

**EFFECTS OF OIL RESOURCE EXPLORATION ON
NIGERIAN POLITICAL STABILITY IN OGONILAND, RIVERS STATE,
NIGERIA**

**ISHAKU HUZU MSHELIA
NSU/PMS/ERM/0009/16/17**

**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF MASTER OF SCIENCE IN
ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT OF THE SCHOOL OF
POSTGRADUATE STUDIES OF NASARAWA STATE UNIVERSITY,**

KEFFI.

OCTOBER,2018

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation has been written by me and it is a report of my research work. It has not been presented in any previous application for the award of Masters of Science. All quotations are indicated and sources of information specifically acknowledged by means of references.

Ishaku Huzi Mshelia

CERTIFICATION

This dissertation “Effects of Oil resource exploration on Nigerian political stability in Ogoniland, Rivers State” meets the regulations governing the award of Master of Science, Faculty of Environmental Sciences of Nasarawa State University Keffi.

Dr. J.I Magaji
Supervisor

Date

Dr. T.A Ogar
Head of Department

Date

Professor N.I Medugu
Internal Examiner

Date

Professor S.A.S Aruwa
Dean SPGS

Date

DEDICATION

This Research is dedicated to researchers and those who desire to acquire knowledge.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to express my profound gratitude to God Almighty who has made this project a reality, from the commencement of my academic programme. I must first and foremost express gratitude to my supervisor Dr. J.I Magaji for his wealth of knowledge, criticism, corrections, suggestions and his untiring efforts in ensuring that this dissertation is completed in good time. My appreciation also goes to Professor N.M Idris, Dean Faculty of Environmental Sciences for his untiring efforts in ensuring that we have a smooth and timely running of academic sessions.

I also wish to register my appreciation to all the lecturers of the Department of Geography who thought me one course or the other especially Professor D.U Sangari, Professor Olusegun Ekanade, Professor Kenneth Iwogu, Professor M.M Alhassan, Dr. Mahmud Abubakar, Dr. Sani Yahaya, Dr. T.A Ogar and Dr. Isa. You have all imparted me with good knowledge.

I also wish to thank those who assisted me with the needed information and those who took me round for field work to source for data and to all those who responded to my questionnaires, you have all made this research work a huge success.

My gratitude also goes to all my colleagues whom we shared knowledge and ideas together while this programme was ongoing. Thank you all.

ABSTRACT

This research work is centered on critical analysis of the manner in which oil exploitation is conducted in Ogoniland in Nigerian Niger Delta regions. It also focuses on how the region's environment is contaminated via the activities of oil exploitation, resulting to massive devastation and destruction of her natural habitats. Consequently, the socio-economic activities of the region have been retarded, slowed and in some cases completely destroyed causing hardship to its inhabitants. The inability of the Federal government to provide a sustainable development agenda for the region; the complicity of the Multinational oil companies (MNOCs) to act as responsible corporate entity adopting the highest, globally acceptable environmental standards; the often non-sensitivity of state governments to the needs of local inhabitants all conspired to rob the region of the much needed human and infrastructural development as antidote to the bastardized environment in Ogoniland.

The methodological approach to this research work was based on content analysis of literature on available textbooks, journals, magazines, newspapers, internet sources, articles and other unpublished works by professionals. Against this backdrop of the research, it came to bear the fact that oil exploitation in Ogoniland overtime has been wrongly fashioned and confirm the position of the region being deprived, alienated, marginalized and neglected. Also ascertained was the justification of the crises condition of the people of Ogoniland as a result of idleness and poverty amidst the oil wealth. Despite the inadequacies in the development relations between the oil Host region and the Federal government/MNOCs, all hopes are not lost. Sustainable development could still be attained in the region when environmental protection laws alongside favourable oil industry and land tenure ship/derivation principles are stringently put in place in the Nigerian polity. Also significant in the findings is the machinery of governance to treat Ogoniland issues with probity, accountability and service to the people.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS/NOTATION

CO ²	Carbon dioxide	
CBN	Central Bank of Nigeria	
DPR	Department of Petroleum Resources	
GDP	Gross Domestic Product	
SPDC	Shell Petroleum Development Company	
ICJ	International Court of Justice	
LGAs	Local Government Areas	
MNOCs	Multinational Oil Companies	
MOSOP	Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People	
NDPVF	Niger Delta People Volunteer Force	
NPC	National Population Commission	
OHCs	Oil Host Communities	
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals	
SPSS	Special Package for Social Science	
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme	
UN	United Nations	

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

Oil production in Nigeria has been a bag of mixed blessings, full with tales of good fortune for some and misfortune for many, depending on which side of the divide. For the country, it has been a huge fortune. It is the main source of her wealth, accounting for about 90 per cent of her foreign exchange earnings. It is the source from which governments at the federal, state and local levels fund all developmental programmes and projects (TELL, February 18, 2008). The oil sector also has been one in which the much desired transfer of technology had to some extent been achieved, especially in the areas of exploration and production.

The generally accepted scientific view is that oil exploration per se causes conflict. Its effects on fragile ecosystems and societies that are already under pressure from lack of economic opportunities will combine to exacerbate existing threats and insecurities. Increasing unemployment, widespread poverty, a growing population and an over dependence on oil as natural resource that is sensitive to environment all in the absence of a sustainable development strategy, making Nigeria highly vulnerable to oil resource conflicts that are exacerbated by environmental degradation.

The intense exploitation of oil resource (most of it unsustainable) and absence of an equitable distribution formulae increase economic inequality that results in abject poverty in the midst of plenty. In the absence of a compelling unifying socially inclusive vision for the whole country, this inequality has nourished discontent and increased vulnerability to conflict. Internal migrations that are remotely attributed to the effects of oil exploration in the Niger Delta have become a national security concern likely to disrupt political stability.

Poor governance and weak disaster management, partly as a result of inadequate information on the nexus between oil resource exploration impacts, can in themselves heighten conflict. Ultimately, the inability of the government and communities to address

and adapt to these changes depends on their knowledge and understanding of the complexities involving, the nature of responses envisaged and the inclusion of the most vulnerable in the decision making. These complexities require new approaches that make sense of the unique impacts of oil resource exploration on communities and livelihoods and sophisticates tools for policy makers and institutions to respond to conflict. This requires that those most vulnerable, who will potentially be deprived of the benefits of their resources, are factored into any human security framework developed by the government. The human security framework must consider all threats, deprivation and exclusion and vulnerability.

However, crafting a vision with which all can identify and which promotes national cohesions and reduces tensions, the current security situation might ultimately serve to unify Nigerians. To reduce the potential for conflict, the government has to foster an atmosphere of social justice and equity with the local population and communities fully empowered to actively participate in decision making processes. Thus the governance of oil resource can be made more democratic, transparent and accountable.

In light of the current problems in the Niger Delta, government should utilize existing platforms at all levels national and regional levels to mobilize oil resource and further develop institutional capacity to implement a national agenda that integrates oil resource management related security concerns into the strategic and policy framework.

Conflicts over oil resource, in particular petroleum resources in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria has been centre of global headlines for a while now. This resource conflict is further exacerbated by environmental degradation and deprivation projections that indicate that the region is one of the most vulnerable areas in terms of sea level rise, exposing the region to further loss and damage arising from climate impact. While the nexus between the oil resource exploration, conflict and the effects of sea level rise may not be directly linked, it is certain however that oil exploration events can further escalate the situation of insecurity to both human and built environment in Ogoniland the study area.

1.2 Statement of the problem

The presence of oil resource in Rivers State and Niger Delta Region as a whole presents a huge paradox. In the case of some countries, the discovery of oil and gas has contributed to the eradication of poverty and development of strong economies while in the case of other countries the discovery of these resources have contributed to political and economic marginalization of the inhabitants. This can well be seen in the case of Niger Delta region of Nigeria. It has been argued that the presence of oil has been more of a curse than a blessing to the people who have been at the receiving end of despite so many years of oil production and hundreds of billions of oil revenue, the local people remain in abject poverty without even the most basic amenities such as water and electricity. The underdevelopment of the region coupled with economic deprivation has generated frustration. This frustration has created a fertile ground for the outbreak of various forms of political conflict. The Niger Delta has a long history of violence; situation has gone from bad to worse to disastrous recently.

