
Eco-criticism: A comparative study of Madrid Deforestation and its Effect on Secondary School Student's learning performance in Jalingo and Ardo kola local Government areas of Jalingo, Taraba State of Nigeria.

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1.1 Introduction:

Literature as a field of discipline has inculcated a lot of approaches that reflect issues involving the society and its environment. One of these approaches called “eco-criticism” which is the study of literature and the environment from an inter disciplinary point of view, where literature scholars analyze texts that illustrate environmental concerns and examine the various ways literature treats the subject of nature. Some eco-critics brainstorm possible solutions for the correction of the contemporary environmental situation, though not all ecocritics agree on the purpose, methodology or scope of ecocriticism.

Ecocriticism is an intentionally broad approach that is known by a number of other designations, including “green (cultural) studies” “eco poetics” and environmental literary criticism and is often informed by other fields such as ecology, sustainable design bio-politics, environmental history, environmental science, environmentalism and social ecology among others.

In comparison with other political forms of criticism, there has been relatively little dispute about the moral and philosophical aims of eco criticism, although its scope has broadened rapidly

from nature writing, Romantic poetry, and canonical literature to take in film, television, theatre, animals stories, architectures, scientific narratives and an extra-ordinary range of literary tests. At the same time, eco criticism has borrowed methodologies and theoretically informed approaches liberally from other fields of literary, social and scientific study.

Cheryll Glotfelty's working idea on “eco criticism reader is that eco criticism is the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment” and one of the implicit goals of the approach is to recoup professional dignity for what Glotfelty calls the “undervalued genre of nature writing”.

Lawrence Buell asserted that “eco criticism is a study of the relationship between literature and the environment conducted in a spirit of commitment to environmental praxis”. Simon Estok noted in (2001) that “eco criticism has distinguished itself, debated notwithstanding, firstly by the ethical stand it takes. It's environment to the natural world as an important thing rather than simply as an object of thematic study, and secondly by its commitment to making correction”.

More recently, in an article that extends eco criticism, to shakespearean studies, Estok argues that eco criticism is more than “simply the study of nature or natural things in literature, rather, it is any theory that is committed to effecting change by analyzing the function – thematic, artistic, social, historical, ideological, theoretical or otherwise of the natural environment or aspects of it, represented in literary work that contribute to material practices in material worlds”. This echoes the functional approach of the cultural ecology branch of eco criticism which analyzes the analogies between ecosystem and imaginative texts and posits that such texts potentially have an ecological (regenerative, revitalizing) function in the cultural system, a political example is the work of Helon Habila's *Oil on Water* and Ngugi Wa Thiongo's *Weep Not Child*.

Eco criticism as a movement owes much to Rachel Carson's (1962) environmental expose, “Silent Spring,” “Drawing from this critical moment, Rueckert's intent was to focus on “the application of ecology and ecological concept to the study of literature and the environment”.

Ecologically minded individuals and scholars have been publishing progressive work of eco – theory and criticism since the explosion of environmentalism in the late 1960's and 1970's. However, because there was no organized movement to study the ecological environmental side of literature, these important work were scattered and categorized under a literary of different subject headings; pastoralism human ecology, regionalism, American studies etc. British Marxist critic Raymond Williams, for example wrote on seminal critique of pastoral literature in (1973) “The Country and the City”.

Therefore, the focus of this research is to examine eco criticism to portray a comparative study of Madrid deforestation and its influence on secondary school students' learning performance, using Helon Habila's *Oil on Water* and Ngugi, Wa Thiongo's

Weep Not child, (A case study of affected secondary schools in Taraba state).

1.2 Statement of The Problem:

Critical observation has been seen on how this benefit of natural resources (forestation) has been jeopardized because of human being's self desire and unnecessary quest for money. This is usually ignored in most states and local governments and is resulting in a lot of deforestation, reducing the learning performance of students in secondary schools and land degradation. Madrid deforestation in Taraba state needs to be discouraged.

According to Dayo Aiyetan of the International Centre for Investigative Reporters, in his study on “How China fuels Deforestation in Nigeria, West Africa”, states inter alia, “smart Chinese businessmen are exploiting a lax regulatory and enforcement environment, loopholes in existing laws, lack of government policy and direction as well as official corruption by government officials to drive an illegal trade in and export of the country's forestry resources that might have grave consequences for both the environment and the economy ... forestry experts are warned that the unrestrained and uncontrolled harvesting of the special type of timber across the states will have devastating impact on the environment and contribute immensely to global warming which is currently threatening the world. Apart from the effect on the environment, the experts fear that the illegal activities of local and Chinese merchants will also have telling economic implications in the near future in many communities where the forests that are being violated are located. In many states, including Kogi, Ekiti, Ondo, Ogun, Taraba, Kaduna, Adamawa, and Cross River, a rapacious demand by China for an ornate species of wood, rose wood (*Pterocarpus erinaceus*) locally known as Kosso, has since late 2013, fuelled an unprecedented frenzy of illegal logging of wood that is fast depleting the nation's natural forestry resources”.

