stunted growth, crop failure and rotting tubers while 52% of the respondent said it caused bad taste of crop produce. About 45% of the respondents indicated that pipeline vandalization caused outbreak of diseases, 30% are neutral while 25% disagree. The soil test analysis indicated that there is a high acidity level on the soil in the affected areas resulting to low fertility and poor crop yield. The study recommended that youths living in oil producing communities should be properly educated and sensitized on the dangers of pipeline vandalization. There should be immediate environmental restoration by government and oil companies in the area affected. There should be development of environmental management strategies and research institutions to help cushion effects of pipeline vandalization. Periodic Environmental impact assessment in oil producing communities should be carried out in order to mitigate the effect pipeline vandalization.