The Ogoniland in the Niger Delta region is a sensitive and fragile ecosystem with vast resource endowment and its immense potential for socio-economic growth and contributions to the overall development of Nigeria. The oil-producing areas within the Niger Delta remain under threat from rapidly deteriorating economic and environmental conditions as well as social tensions with the situation worsening in recent years. The perception of local people living in the oil communities is that the government is acting negligently, while the valuable ecosystems on which they depend for their livelihood are devastated by oil extraction. As a result, the situation degenerates into violence and this draws a disproportionate reaction from the government, deepening the people's resentment and sense of alienation.

Recently, political and scientific policy debates on the potential security implications of oil exploration have gained great momentum. That oil exploitation poses one of the key security challenges for global economic development and human well-being is now beyond doubt. Oil exploitation may put peace and security at risk through increased scarcity and marginalization of the host communities of such resource in the area. In addition to these scarcities, migrations are projected to increase as a result of the effects

of environmental changes in land degradation, loss of livelihood, pollution, weather, and increased frequency in extreme weather events such as floods and storms.

The potential for sustained economic growth that is inclusive and equitable can be viewed from the perspective of Nigeria's natural wealth. It boasts the highest reserves of oil on the continent and is ranked number nine globally in terms of oil deposits and production. Despite the large reserves and centrality of oil and other natural resources, it is perhaps a paradox that the country is regarded as highly vulnerable to peace and security due the mismanagement of the resources. This paradox is not surprising however, as the huge deposits of oil have not translated into major poverty reduction or increased capacity building and economic development. The result is that both people and natural systems are poorly equipped to withstand the impact of conflict, let alone recover from such impacts. However, equitable access to the proceeds of natural wealth and diversification of the Nigerian economy can increase local level adaptive capacity as well as national abilities to deal with oil resource exploitation and scarcity threats thereby reducing threats to peace and political stability.

The agitation for the equitable distribution of natural resources in the Niger Delta has recently taken a new dimension with the agitations going beyond the usual demand for increase in derivation allocation to call for sovereign state and threats to declaration of independent states. The emergence of the Niger Delta Avengers and other armed militant groups has swallowed the voices of non-violent activists like the Movements for the Survival of the Ogoni People and other peaceful agitators. All these have culminated to increase the tension in the region, threaten economic activities (through bombing of pipelines), and constitutes risks to the political system and governance.

The mangroves provide biodiversity and ecological benefits to the people of the Niger Delta regions and indeed increased economic benefits. The unsustainable use of the oil resource has increased the rate of pollution resulting to direct threat to the marine and aquatic lives in the region with its attendant economic consequences. It is in the light of the above intricacies that the researcher focused attention on the following research questions:

1.3 Research questions

- i. Is there any link between oil exploitation in Ogoniland and growing poverty level in the oil bearing communities?
- ii. Has oil prospecting improve infrastructural facilities in Ogoniland?
- iii. Has the crises situation in Ogoniland reduced the oilproducing capacity of Nigeria

1.4 Aim and objectives

The main thrust of this research was to assess the effects of oil exploration on political stability in Ogoniland, Rivers State. Towards achieving this aim, the following specific objectives were to:

- i. Systematically investigate if there is any relationship between crude oil exploration and the poverty level of oil bearing communities in Ogoniland.
- ii. Assess the extent of oil resource exploration and the impact on the socio-economic livelihood of the people in the area.
- iii. Critically examine whether the oil proceeds had not improved infrastructural needs of the people and the effects of crisis on oil production in Nigeria.

1.5 Significance of the study

The findings of this study shall be of immeasurable value to the oil host communities, the Niger Delta region, oil companies, state governments in the Niger Delta region and the Federal government.

The study shall expose certain shortcomings in our approach as students/researchers to tackle the effect of political stability in the study area and Niger Delta question in the Nigerian Federation. Multi-national oil companies (MNOCs) and government shall through the result of this research rededicate their efforts to the political and morality issues of why the Ogoniland and the Niger Delta region requires aggressive development from the challenge of oil resources exploration and environmental degradation in the region.

Equally significant is that subsequent researchers will find results of the project useful particularly in the fields of social sciences and crises management oriented topics. The research will equally serve the task of filling a gap in existing literature and ultimately

add to knowledge because the work is not devoid of the academic tradition of knowledge built on existing knowledge.

This research work is significant because it has revealed the underlying reasons that is causing instability in a region which is poverty stricken in the midst of plenty,(the Ogoniland in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria), an area that could be referred as the proverbial “the goose that laid the golden egg” that Nigeria has enjoyed for decades but yet with nothing to show for it.

Finally, the research will also serve as a means to understanding the intrigues in oil production that metamorphosed to underdevelopment and crises in the Niger Delta Region. Hence, the tasks of solving the crises and possible enhancement of socio economic development and unity of the region and Nigeria as a whole is achievable via application of moral standard by the government, oil companies, local chieftains who connive with the oil companies to exploit and sabotage the system.

1.6 Scope and Limitation

The scope of the study was defined in terms of time, space and content dimensions. In the dimension of temporal scope, the research was carried out in duration of 30 days. In the dimension of spatial scope, the study was designed to cover Gokana, Eleme, Khana and Tai local government areas of Rivers State but using selected households as samples.

The selection of these households was done on random basis but by possession of certain characteristics which were needed for the investigations as well as variables associated with the impact of oil resource exploration as its affect Nigerian political stability in Ogoniland that comprises four local government areas in Rivers State.

CHAPTER TWO

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter seeks to explore the core basis of the Niger Delta environment in terms of human and natural resources and the attendant depletion/degeneration of the natural endowments that affect the socioeconomic well being of the human resources in the region. It also serves as a basis to empirically ascertain our conceptual framework in this study as we progress in this chapter.

2.1 Conceptual Framework

Before examining how oil as a resource has become a source of political conflict, it is pertinent to have a brief conceptual understanding of the term political conflict and also to understand the roots of the conflict by incorporating the psychological theories.

This was followed by an insight into the Niger Delta area. This understanding also facilitates the outbreak of various challenges that were posed before the Nigerian Political system. The research was therefore presented as follows: a conceptual understanding of the term political conflict and the reasons for the outbreak of the political conflict were clearly explained by utilizing the psychological theories. An insight into the Niger Delta and the various forms of political conflict with which the Nigerian political system has been confronted with were discussed in this study.

2.1.1 Conceptual Understanding of Political Conflict and the Significance of Psychological Theories in Understanding the Outbreak of Political Conflict

A political conflict is a contention among collective actors over the structure, incumbents or policies of a political regime and is ubiquitous of a political regime feature of political life” (Lichbach and Gurr, 1981). Though scholars like Ted Robert Gurr (Gurr, 1980) have pointed out that there was no exact distinction in the social sciences generally or in conflict research specifically between the political and the non-political forms of conflict, yet there exist certain distinguishing characteristics which enable one to differentiate between social and political conflicts. The main components of the society are the individuals, the organizations, the institutions and the structures. In any society, conflict will arise as individuals or groups having their goals interact with one another: many of these conflicts do not become political since some of them may be either unimportant and

tend to fade away or they can be solved through the non-political channels. However, only those conflicts which enter the political process are the ones that acquire the form of political conflict (Conn, 1971). The various forms in which political conflict can occur are riots and clashes, coup d'état, clandestine and armed attacks, civil war and revolutions. Some scholars like Rudolf J. Rummel and Raymond Tanter have on the basis of their empirical studies put forward a typology of civil strife events.