The multiplier effect of this trend is that young persons who should have been in school are out there in the forest engaging in such activities, thereby mortgaging their future for immediate personal gains. This is a serious problem that calls for a study like this.

Considering the problem on hand, this study went on and formulated certain question which include: knowing what role Madrid deforestation plays in Taraba State; knowing what implication Madrid deforestation has on Taraba State; to what extent does eco-criticism as an approach of literature tends to promote Taraba State (Forestation) environment; what are the elements, found in *Oil on Water* and *Weep not Child* that portrays the study? ; how the author's ideological stand depicts the nature of Madrid deforestation in Taraba state ; how can people in Taraba state avoid Madrid deforestation; the role Madrid deforestation plays in the life of secondary school students in Taraba state and the effect of Madrid deforestation in Taraba state and to the secondary school students in the state.

1.3 Purpose of the Study:

The specific purpose of the study is:

- i. To examine or give a comparative study of Madrid deforestation using **Helon Habila's** *Oil on Water* and **Ngugi Wa Thiongo's** *Weep Not child*.
- ii. To examine the effect of Madrid deforestation on secondary school students in Taraba state.
- iii. To look out on the influence of Madrid deforestation on the learning performance of students in secondary schools in Taraba state.
- iv. To give distinctive suggestions on how to avoid the act of Madrid deforestation which may not be covered entirely in the cause of the study but could encourage further research study?

1.4 Methodology:

The research falls under descriptive type of research. Descriptive research which is also called deductive statistics refers to the procedures for organizing, summarizing and presenting data about

a sample or population where complete population data is available. It does not involve drawing an inference or generalization from a sample to its population.

With regards to the research, the total population of students in fifteen secondary schools in affected areas such as Garba Chede, Mayo Kam and Maihula in Bali local government as stated by inspection on provision unit of 2016/2017 section, has approximately a hundred and forty thousand students and the three schools selected within that area has a total number of ten thousands three hundred and forty seven students. Students were picked from the three schools to generalize the effect of Madrid deforestation to their learning performance.

The purpose random sampling technique was used because of the area prominent in Madrid exploitation, location that will give us exactly what we wanted to actualize our objectives. Out of fifteen secondary schools in the affected areas of Taraba state, three schools were selected to get information of the students on Madrid deforestation and its effect on secondary schools learning performance. A self developed questionnaire with closed ended format was administered in the selected secondary schools on staff and students.

The method of data analysis was the use of descriptive statistical method, employing the measure of central tendency. This is a procedure used for drawing conclusions from generalized information. It uses information obtained from a sample to say something about the entire population.

The researcher used descriptive analysis and correlation of student's results or performance in English language and Mathematics with data obtained in the course of the study.

The population sampled consists of both male and female students and teachers, making a total number of 180 questionnaires where only 179 were filled and returned. Returned questionnaires were

approximated to 179 copies for ease of handling computation. Data presented and analyzed were therefore based on the retrieved figure of 179 questionnaires.

Background characteristics of respondents (student) shows 87 male and 63 females and the age distribution shows 73 for those in the 15-17 age bracket, 76 for 18-21 age bracket. 139 respondents are aware of Madrid deforestation while 11 claimed they do not know about forest deforestation. 132 respondents agreed that people in their locality are involved in Madrid deforestation, while 32 disagreed. On whether Madrid deforestation did not promote the growth and development of the community, 55 agreed while 95 disagreed.

125 respondents agreed that Madrid deforestation provides adequate revenue to the state government while 25 disagreed. The learning performance of students in the affected areas is said to have been affected. 11 respondents agreed that the learning performance has been affected while 139 disagreed.

