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Electricity: A Cursed Resource?

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Oral Presentation O11.1

ELECTRICITY: A CURSED RESOURCE?

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The natural resource curse is a widely documented hypothesis that attempts to explain why countries that receive large oil and mineral revenues often fail to better the lives of their citizens, often lowering standard of living. This study looks to examine the effects of electricity exports on quality of life in Africa. This project data from the World Bank, the United Nations Development Programme, and the CIA World Factbook to examine twenty-five countries from 2005-2008, providing one hundred observations. OLS regression results show that electricity exports in Africa significantly increase levels of corruption, and that the increase in corruption negatively affects standard of living, supporting the project's hypothesis that electricity exports are the source of a natural resource curse in Africa.