According to Gurr (1970), a feeling of frustration develops when men's ability to derive satisfaction from the existing situation undergoes a change. This frustration is released in the form of conflict when men try to strike the sources of frustration. By doing so, they are in a position to release the tension that has been built by frustration. This principle, says Gurr, operates to determine a variety of individual behaviour including the action of those who rise in rebellion against the political community. Gurr thus regards aggression as a product of frustration and thus puts forward a viewpoint very different from those who regard aggression either as innate or that it is solely learned.

According to Gurr, the necessary precondition for the occurrence of violent civil conflict is "relative deprivation" which implies "actors' perceptions of discrepancy between their value expectations and their value capabilities" (Gurr, 1970). According to Gurr, value expectations generally stands for the goods and conditions of life to which people believe they are rightfully entitled to whereas value capabilities refer to those goods and conditions of life which they think they are capable of getting and keeping. The discrepancy between expectations and capabilities can emerge in relation to any collectively sought value, which can be economic, psychological or political and thus giving rise to the feeling of frustration.

2.1.2 Conceptual framework for analysis

The struggle for emancipation and development of the Niger Delta region lies at the core of the Niger Delta struggle. However, this struggle is not yet directed towards secession from the Nigerian State but merely a struggle against neglect, environmental degradation, marginalization and exploitation which has led to frustration. In examining the activities of the militia groups occasioned by the exploration of crude oil and exploitation of the environment and the people, the research explores the Frustration aggression hypothesis.

The hypothesis posits that people are pushed into aggressive behaviour by drive influenced by frustration (Dollard et al 1939).

The above explanation can further be explained from two points in relation to activities of militia groups in the Niger Delta due to exploration activities and exploitation of the physical environment and people of the Niger Delta. The first point is that frustration leads to some form of aggression. This may not take place in all situations since the level of tolerance differs from one group to another. Furthermore, the magnitude of the perceived stumbling block is a function of frustration projection. Given the relative strength of the Nigerian State in the case of the militia groups, and government face-off which often results to frustration displacement. As a consequence, therefore, the activities of militia group are directed at expatriates working with multinational companies, Nigerians in some cases and oil installations in the region who should ordinarily not be affected (Hewstone and Stroebe, 2001).

The second point is that aggression is a consequence of frustration. The socio-economic hardship, perceived marginalization and inequity in the distribution of the nation's wealth which a large proportion comes from the Niger Delta region and yet poverty is everywhere in the region. This is expressed in violent activities by militia groups in the region.

The problem of environmental pollution or degradation, socio-economic closure, deprivation and such other problems are unlikely to attract the same degree of moral condemnation that attends militia activities (Munae and McLanghlin, 2001).

In line with the conceptual framework for this study, it also links with Sustainable Development Goal 16 with a focus to promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

Goal 16 has specific targets aim at ensuring peace and stability, human rights and effective governance for sustainable development that some regions enjoy. This is by no means inevitable and must be addressed with the goal aimed to significantly reduce all forms of violence, and work with governments and communities to find lasting solutions

to conflict and insecurity, in the Ogoniland which are key to process. (UNDP, SDGs 2016).

2.2 Literature Review

2.2.1 Insight into the Niger Delta Crisis

The area which is described as the Niger Delta region of Nigeria lies between latitudes 4° and 8° East of the Greenwich and is a home of various ethnic groups like the Ijaw, Itsekiri, Urhobo, Ikwere, Andoni, Fik, Ibibio, Kalabari, Okrika which are together referred as 'southern minorities'. It comprises the states of Akwa Ibom, Cross River, Edo, Imo, Rivers, Bayelsa, Delta, Abia and Ondo making it coterminous with all of Nigeria's oil producing states. It embraces one of the world's largest wetlands, over 60% of Africa's largest mangrove forests. Comprising mainly of a distinct aquatic environment which embraces marine, brackish and fresh water ecosystems, it encompasses the most extensive fresh water swamp forest in West and Central Africa (Afinotan and Ojakorotu, 2009). Besides these resources, Niger Delta is the home of the oil and gas reserves and the oil industry. There were 349 drilling sites, 22 flow stations and one terminal in the early 1990 and about 10,000 km of pipelines, 10 gas plants, 3 oil terminals and 1500 oil producing wells by the mid 1990s. In 2007, there were over 600 oil fields, 5284 on and off shore oil wells, 10 export terminals, 275 flow stations and 4 refineries. Crude oil reserves as at 2000 were estimated at over 30 billion barrels (Ojakorotu, 2009). The region with its rich oil resources contributes about 90% of the nation's foreign exchange earnings. In spite of the rich natural resources, especially oil, the Niger Delta region remains grossly underdeveloped, pauperized, marginalized and largely a poverty zone. The basic facilities and infrastructure of a modern society like potable water, electricity, health care facilities, good roads, cottage industries and employment are lacking in the area.

The wealth derived from oil by the Nigerian federation is therefore not reflected in the socio-economic life of the oil producing communities and their standards of living. The Nigerian state does not have coherence; consistent and just formula of recycling some parts of the oil wealth it accumulates back into the communities from which oil is produced. The period during which oil became the mainstay of Nigeria, coincided with

its logic of power centralization and economic control. The rise of the military in power after the civil war gave de-emphasis on the principle of derivation as a revenue sharing formula to other factors like population, need and even development (Ojakortu, 2009).

According to (Ejibunu, 2007), the implications of this is that what oil producing states got from the federation was increasingly not commensurate with their contribution and sacrifices in producing it, since the bulk of the revenue was derived from the exploitation of oil beneath their land. Apart from the increasing marginalization of the oil producing areas in revenue allocation in the federation, there is also the problem of ecological disaster and environmental degradation that oil exploration lead to. Environmental problems like erosion, flooding, land degradation, destruction of natural ecosystem, fisheries depletion caused by dredging: toxic waste into the rivers is a common phenomenon in the region.

The local people can no longer take to farming and fishing which are their major occupations (Ojakortu, 2009). The multinationals contribute significantly to the environmental degradation of the Niger Delta through their operations with different consequences like oil spillage, gas flaring and oil pipe explosions (Ejibunu, 2007). Thus, total neglect and deepening poverty characterizes the Niger Delta communities. A broad section of the elite in the Niger Delta believes that the injustices their people suffer are due to the fact that they are minorities in the Nigerian federation. They accuse the major ethnic groups who control political power at the federal level of using oil wealth derived from the oil producing region to develop their areas at the expense of the area from where the oil is gotten.

The growing disparity between the wealthy government and impoverished inhabitants of the region has widened over a period of time. This has generated a feeling of relative deprivation which has generated frustration amongst the minority ethnic groups. This has created a ground for the emergence of various challenges before the political system (Ejibunu, 2007).

2.2.2 Various forms of Resource Conflict in Niger Delta

The frustration experienced by the inhabitants of the Niger Delta which has emerged owing to lack of trickle down of benefits from the exploration of their resources especially oil, has found its outlet in various forms of political conflicts. The details of these are chronologically given as follows:

The Boro led Niger Delta Volunteer Service, 1966 The principle focus of Boro's Niger Delta Volunteer Service which was launched in February, 1966 was to create a state of the Niger Delta people in order to address the human and infrastructural development problems of the area. Boro's struggle was a follow up of several other failed peaceful agitations of the Chiefs and politicians of the area in search of a state. The failure of the Nigerian government after independence in giving the desired attention to the development of the Niger Delta region in spite of its rich oil resources stimulated Boro's dream for self-determination. The Boro mobilized Niger Delta Volunteer Service against the Nigerian government in a war of liberation and declared a Niger Delta republic on February 23, 1966. The federal government responded by subduing the movement by employing the federal forces.

Saro-Wiwa-led Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP), 1992 after about three decades of the fall of Boroism, another revolutionary movement called MOSOP led by Ken Saro- Wiwa sprang up from the Niger Delta region. Saro-Wiwaism unlike Boroism that was widely described as guerrilla warfare, started on the premise of intellectual warfare through constructive criticism and dialogue by way of demands and protests against the exploitation of the Ogoni land by Shell and the Nigerian Government. Earlier in 1990, the Ogoni people of Rivers state had formally organized themselves in the form of a Bill of Rights. The Bill is made up of twenty points.