129 agreed that students are involved in Madrid deforestation while 23 disagreed. 110 respondents agreed that students are involved in Madrid deforestation, while 40 disagreed. 141 respondents agreed that Madrid deforestation stops students from attending school, while 9 disagreed. 142 respondents agreed that Madrid deforestation affects natural resources in their community while 8 disagreed. 141 agreed that Madrid deforestation promote global warming while 9 disagreed. Six respondents agreed that teachers encouraged students involved in Madrid deforestation while 144 disagreed. 67 respondents agreed that Madrid deforestation has played an important role in the school or community while 85 disagreed. 117 respondents agreed that students involved in Madrid deforestation make adequate money from it while 33 respondents disagree. 136 respondents agreed that Madrid deforestation reduces the trees in the community while 13 disagreed. 145 agreed that the Chinese have been to Taraba in search of timber/woods while 5 disagreed. 74 respondents

agreed that books have been written to discourage Madrid deforestation while 70 disagreed. 95 respondents agreed that government has put in efforts to discourage Madrid deforestation while 52 disagreed. 22 respondents agreed that Madrid deforestation should continue while 128 disagreed. 145 respondents indicated interest in Madrid deforestation while 5 did not show any interest. 113 respondents agreed that Madrid deforestation promote business organization while 37 disagreed.

Meanwhile Background characteristics of another category of respondents (staff), shows a total number of staff as 27 with 20 males and a females. The age distribution shows 2 respondents in the 18 – 21 age bracket, 23 in the age bracket of 26 – 35, two in the age bracket of 36 – 40 and 1 in the age bracket of 41 and above. 25 respondents are single while 3 are married. Five respondents have NCE/OND, 6 had HND while 18 have a degree. 28 respondents knew about Madrid deforestation in Taraba while one did not know. 27 knew that people are involved in Madrid deforestation in the locality while 2 didn't know. Seven respondents agreed that Madrid deforestation promotes growth and development in the community while 22 disagreed. 20 respondents agreed that secondary school students are involved in Madrid deforestation while 9 disagreed. 17 respondents agreed that Madrid deforestation brings adequate revenue to the state government while 12 disagreed. A total of 29, which is the total figure of respondents disagreed that Madrid deforestation promotes the learning performance of secondary school students in the community. 15 respondents agreed that students that are involved in Madrid deforestation save a lot of money, while 14 disagreed. 28 respondents agreed that Madrid deforestation stop students from attending schools while one disagreed. 28 respondents agreed that Madrid deforestation affects natural resources while one disagreed. 27 respondents agreed that Madrid deforestation promotes global warming while 2 disagreed. A total of 29 respondents, which is the total number of respondents disagree that

teachers in their school encourage students involved in Madrid. Seven respondents agreed that Madrid deforestation plays an important role in their school/community while 22 disagreed. 19 respondents agreed that students involved in Madrid deforestation make adequate money while 10 disagreed. 28 respondents agreed that the Chinese have been to Taraba state in search of timber/woods while 2 disagreed. 10 respondents agreed that many

books have been written to discourage the act of Madrid deforestation while 19 disagreed. Two respondents agreed that Madrid deforestation should continue in their community while 27 disagreed. 27 respondents say they would discourage their friends. 21 respondents agreed that Madrid deforestation helps to promote business organization in their community while 8 disagreed.

Table: 1 Responses on students' performance in examinations. Students' performance in Mathematics/English examinations.

Score	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
1 – 20	35	23.3	23.3	23.3
21 - 30	50	33.3	33.3	56.7
31 -40	25	16.7	16.7	73.3
41 - 50	16	10.7	10.7	84.0
51 - 60	10	6.7	6.7	90.7
61 - 70	8	5.3	5.3	96.0
71 - 80	3	2.0	2.0	98.0
81 - 90	3	2.0	2.0	100.0
Total	150	100.0	100.0	

From the data presented above, it is realized that majority of the students have scores below average which implies that students perform poorly in the two subjects within the period under study (2016/2017).

Correlations:

	Students performance in Mathematics/English exams	Students involved in Madrid deforestation in my community.
Students' performance in Correlation Mathematics/English coefficient sig. Examinations. (2-tailed) N	1.000	-.299**
Spearman's rho	150 -.299**	1.000
Students in secondary school Correlation are involved in Madrid coefficient sig Deforestation in my (2-tailed) Community. N	.000 150	150

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

The significant spearman correlation coefficient value of -0.299 confirms that there is a strong negative correlation between the two variables. Thus, it can be further explained that the level of secondary school students involvement in Madrid deforestation is highly associated with their low performance academically; especially in English and Mathematics examinations.

Discussion of findings:

The result shows that students and staff of the affected areas knew about Madrid deforestation and that the students are immensely involved in Madrid deforestation and this has a lot of negative influence and effect on their learning performance as shown in their result for both Mathematics and English language. The significant spearman correlation coefficient value of -0.299 confirms that there is a strong negative correlation between the two variables. Thus, the level of students' involvement in Madrid deforestation is highly associated with their low performances academically especially in English and Mathematics examinations.

