Community based environmental impact assessment of the university of Ibadan International Conference Centre

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Abstract

Community based impact assessment provides basic and up to date information on the extent to which an infrastructural project affects the environment and livelihood of community dwellers. This study assessed the environmental impacts of situating University of Ibadan International Conference Centre (UIICC), Nigeria on its adjoining communities in with a view to identifying the effects of UIICC building on the livelihood of its neighboring communities. The data for this study was obtained through oral interview, questionnaire administration and visual observation analysed using descriptive statistics. One hundred and fifty (150) questionnaires were randomly distributed within three communities (Abadina, Orogun and Barika) around the UIICC. The results of this study showed that majority the respondents (54%) had lived within and around the university environment for more than eight (8) years and 46.6% had obtained tertiary education. However, they are all involves in different occupation including students. This research reveals that during events in the conference centre, business activities within the communities increases, temporal employment and tight security are provided. Furthermore, deforestation and soil degradation were among the observed negative impacts of UIICC to the environment. Landscaping, planting of avenue tree and ornamental plants within and outside the conference centre and provision of good drainage systems are some of the mitigative measures recommended by this study. Hence, employment of youths from the communities was identifies as key to preventing future conflict between the University and the communities.

Keywords: Community, EIA, forest, impact study, University of Ibadan.

Introduction

In the developing countries, trees are seen as obstacles of infrastructural development. According to the 2016 Nigeria National Policy on Environment (Revised), development in general will only be meaningful if a country's vulnerability to environmental impacts does not increase. However, environmental impact assessment is an activity aimed at identifying, predicting, interpreting and/or communicating information about impacts of programmes, projects, legislative proposal, policies, projects and operational procedures on man's health and wellbeing[1].

However, Nigeria as a country is party to numerous international conventions, accords and treaties governing environmental issues in the world. Legislations such as Sections 20, 17 (2) and 16 (2) of the 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Decree number 86 of 1992 and National Policy on the Environment (NPE) in 1991 (revised in 1999 and 2016) have been put in place in Nigeria[2].

These laws provided that all developmental projects must ensure they do not constitute adversely impact on the community and ecosystem integrity. Thus, must function within environmental sustainability levels.

University of Ibadan International Conference Centre (UIICC) was established in 2009-2012, with the aim of providing and enabling environment that is of international standard for academic and non-academic events such as seminars, conferences, exhibitions and other social gatherings[3]. The conference centre cuts across the Universities forest. The UIICC comprises has five halls with about 6700 sitting capacity, outdoor cooking spot, boardrooms, moat pavilion, "Suya" spot, roundabout and road network among others[3].

There is scarcity of information on the impact of UIICC on its adjoining environment. The environment is not just forests; it is also including all the processes that take place in and around that forest[4]. Hence, it is necessary to identify impacts of situating UIICC in line with NPE of 2016, EIA Decree number 86 of 1992, section 20 and 16(2) of the 1999 Nigeria's constitution. This study therefore, aimed at assessment of the impact of the University of Ibadan International Conference Centre on its adjoining communities. Thus, with a view to and suggest mitigative measures for proper management.

Materials and methods

The study area: This study was carried out at the University of Ibadan International Conference Centre (UIICC), the adjoining

forests and communities within 200 m around the UIICC. The area located along Oyo road, Ibadan in Akinyele Local Government Area of Oyo State, which lies between latitudes 7° 45.106' N to 7°45.834' N and longitudes 3°90.942' E to 3° 90.508' E (Figure-1), within the tropical rainforest. With mean altitude of 227 m above sea level[5].

Data collection and analysis: Fifty questionnaires were distributed to fifty persons dwelling within each of the three communities selected for the study, therefore a total of one hundred and fifty (150) questionnaires were administered for the study. The communities are Abadina, Orogun and Barika these communities are located within 0 to 200meters away from the UIICC building because the building is located is within Abadina community. Data collection for this study was achieved using oral interview, questionnaire administration and visual observation. Data collected from the study as analysed using descriptive statistical; frequency counts and percentage to summarize the data.