The Ogoni people in sum demanded amongst others, the political self-determination for themselves, the right to control and use their economic resources to develop Ogoni land, payment of reparations by government of Nigeria and petrol-businesses, compensation for the pollution and destruction of their living environment, as well as the right to protect the area from further degradation. Copies of the Bill were submitted to all appropriate quarters and published in several dailies without violence.

After two years of fruitless waiting for the Nigerian Government and multinational companies to come up with policies to address the issues raised in the Bill the Saro-Wiwa's Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP) was formed to reinforce the aims and objectives of the Ogoni Bill of Rights. The MOSOP rolled out its agenda in earnest on November, 1992. Some of its high points include: (i) the passing of a resolution that gave Shell Petroleum Development Company of Nigeria a 30-day quit notice. (ii) that by the first quarter of 1993, the "March" of January 4 and the "vigil" of March 13 has been accomplished. During the "big March", Saro-Wiwa declared thus, "the Ogoni people in Rivers States publicly reassessed the Bill of Rights which they presented to President Babangida and the Nigerian nation. In furtherance of the struggle, Saro-Wiwa's MOSOP took their message beyond the shores of Nigeria to United States in New York.

The movement was accorded the much-needed international attention after presenting its case. Thereafter, MOSOP returned to Nigeria with endorsements from international environmental groups such as Green Peace and the London Rainforest Action Group. Unfortunately, the Nigerian Government ignored all its pleas. Instead, government resorted to the harassment of the leaders of MOSOP with its security agencies. The government of General Sani Abacha and the oil companies were not comfortable with the activities of Saro-Wiwa and his movement. Saro-Wiwa was accused of inciting members of MOSOP to kill four Ogoni leaders. He and eight other compatriots were arranged for a trial in a military tribunal and were convicted and hanged in November 1995. It was at this point that MOSOP felt it had exhausted all peaceful means to achieve their set objectives and resorted to a confrontational approach.

Other movements of lesser aggressive disposition in the Niger Delta existed side by side MOSOP. These movements were ostensibly formed by younger generation of elite who wanted to renegotiate the existing social contract within the context of the present political economy of the Delta area. The targets of the struggle are the multinationals, especially shell and the state.

The Aleibiri Demonstration of 1997 It was a demonstration of over ten thousand youths from across the oil-rich Niger Delta. The main objective of the demonstration was to stop Shell and other oil companies to stop their operation in the Niger Delta.

The Egbesu Wars This took centre stage in the region between 1998 and 1999 through the amorphous tactics sustained from the Aleibiri Declaration in a modified form by bearing an identity called “Egbesu Boys of Africa”. In this era, core oil bearing states were in perpetual unrest as the Niger Delta youths became more aggressive in attacking oil installations and oil workers as they were more emboldened and courageous due to their consciousness of being impervious to the bullets of the Nigerian State Security Force.

The Asari-Dokubo’s Niger Delta People’s Volunteer Force (NDPVF) Asari-Dokubo’s struggle which came up with the aims and objectives on November, 2004, was predicated on the fundamentals of justice and equality, truth conscience, logic and facts, love for humanity and sanctity of life (NDVF Handbill, 2004). His main objective was to challenge injustice and inequality prevalent in the Nigerian State. Asari-Dokubo’s NDPVF came up gallantly and protested against what he perceived as the Nigerian government did not care about the area in spite of the more than 80% revenues derived from the area and the concomitant adverse effects on the livelihood of the people due to large scale petroleum production activities. Asari concluded that if the people of the Niger Delta do not take up arms and fight the Federal Government, they would remain poor and become poorer in future. Alhaji Mujahid Asari-Dokubo was however arrested in November, 2005 and released in June, 2007.

Ijaw protest of 1998 This was a fallout of the success of the Egbesu Boys encounter with the then Military government of Bayelsa State and as such, a more elaborate protest and agitation for resource control within the Niger Delta region ensued through the support of more enlightened youths. The federal government countered the protest by massacring youth in Yenagoa capital of Bayelsa State in December, 1998. A few months later, the government sent troops to Kaiama in Bayelsa State where a convention of Ijaw youth was called to reassess the position of the Ijaw ethnic nationality in the Nigerian Federal State. At the end of the meeting, an open letter was addressed to the government of Nigeria and

multinational companies operating in the area, requesting for more local control of oil revenues and better environmental practices. This document was known as “Kaiama Declaration” which gave the Government of Nigeria up to 31 December, 1998 to respond positively to their demands. However, the Federal Government responded negatively to the demands of the Ijaw youths.

The Jomo Gbomo-led Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND)

Amongst other faceless militant groups is one of the groups that have claimed responsibility for cases of kidnapping and hostage taking. In a statement issued by Gbomo, he owned up an attack and destruction of Agip installations in Brass, Bayelsa State. Some of the major demands put forward by MEND were: i. That Asari-Dokubo be released unconditionally, ii. Payment of compensation by Shell to communities affected by its spillages. iii. That the Niger Delta people be allowed to control their resources. iv. That all prisoners of the Niger Delta origin hold by the Nigerian government on account of fighting for justice in the Niger Delta be released(Ojatorotu, 2009). The studies of various political conflicts clearly reflect that the frustration that is experienced by the minority ethnic groups is the product of their economic deprivation. They are very well conscious of the fact that their resources particularly oil is contributing to the enrichment of the government officials and the revenues earned are diverted to the development of areas dominated by the majority ethnic groups like the Yorubas.

According to (Ajorokuta 2007), this feeling of relative deprivation that was experienced by the people in the past therefore continues to exist till date. The outcome of which is that the Niger Delta crisis which has been simmering for years has assumed a serious dimension over a period of time. The crisis has created a weird booming business of hostage taking for money and storming of banks. The government though has taken certain measures to respond to the problem like setting up of an Oil Minerals Producing Areas Development Commission(OMPADC) under the Babangida regime in 1992, replaced by the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) in 2000 and Technical Committee by President Yar'Adua in 2007. However, all these commissions have failed to provide lasting solutions to the crisis scenario. To the Niger Delta people,

the federal government is like a one armed bandit which makes laws seizing their lands and waters, oil and other natural resources and sends in armed men to kill them

(RansomeKuti, http://www.humanrights.de/doc_en/countries/nigeria/background/niger_delta_crisis.html).

The crisis in the Niger Delta region persists because of the intractable combination of neglect, vested interest, and greed and therefore in dire need of a comprehensive government strategy that is holistic, socially inclusive and proactively responsive to the continued agitations and demands. There must be some sense of ownership of all the peoples of the region in whatever strategy is being adopted and development must be people driven. The revenues earned by the government from oil, should also be ploughed back into the region so that along with the prosperity of ethnic minorities, there also take place the development of the region. This will not only contribute to the development and improvement in the economic conditions of the people of the region but will also create a sense of satisfaction. The people inhabiting the region should get a feeling that their resources are contributing to their improvement and also contributing to the development of their region. This will provide a long lasting solution to the problem which has been going for decades and has led to immense loss of material and human resources.

2.2.3 Contextualizing Resource conflict

A conflict on its own is disagreement between individuals or groups of people over ideas or interests and it is a normal part of life. It is neither good nor bad; it is how it is managed that is important. Wilmot and Hocket (1998) asserted that conflict is an expressed struggle between at least two interdependent parties who perceived incompatible goals and scarce resources with interference from others in achieving their goals. According to them, conflict can be destructive and constructive. Whatever form conflict takes, it is likely to have several impacts, which may include physical harm to humans and natural resource base, impact on productivity levels and economic development more generally.