Student involvement in Madrid deforestation is highly associated with their low performance academically especially in English and mathematics examination. On weather Madrid deforestation promote the growth and development of the communities, the responses of both the students and the staff indicates that Madrid deforestation does not promote the growth and development of the communities, instead it brings a lot of damage to both the people involved, the relatives, friend and the natural endowment in the communities. Majority of the respondents are strongly disagreement that Madrid deforestation promotes the learning performance of students in their communities. This implies that Madrid deforestation by all indications has really reduced the learning performance of the students. Responses on whether Madrid deforestation affects the natural resources in their communities indicates that it affects the

natural resources, the fertility of the land, the unshade space as a result of cutting down of trees. This is in comparison to Helon Habiba's *Oil on Water* on the social upheavals in its setting; the fictional Niger Delta region. In analyzing *Oil on Water*, it is shown how the discovery and exploration of oil activities which were envisaged to bring in riches ironically boomerangs and results in devastation and impoverishment of the land its people.

In *Oil on Water*, a non linear narrative, Habila presents fragments of a larger narrative using multiple perspective that reflects the varied version of fictional Niger Delta. The background of the setting covers Agbuki Island, Irikefe and Jesse junction. The latter two areas are places that go up in smoke, succumbing to burning from oil stealing from pipelines associated with vandalism. In effect, *Oil on Water* provides the back story, the underlying causes of the suffering of the people living in these areas that are blessed by the natural deposit oil.

However, opposite is the case, the natural balm of a normal days work is denied the people of Irekefe because of flaring in the oil drilling process. As normal life is disrupted, abnormal behavior erupts and some of the people resort to extortion, and kidnapping for monetary again. This is what some of the environmentally deranged people do as a means of hitting back at their perceived enemies.

When the story begins, two journalists are on a journey to the remote creeks of Irikefe in search of Mrs. floode, the missing wife of a British oil worker in Port Harcourt. However, what the reader discovers in the end is not what the journalists Zaq and Rufus set out to find Mrs. floode but indeed, as Rufus puts it; "the meaning of the story". In other words, the reconstruction of the story event leading to the woman's disappearance, the people connected to It, the flora and fauna of the setting and

how the setting and how the people in area are coping with challenges in their lives, a life that has made particularly difficult because of new found oil. Habila's diction and idiolect reveal the complexity beneath the terrain, the labyrinths of Greeks, dense mangroves, oil spills and vandalizing of pipelines. Oil exploration has left the place bedeviled by environment challenges, gully and coastal erosion, soil degradation, declining fertility, industrial and solid waste pollution, oil spillage, contamination, (gas flaring and air pollution)

From all indications, teachers in those affected secondary schools areas did not encourage secondary school students to engage themselves in Madrid deforestation.

Table Fourteen (14) shows that Madrid deforestation does not play an important role in the community. The role it plays can only be deduced to the negative aspects as it causes a lot of depletion to the environment.

Because of the flamboyant and luxury life of those that are involved in Madrid deforestation in those communities, the respondents succumbed to the questionnaire item in table fifteen (15) that students that are involved in Madrid deforestation gain adequate money from it.

It was strongly agreed that, Madrid deforestation reduces the trees in their community, as it relates to Ngugi wa Thiongo's *Weep Not Child* (1964), where he portrays the Kenyan's lands that were taken over by the colonial master; dilapidated and destroying everything that was owned by the Kenyans and then planting in their substances, i.e. their cotton with the intention of harvesting and exporting it to their country. Mr. Howland being the white man; Ngotho who was a citizen of Kenya because of oppression is subjected to be working for Mr. Howland in his own inherited land.

Since 2011, the Chinese have fueled Madrid deforestation in Nigeria. According to Aiyeten (2016) in his article, postulated that corruption by

local officials and sharp practices by Chinese businessmen drives a thriving illegal trade in timbers from Nigeria and a large part of West Africa with grave consequences for the economy, ecosystem and the environment. As to whether the Chinese people have been to Taraba State in search of timber/wood, the respondents strongly agreed to it. Chinese traders are in search of rosewood as they move from one West African country to the other. Invariably such search of rosewood has also been seen in Taraba State.

It is obvious from the students and the staff points of view that books have been written to discourage the act of Madrid deforestation.

Government has put in efforts to stop the act of Madrid deforestation and to discourage people from it.

Table twenty (20), shows that the respondents do not want the act of Madrid deforestation to continue in their community. They will rather not advice their friends to have interest in it either.