Results and discussion

Residential characteristics of respondents: The result obtained from the three communities (Abadina, Orogun and Barika) which are 0-200 m away from the UIICC, reveals that most (54%) of the respondents have leaved in the communities for over 8 years, 34% of them has stayed between 5-7 years while only 2% have stayed less than a year in the study area. This implies that most of the respondent has been living within the study areas and are good judge of the environmental impact of the ICC building to their respective community. The result further shows that 6% of the respondents had no formal education, 10.7% had primary school certificate and 36.7% had secondary education while 46.6% of the respondents were with tertiary education indicating that most of the dwellers took advantage of the academic institutions like UI Staff School (Primary) and the International School (Secondary) within the university to be literate. The occupational categories of the respondents show that 26% of the respondents were civil servants, 26, 18 and 14% are traders, artisans and farmers respectively. 14% of the respondents were students and only few (7.3%) are unemployed (Table-1).

Respondents' knowledge about University of Ibadan (UI) Teak plantation: The result further reveals that majority (68%) of the respondents have not accessed the forest ever since they have been staying in the community, hence, only 48% of have entered the forest out of which 20.8% went for the collection of fuel wood, 18.8% for animal, 12.5% for recreation activities and 2.3% for other purposes which include: religions defecation and smoking. The respondent that has not access to the forest feels this is because they have no reason in the forests: 93.1% had no business in the forest, 4.9% because of other reasons like illegality of entering the forest, some scared and only 2.0% was because of the UIICC building (Table-1).

Socio-economic impact on respondents': Table-2 revels that 75.3% of the respondent optioned that UIICC do no reduce business activities in their communities while 24.7% believes it does, also 74% of them believes their communities experience increase in business activities whenever there is event in the conference center, 17.3% express that they benefit from temporal jobs and 7.3% enjoys tight security. Hence, 93.3% said UIICC does not possess security threat to their community while few (6.6%) of them believes it does some of which evident form theft, sexual harassment and among others. In their suggestion for improvement however, 83.3% of the respondent suggested that youths from the neighboring communities should be employed at the UIICC, 14.7% seek access to the UI teak forest to continue their usual activities including fuel-wood collection meanwhile, 2% suggested that the management of UIICC should further improve relationship with communities hosting UIICC including hold a town hall meeting with the communities when need arises among others. Figures-2 and 3 shows pictorial view of shops (business centres) and community opposite UIICC, respectively.
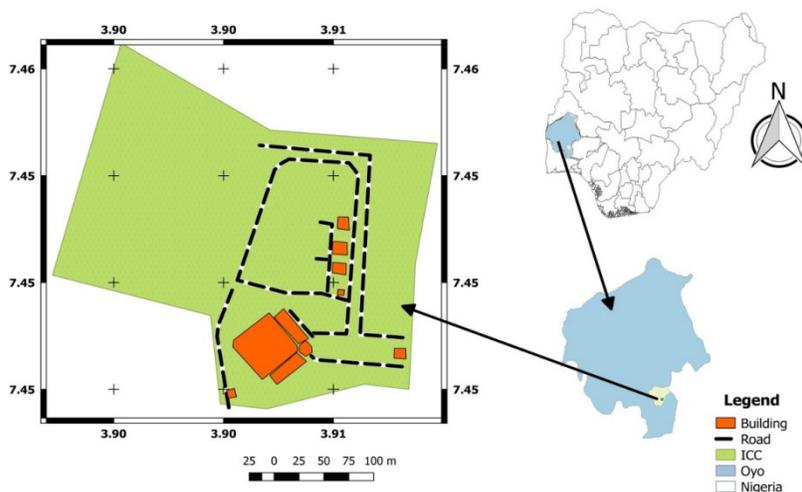

Figure-1: Map of University of Ibadan International Conference Centre.

Table-1: Residential characteristics awareness and access to University of Ibadan Teak plantation.