Francis (2006) conceives conflicts as an intrinsic and inevitable part of human existence. Hence, he defined conflict as the pursuit of incompatible interests and goals by different

groups. Igwe (2002) also sees conflicts as a universal and permanent attribute of nature, life and society, necessary and unavoidable, when in terms of dialectics they serve to advance the positive evolution of phenomena, and unnecessary and avoidable, when irresoluble and their consequences are negative for society and man. The definitions above according to Aloysius-Michaels (2009) practically demonstrate inter alia that conflicts are largely the expressing of opposing interests.

Conflict can be defined as manifestation of hostile attitude in the face of conflicting interests between individual, groups or states. These conflicting interests can be over resources, identity, power, status or values (Onu, 2009). It has been generally seen as a situation in which two or more parties strive to acquire the same scarce resources at the same time (Wallenstein, 2002). Conflict would generally incorporate perceived differences in issue positions between two or more parties at the same moment. Conflict stems from the basic fact of human interdependence for individuals to meet even their basic needs, they depend on the active participation of other individuals (Foltz 1991). Conflict arises from the interaction of individuals who have partly incompatible ends, in which the ability of one actor to gain his ends depends on an important degree on the choices or decision another actor will take.

Conflict can also be described as a situation of incompatibility, struggle or unhealthy competition or rivalry between individuals or groups in a condition where there is a strong desire on the part of one party to carry out the means or achieve the ends, or the distribution and allocation of collectively owned resources which are, or appear to be incompatible with others. (Phil-Eze, 2009). Conflict is thus a manifestation of a struggle to resist or overcome opposing forces or powers in a condition of opposition, antagonism or discord. It is instructive to note that a number of violent conflicts have erupted in many parts of the world over struggle and control of environmental resources. For instance, in several African nations, lucrative minerals resource soil and other strategically important minerals have fuelled ongoing conflicts. Many countries have been devastated by war due primarily to predatory governing elites who use their control over the resources to enrich themselves and equip the armies to maintain their command (environmental literacy council, 2008, Madu, and Ayogu, 2009).

Another concept central to this study is environment. Environment refers to the totally extreme condition affecting the life and development of organisms whether on land, air or water. It is the total surrounding of man, including air water, land, natural resources, humans etc. as well as their interaction. Sada (1988) defines environment as a system within which living organism interact with the physical elements. The definition of environment should be human focused and human centered because the condition of the environment is derived from human perception and human surrounding. Such definition should be all embracing to capture all aspects of human surrounding that affect the survival at a comfortable level of existence. It is only within this purview that one can understand that any attempt to violate the environment will always generate conflict (Phil-Eze, 2009).

Environmental conflict has been a major concern of the world bodies such as the United Nations (UN) because of its rapid escalation across the globe. The connection between environment and conflict is rooted in the scarcity or abundance of natural resources within and between states as well as the unequal access to these resources.

Thus, the quests for natural resources have increased the rate of occurrence of conflicts in different cities, states or nation states to the point the intervention of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) was required in some cases. An example is the dispute between Nigeria and Cameroun over the oil-rich Bakasi Penninsula.

In Nigeria, environmental conflict is mostly resource induced most especially through exploitation of mineral resources and its indirect effects. Most of these conflicts come about over the ownership of land (farming, fishing, oil deposit, solid mineral deposits etc.) Oyefusi (2007) observed that Nigeria has not been spared the agony of recurring violent conflicts associated with the management of her oil resource in the South South geo-political zone of the country.

Nyong (2007) also asserted that the major sources of conflict in most of the Northern states in Nigeria are ecological degradation induced by climate change and degradation. Similarly in the South West and South East political zone of the country, environmental conflict arise mostly over the direct use of land, water, wild life and forestry resources

which are caused by physical scarcity when local demand exceed supply (Phil Eze, 2009).It is therefore appropriate to observe that there is no part of Nigeria that is not prone to environmental conflict. According to Vold (1958) social conflict represents a universal form of interaction in which groups are naturally in conflict as their purposes and interest/goals overlap, encroach on each other and often tend to be competitive. Therefore, the competitive achievement oriented nature of modern society makes social conflict part and parcel of the dynamics of society (Anugwom, 2009).

2.2.4 The Resource Curse: Advocates and Skeptics

The resource curse is generally a condition in which a country that relies heavily on one or more types of resources for its budget revenues has negative economic outcomes. This phenomenon is sometimes also called the “curse of oil or the paradox of plenty”. A few of the possible negative economic outcomes of the resource curse include slower growth, the Dutch Disease and the lack of a tax base (Albert, I.O (2001b). In addition to the economic aspects of the resource curse, it is also associated with negative political outcomes, such as more authoritarian political systems, greater than average (as compared to other countries) corruption and governments or societies that are prone to war. The last effect of the resource curse that states may be more prone to war has been a subject of increased research and coincides in part with this study. One important point that should be made clear at the onset is that countries that have an abundance of one or more natural resources, but are diversified economically, do not necessarily have negative economic outcomes (Adewuyi, A.O. (2001).

According to Adewumi A.O (2001), the resource curse, much like peak oil, is a dominant perspective in academia, development organizations and international organizations. Unlike the typical binary opposition in the peak oil debate, there are more nuanced views when discussing the resource curse. Four dominant perspectives in this debate include: 1) heavy reliance on one or more resources in a country predisposes it to negative economic outcomes; 2) a country’s abundance of one or more resources is not inherently problematic, but in the long-term, this resource endowment does hamper a country’s economic development; 3) along with negative economic outcomes, a country that succumbs to the resource curse also tends to have an undemocratic system, high-level of

corruption and/or a propensity for war; and finally, 4) resource-endowed countries may have positive economic outcomes and are not necessarily prone to above average levels of corruption or war. Jeffrey Colgan, Paul Collier, Mahmoud A. El-Gamal, Terry Lynn Karl, Macartan Humphreys, Amy Meyers Jaffe, Michael Ross, Jeffrey Sachs, Joseph Stiglitz and Andrew Warner are some of the proponents of the resource curse. Instead, some of the authors who question the resource curse, see some benefit to resource endowment, or strike a neutral tone are Matthias Basedau, Charles Kenny, Jann Lay, Daniel Lederman and William F. Maloney.

2.2.5 Resource Curse Advocates

According to Richard Autry, who coined the term resource curse “resource-rich countries fail to benefit from a favourable endowment; they may actually perform worse than less well-endowed countries. This counter intuitive outcome is the basis of the resource curse thesis.” Two of the most notable proponents of the resource curse theory are Jeffrey Sachs and Andrew Warner. Their influential paper, *Natural Resource Abundance and Economic Growth*, written in October 1995, tracked 95 countries over a 20 year period and found that those states that were less endowed with natural resources, surprisingly, performed better economically. With regards to oil, the likely reason for negative economic outcomes is that the entrenched interests of petro state bureaucrats and actors involved in the oil industry create a symbiotic relationship that stifles normal economic development. The elite’s oil interests operate outside the norms of a free market system and the main goal is the perpetuation of this oil-dominant system. Furthermore, this interaction between groups involved in the oil industry and the state creates an “oil culture” of norms and rules, specifically:

The proposition that natural resources are a boon for countries has held sway until recent decades. Development organizations, economists and policy makers saw oil and other natural resources as an advantage for countries’ development and modernization; resource wealth would enable the transition from developing to developed countries Jeffrey (2005). The development community has not outright discounted the potential for resource wealth to aid countries, but there is greater caution about unexpected consequences from resource wealth such as governance issues.

2.2.6 The Niger Delta Oil Crisis

In his attempt to identify the real and potential issues that spark political controversy, Odaro (2001), focused his attention on five main sources of political conflict. These areas, he identifies as power, resources, social identity, ideas, and values. He argues strongly that resources are a source of political contention within and between nations. On natural resources, such as crude oil, Sodaro (2001) posits that it is a source capable of stimulating intense political contention. Whether the issue concerns drilling rights in Alaska or the more explosive matter of who controls the Middle East's abundant petroleum reserves, oil has provoked conflicts ranging in severity from legislative wrangling to mortal combat. In the same vein, Humphrey (2005) observes that highly influential research by Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler at the World Bank Suggest that countries whose wealth is largely dependent on the exportation of primary commodities a category that includes both agricultural produce and natural resources are highly prone to civil violence.