Summary, Conclusion and Recommendation:

5.1 Introduction:

The study is conducted to determine the Eco-criticism: A comparative study of Madrid deforestation and its influence on secondary schools' learning performance using Helon Habila's *Oil on Water* and Ngugi wa Thiongo's *Weep Not Child* (A case study of affected secondary schools area in Taraba State). The chapter therefore, attempts to summarize the major findings, draw conclusion, make recommendations, and outline the limitations, suggestions for further research and contributions to knowledge in order to improve the achievement of the program.

5.2 Summary:

The researcher through the research questions and the research items was able to make the following major findings.

- i. Madrid deforestation has a negative influence on Taraba state and secondary school students in the state.

- ii. Madrid deforestation diminishes the learning performance of secondary schools students in areas prominent to the study.
- iii. Madrid deforestation stops secondary school students' from attending school.
- iv. Madrid deforestation affects the natural resources and equally promotes global warming.
- v. Government can stop the act of Madrid deforestation through a possible means.
- iv. Secondary schools should understand the need to make appropriate use of forestation and its usefulness to improve man's life positively and not in a negative way.
- v. The mindset of exporters engaging on Madrid transaction with foreign traders like the Chinese should be stopped or be done in a more legal way in the state.
- vi. Community leaders should not give primacy or preference to the act of Madrid deforestation in their community.
- vii. Security personnel should examine every movement of Madrid going outside the state and then take a preventive measure.
- viii. Teachers in rural areas should be remunerated for students to see hope for the future in them.

5.3 Conclusion

The following conclusions have made

1. Madrid business in Taraba State has negative influence on students' academic achievement.
2. Madrid business has brought about deforestation and degradation of the environment.

Madrid deforestation plays a negative role in Taraba State. Government can implement a preventive measure to discourage Madrid deforestation. Madrid deforestation influences secondary school students' learning performance negatively. Madrid deforestation depletes the trees in Taraba State. The act Madrid deforestation will continue to stop secondary school students' and staff from attending schools.

5.4 Recommendation:

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made for better implementation and to make the situation more positive.

- i. Taraba state government should consider or look into the act of Madrid deforestation and its negative influence on secondary school students learning performance and then provide a standard measure to stop it or to look for a suitable means of having a Madrid industry in the state in order to gain more revenue.
- ii. Secondary school administrators should ensure that quality teachers in their educational systems are educated about the influence of Madrid deforestation in order to avoid it.
- iii. Every individual in rural and urban areas should imbibe the culture of protecting his or her natural resources (trees) from depletion.

5.5 Limitations:

The study was restricted to three secondary schools in three towns at Bali local government area which are prominent in Madrid deforestation in Taraba state. The researchers encountered the following constraints during the study.

- i. The area of the study was very large and there was insufficient time to cover all the areas that are prominent in Madrid deforestation.
- ii. The researchers collected information (Data) for the research with difficulty due to financial constraints.
- iii. The students of some of the selected schools found it difficult to supply the needed information because of difficulty in reading and understanding the items given to them. Thus, the researchers collected data with difficulty.

5.6 Suggestions for Further Research:

Based on the limitations of the study, the following suggestions were made for further studies:

- i. A replication of this study should be carried out again to cover other secondary schools in different states in the country by considering the areas that are more prominent in Madrid deforestation.

- ii. Further research should be carried out on similar study on the variables that were not previously investigated.
- iii. Researchers should investigate the influence of Madrid deforestation on academic performance of staff in secondary schools in areas prominent for Madrid deforestation.
- iv. More researchers should examine the effect of Madrid deforestation on people living in areas that are prominent in Madrid deforestation and then give a distinctive suggestion on how to avoid it which may not be covered entirely in the course of the study but could encourage further research study.

5.7 Contribution to Knowledge:

This study will contribute immensely to education in the following areas:

- i. The study will help the school administrators to improve students behavior with motivation in order to avoid the act of Madrid deforestation.
- ii. The study will serve as a resource material (book) indicating the influence of Madrid deforestation.
- iii. The study will enlighten secondary schools students with the knowledge that Madrid deforestation has negative influence and effect on learning performance.
- iv. It will help the staff in secondary schools' with adequate knowledge and incentive not to imbibe or encourage students to go into Madrid deforestation.
- v. It will help administrators in secondary schools to apply management strategies on how to stop students that are coming to school because of Madrid deforestation.
- vi. It will help students in secondary schools with positive thinking towards the role to which Madrid deforestation is playing in their community.

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