Characteristics	Variable	Frequency	Percent (%)
Duration of stay in the community	Less than 1	3	2
	2-4	15	10
	5-7	51	34
	8 and above	81	54
	Total	150	100
Educational Level	Non-formal	9	6
	Primary	16	10.7
	Secondary	55	36.7
	Tertiary	70	46.6
	Total	150	100
Major Occupation	Student	21	14
	Artisan	27	18
	Trader	31	20.7
	Civil Servant	39	26
	Unemployed	11	7.3
	Farmer	21	14
	Total	150	100
Have you ever visited UI teak plantation before?	Yes	48	32
	No	102	68
	Total	150	100
If Yes above, why did you entered the forest?	Prayer	4	8.3
	Medicine	8	16.7
	Animal	9	18.8
	Recreation	6	12.5
	Fuel wood	10	20.8
	Others	11	22.9
	Total	48	100
If No above, why did you entered the forest?	Building of ICC	2	2.0
	I have no business there	95	93.1
	Others	5	4.9
	Total	102	100

Source: Field Survey, 2017.

Table-2: Socio-economic impacts.

Characteristics	Variables	Frequency	Percent (%)
UIICC building and business activities	Yes	37	24.7
	No	113	75.3
	Total	150	100
Benefit during event	Increase in business activities	111	74.0
	Provision of tight security	11	7.3
	Temporal employment	26	17.3
	Others	2	1.3
	Total	150	100
Does UIICC possess any security threat?	Yes	10	6.6
	No	140	93.3
	Total	150	100
If Yes above, what threat?	theft	3	30.0
	sexual harassment	2	20.0
	kidnap	0	0
	Others	5	50.0
	Total	10	100
Suggestion for improvement	Employment of youth	125	83.3
	Allow us access UI teak forest	22	14.7
	Others	3	2.0
	Total	150	100

Source: Field Survey, 2017.

Discussion: Historically, the respondents revealed that part of the forest was cleared to build the University of Ibadan International Conference Center. This implies deforestation. Hence, deforestation usually is accompanied by natural/wildlife habitat destruction, reduction in biodiversity, species extinction and decrease in primary productivity[6].

Socio-Economic Impact: This study revealed that large proportion of the respondents in the study area had a tertiary education. This is no doubt as the community is neighboring the first University in Nigeria, hence it implies that members of these communities have ceased the opportunity of the academic

environment. Furthermore, most of the respondents have lived in the study area for over eight (8) years; this validates the information given by the respondents as true reflection of the study area as the conference center is about eight years as at the time of this research.

This research exposed that most of the residents of community around the study area had not entered the adjoining forest indicating that they have no business with the forest. However, this could be because most of the residences of the communities surrounding the forest are either students, civil servants or business entrepreneurs. On the other hand, defecation and smoking was reported as major reason why some of the respondents assessed the forest. Only few people assess the forest for non-timber forest products (NTFPs) such as medicine and animals while few of the respondents entered the forest for recreation and religious activities. This is in line with FAO report; that forest provides diverse of economic and social benefits, extending from less tangible services and contributions to the society to easily quantified economic values associated with forest products[7].However, the result of this study also reveals that during events in UIICC, business activities communities increase. Events in the conference centre also provides temporal employment to members of the community and tight security. Hence, this implies that the conference centre does not pose security threat to the community.

Furthermore, deforestation and soil degradation were among the observed negative impacts of situating UIICC to the environment. Inadequate planted tree, ornamental plants and landscape, soil erosion and unemployment of youths in the community were among the threats observed in the study area. However, planting of avenue trees, ornamental plants and landscaping of the conference centre will ameliorate the environmental condition of the area. Also, employment of youth from the community will serve security to the conference centre and prevent future conflict between the University and the communities.

Figure-2: Picture Showing Some Shops Opposite UIICC.

Figure-3: Picture of Orogun Community and parts of UIICC.

Conclusion

The environmental impact assessment outcome has established that the University of Ibadan International Conference Centre have no doubt contributed to an increase the security, business, job and by extension the standard of living of members of the communities around it.

However, deforestation and soil degradation were highlighted as major negative impacts to the environment. Furthermore, this research recommended the planting of avenue trees and ornamental plants and landscaping of the conference centre, employment of youths from the communities and construction of good drainage system in and around the conference centre.

Acknowledgement

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