The Niger Delta crisis has come to constitute a dominant issue in Nigeria's political, social and economic discourse. Historical evidence points to the fact that just before independence, the minority peoples of Nigeria raised an alarm with regard to their fear of future domination and exploitation by the majority ethnic groups in an independent Nigeria.

In this regard, Humphrey (2005) observes that the conflict that ensues out of this feeling of marginalization is borne out of the desire to put an end to this age long practice. Humphrey (2005) tends to confirm his findings by observing that "natural resource wealth may be seen as more unjustly distributed than other wealth". This negative feeling and world view has contributed in no small measure to the calls for resource control, among other agitations by the Niger Delta militant groups.

According to Okoko 1991, a central theme which runs through deprivation, poverty and disempowerment and under-development a dominated perception is that the oil wealth being produced in the Niger Delta with all the attendant hazards for communities is being siphoned away for the development of more politically powerful, non-oil producing areas of Nigeria. Humphrey (2005) has observed strongly that oil politics has led to political instability in many countries. Using Chad as a case study, Humphrey (2005) emphasizes

that “the role of oil in Chad’s politics illustrates some of the complexity of the linkages between natural resources and conflict.

Humphrey further assert that the Niger Delta condition has become increasingly complex as a consequence of the constant degradation of the environment by the activities of the Nigerian (rent taking) Federal Government and the multi-national oil exploring, and producing companies; which include Total Fina Elf, Mobil Producing Unlimited, Texaco, Shell and Chevron. The Niger Delta people who are predominantly farmers and fishermen argue that as a result of the pollution of their environment, they can no longer engage in legitimate sources of livelihood. This is sequel to the fact that the land has been destroyed by oil spillages and rain dust (a direct consequence of gas flaring at oil location/rig sites). They equally complain that the rivers are almost now empty of aquatic and marine life, being a consequence of the over mixture of spilled oil and water. Some argue equally that the dynamites used by the oil exploring companies contribute a lot to the destruction of marine life in the Niger Delta. The oil company’s pollutants and spillages according to Nna (2001) degrade the environment and devastate fauna and flora, in turn destroying or dislocating the basic economic life of the people likely to lead in rural-urban migration, prostitution, intra and inter community conflict, and underlie the nature of crisis in the Niger Delta.

In the same vein, Ogbogbo (2006) observes that with exploration and exploitation of crude oil in the region brought environmental degradation of unimaginable proportion. Apart from massive deforestation, there was the poisoning of the ecosystem through incidents of oil spillages and gas flaring. Indeed, the already fragile Niger Delta environment became further devastated. This negative experience of the region without commensurate adequate compensation was to result in conflict with both the oil companies and the Nigerian state.

This condition of environmental pollution reflects the poor state affairs which has become a recurring decimal in virtually all the Niger Delta creeks. On this condition, the Tell magazine (quoted by Akpan, O. and M. Bonchuk, 2008) comments thus “According to statistics, there have been well over 4000 oil spills in the Niger Delta alone since 1960”. Another report on the activities of oil prospecting companies in the Niger Delta

has also indicated that companies like Shell Petroleum Development Company, Mobil, Agip and Chevron have added to a “slow poisoning of the waters of this country and a destruction of vegetation by oil spills which occur during petroleum operations” gas flaring in Nigeria is highly inefficient and releases large amounts of methane, which has very high global warming potential. The methane is accompanied by the other major greenhouse gas, carbon dioxide, of which Nigeria was estimated to have emitted more than 34.38 metric tons in 2002.

The Niger Delta people have through several media, demanded attention from the Federal Government and oil producing companies. These agitations culminated in the recent struggle for resource control or at least, 50% derivation of the income generated from the sale of crude oil. Ekpo (2003) has argued that crude oil production has been by far the most important economic activity in the Nigerian economy since the early 1970s is not subject to debate. Its impact is not limited to it’s contributing approximately 90% of Nigeria’s total foreign exchange earnings. However, after oil became the mainstay of the nation’s economic base, derivation has been drastically reduced.

2.2.7 Niger Delta Crisis: Matters Arising

The downturn, recorded by Nigeria’s economy from the 1980s signaled tough times for her citizens. This is irrespective of the fact that the amount of crude oil drilled from the land and territorial waters of the nation has been on a steady rise. According to a study sponsored by the World Bank during the 1971- 83 economic boom years (Auty, 1993), both major oil exporters and major hard rock mineral oil exporters performed less well than their resource poor counterparts. This World Bank report was confirmed by further research conducted by Jeffrey D. Sachs and Andres Warner (cited in Ross, 1999). They used 97 (ninety-seven) countries which were studied over nineteen years period; applying regression analysis in measuring the impact of mineral and other resource export on GDP growth. They concluded their study on the note that a high “ratio of natural resource exports to GDP in 1971 had abnormally slow growth rates between 1971 and 1989”. We corroborate this finding by adding that the trend has not changed significantly with regard to a country like Nigeria as at 2009.

But, a lot of voices clamored for immediate sharing of the excess revenue and had their way. Shortly after this, though, the global price of oil came crashing. The world faced an economic recession and the windfall from oil ceased.

In the midst of these huge revenue received by the different levels of government, the citizens remain largely poor, sickly and unemployed. Nigeria's poverty index remains on a steady rise, especially, with the absence of a middle class.

We therefore argue further, that to a large extent, the higher dependence of the Nigerian economy on this natural resource (crude oil) has become a problem, not a solution to the nation's development problems. One of these problems is the Niger Delta crisis. This condition is made worse by the near perpetual existence of corrupt, visionless, bad and quick-fix mentality leadership style from 1960 till date.

The Niger Delta crisis has reached a level of urgent national attention. It has gone beyond agitations for resource control and or derivation principle, to the taking (kidnapping) and killing of (oil company workers) hostages and soldiers. The Niger Delta region has as a result of these incidents, been described as the hot bed of Nigeria during the lifetime of the last administration.

2.2.8 Oil Exploration and the Resultant effects on the Environment

In broad sense, the Niger Delta environment has been vulnerable as a result of oil exploration activities in the region. Vulnerability is a set of conditions and processes resulting from physical, social, economic and environmental factors, which determines the susceptibility of a community to the impact of hazards (Schmidt–Thome and Jarva, 2003). Environmental degradations leading to vulnerability assessments forms on identification of all possible physical, social, economic and environmental factors that are occupying the Niger Delta as a result of both natural and anthropogenic transformations which include: exploitation of natural resources (especially crude oil) urbanization, industrial development, deforestation among others. These negative trends are not just exposing the dedicate ecosystem of the Niger Delta to harsh climate variability but are also deepening the region's vulnerability to natural disasters. By disasters, we mean exceptional events that suddenly result in large number of people killed or injured or large economic losses (Satter– Thwaite, 2003).

Since the mid 1980's, when oil overtly displaced traditional economic activities in the Niger Delta, the region has witnessed phenomenal growth in urbanization with attendant implications for the environment. The rise of oil cities and oil jobs in the region have generated mass migration, urban sprawl, slum housing, traffic congestion and increased human and industrial pressure on already tenuous situation. More so, natural terrain and hydrology have exposed the region to constant threat from certain environmental problems, especially flooding, siltation, occlusion, erosion and shortages of land for development (UNDP, 2006). The local inhabitants of the Niger Delta region have lived with these hazardous conditions for several years and have evolved ways of dealing with them albeit in an ineffective manner; hence, their frequency and intensity further exacerbated by global warming.

