

DOES ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CAUSE ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION? EVIDENCE FROM NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The relationship between development and environmental sustainability or lack of it (or lack of it) has for long been a theoretical issue in Nigeria just as it is a huge problem in practice. Several efforts have been engaged in explaining its dynamic nature, links and consequences on not only the survival of human, plant and animal species but of the planet earth as well.

Two problems, however, tend to undermine these efforts. One analysis of this delicate relationship is oftentimes done on a broad or aggregative basis. Two the environment is in most cases, treated as a homogenous whole thereby either unwittingly de-emphasizing the role played by its individual components in the development process or the extent to which development effort impacts on them. This study is an attempt to decipher (in quantitative terms) the relationship between development and components of the environment within the context of Nigeria using 1970-2004 data on the economy. A vector autoregression (var) model which makes minimal theoretical demands and treats all variables as endogenous is used to analyze the development environment relationship. Analysis of the result from the study seems to suggest that agricultural practice, economic development, energy consumption and industrialization strategies in the past might not have been environmentally sustainable.