Oil exploration activities that mostly and overtly contribute to the environmental degradation of the Niger Delta includes:

Gas flaring

Gas flaring and venting which represents a significant source of global warming is one of the biggest environmental problems associated with oil exploration and exploitation in the Niger Delta. In the course of oil production, gas is released as a by-product. This is known as associated gas. Approximately 75 percent of about 95 percent of the associated gases are flared. This makes Nigeria to flare gas more than any other country in the world (Tell Magazine, February 23, 1998). The Nigerian legislation of 1969 required oil companies to set-up facilities to use the associated gases from their operations within five years of commencement of production. The 1970 legislation set a time lag of October 1979 – April, 1980 for oil companies to develop gas utilization projects or face fines (SPDC, 1993).

According to a November, 2007 report by the Department of Petroleum Resources (DPR) fields in Nigeria still flare gas (Ugwuaren, 2008). Most Oil Host Communities (OHCs) in the Niger Delta lives with gas stacks that flare gas 24 hours a day at a temperature of 13 – 14, 000 degree Celsius. These gas flares produce 35million tons of CO² and 12million tons of methane, more than the rest of the world (Bassey, 2001). This condition makes the oil industry in Nigeria a significant contributor to global warming.

The hazardous health risks of gas flaring have been long acknowledged in Nigeria, but not winding the environmental health risks against the people of the Niger Delta, the gas flaring in oil exploitation continue to persist. The most worrisome thing is the manner in which deadlines set to stop the practice of gas flaring has been continuously shifted.

However, without any gas utilization projects of its own the government could not credibly enforce this legislation. Following lobbies by oil companies, limited exemptions to this rule were granted in 1985 by an amendment and regulations which allowed gas flaring in certain cases. The cost to operating companies of leasing gas flaring far outweighed the fines imposed, hence they prefer flaring the gas at the expense of the Niger Delta inhabitants and pay the fine to the Federal Government. In January 1998, fines for gas flaring were increased from N0.5 to N10 (US 11) for every 1,000 standard cubic feet (scf) of gas (Human Rights watch, July 1975).

Agreements between oil companies and Federal Government fixed December, 2007 as the deadline for end of gas flaring. The date was reached after earlier deadlines in 2003 and 2004 failed to meet. However, gas flaring has continued unabated in defiance of the government's warning that the act would not be tolerated beyond the agreed deadline. Following pressure from the oil conglomerate amazingly the Federal Government late 2008, shifted the deadline to end gas flaring from December 31, 2007 to December 31, 2008. Yet it was alleged that oil multinationals were still lobbying for further extension to 2010. Today, the fine for gas flaring is N20 for every 1,000 scf. According to CBN, gas flaring has been reduced and about 65 percent is now flared and payment of fines continues CBN (1998). The purported lobby of the oil conglomerates had some truism because as at the time of this research which was December, 2010 to early parts of 2011, the ugly trend of gas flaring by oil companies was still frequently cited (sighted?) at various oil fields in Baylesa State of the Niger Delta.

Oil spillage:

Oil spill is the accidental, natural or deliberate discharge of crude oil or oil products on land, lakes, ponds, creeks, streams, rivers and sea during drilling and transportation of crude oil by the multinational oil companies. The problem of oil spill is another major devastating environmental hazard associated with the oil industry in the Niger Delta.

The U.S. Department of Energy estimates that over 4,000 oil spills discharging more than two million barrels of crude oil have occurred in the Niger Delta since 1960. (Nwilo and Badejo, 2001). In specific records, there were 1600 cases of oil spills resulting in the release of over 1.678 million barrels of oil into the environment in 1970–88 periods. Also there were 45 cases of oil spills in 1993, (Nwilo 2001).

The bad aspect of oil spill is that whatever natural habitat that comes to contact with the spilled oil particles will receive a negative effect. Hence, oil spills had exterminated a lot of the natural endowments in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. This was why Steven Tombofa (2005) opined that the negative externalities of crude oil production are associated with primary sources such as oil spills, oil blow-out and gas flaring.

Deforestation

Another destroying effect of oil exploration to the Niger Delta environment is the deforestation of the environment's bushes. "The Niger Delta region, the oil industry is a very important factor of mangrove forest destruction. In addition to illegal logging brought on by increased accessibility to forest, the extraction of oil as well as increased investment in the gas sector has accentuated the rate of deforestation in the Niger Delta region. Massive exploration, drilling and the construction of pipelines for the transportation of oil and gas products within and beyond the Niger Delta region has led to the clearing of forests to construct pipelines, flow stations and other oil facilities (Badejo, 2001).

This further devastates the already delicate ecosystem of the region. The destruction of forest and coral relief (reef?) contribute both to the vulnerability of the region to natural disasters and global climate change. As these forest ecosystems were being depleted, the rate at which CO² is withdrawn is further reduced, hence adding to the poor environmental conditions of the people of Oil Host Communities (OHCs).

CHAPTER THREE

THE STUDY AREA AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

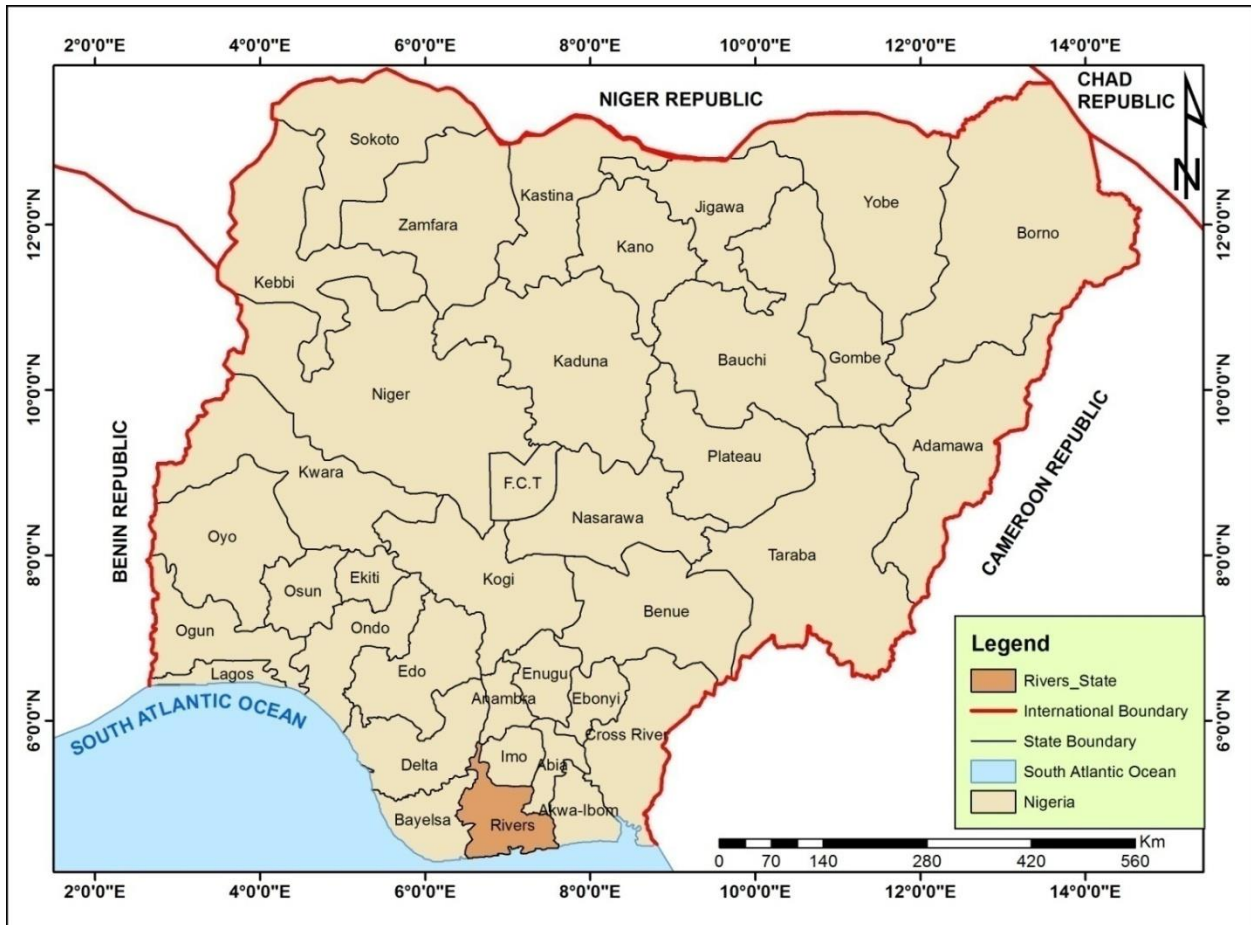
3.1 The Study Area

Ogoniland is situated in an area east of Port Harcourt in Rivers State figure 3.2 and because of their agricultural economy and an increasing population; most of the rain forest that once covered the area has been cleared for farming. The area forms part of the coastal plains, featuring terraces with gentle slopes intersected by deep valleys that carry water intermittently.

Ogoniland, occupies a surface land area of 1,000 square kilometres in Rivers State, southern Nigeria figure 3.1. Ogoniland is situated in the Niger Delta region, the third largest mangrove ecosystem in the world.

The region is divided administratively into four local government areas: Eleme, Gokana, Khana, and Tai figure 3.3. The Ogoni people are predominantly farmers and fishermen.

Figure 3.1 Nigeria Showing Rivers State



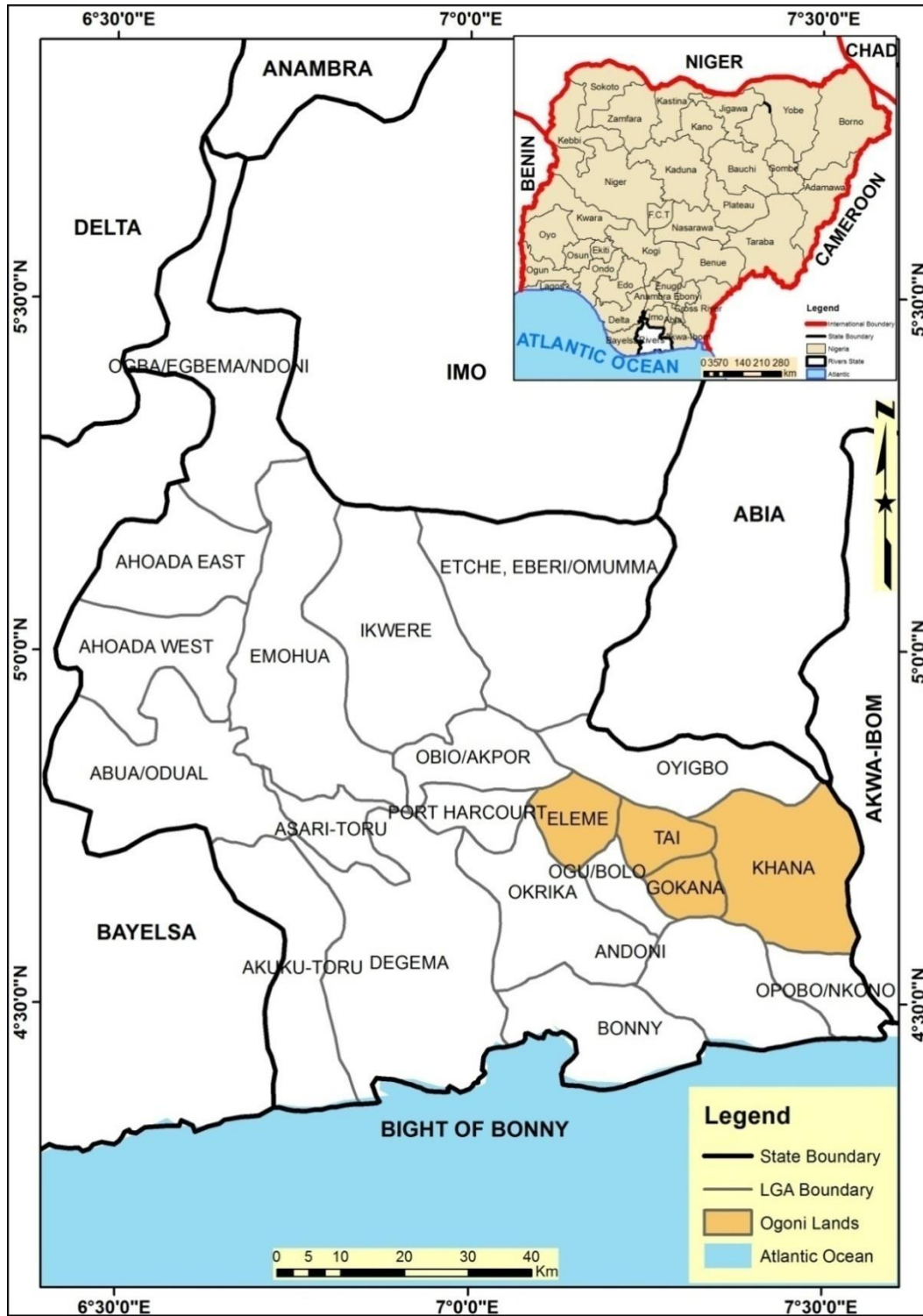
Source: Department of Geography/Geographic Information System GIS NSUK

Figure 3.2 Rivers State Showing Local Government Areas (LGAs)



Source: Department of Geography/Geographic Information System GIS NSUK

Figure 3.3 Rivers State Showing Ogoniland (The Study Area)



Source: Department of Geography/Geographic Information System GIS NSUK

3.1.1 Location

The Ogoniland is located between longitude $4^{\circ}45'N$ $6^{\circ}50'E$ and latitude $4^{\circ}75'60''N$ and longitude $5^{\circ}23'73''E$ and latitude $6^{\circ}25'05''N$ east of Port Harcourt in Rivers State respectively.

3.1.2 Population

According to the information available at the National Population Commission (NPC), the total population of Ogoniland stood at 832,000 out of Nigeria's total population with the growth rate of 3.1% (NPC, 2006).

Based on the above information, the present demographic information of the study area can be determined using the equation stated below:

$$P_f = P_p (1 + r/100)^n, \text{ where:}$$

$$P_f = \text{Future Population} = ?$$

$$P_p = \text{Present Population}$$

$$r = \text{Growth rate}$$

$$n = \text{No. of year required}$$

$$P_p = 832,000 \text{ (Base year population i.e. 2006)}$$

$$r = 3.0 = 0.03$$

$$n = 11 \text{ years (2007 – 2017)}$$

$$P_f = 832,000 (1+0.03)^{11}$$

$$= 832,000 (1.03)^{11}$$

$$= 832,000 (1.3842338707) = 1,151,682.5804$$

$$P_f = 1,151,683$$

Projected at 3.0% population growth rate from 2006 to 2017, it is expected therefore that the population will increase to about 1,151,683 at 3.0% growth rate.

3.1.3 Climate and Rainfall

Rainfall in Rivers State is seasonal, variable, and heavy. Generally, south of latitude 05°N, rain occurs, on the average, every month of the year, but with varying duration. The State is characterized by high rainfall, which decreases from south to north. Total annual rainfall decreases from about 4,700 mm on the coast to about 1,700 mm in extreme north of the State. It is 4,698 mm at Bonny along the coast and 1,862 mm at Degema.

Rainfall is adequate for all year round crop production in the State. The duration of the wet season is not less than 330 days, of which a great number is rainy days (days with 250 mm or more of rain). For Port Harcourt, the rainy days are about 182. Mean maximum monthly temperatures range from 28°C to 33°C, while the mean monthly minimum temperatures are in the range of 17⁰C to 24⁰C.

The mean monthly temperature is in the range of 25°C to 28°C. The mean annual temperature for the State is 26°C. The hottest months are February to May. The difference between the dry season and wet season temperatures is only about 2°C. Relative humidity is high in the State throughout the year and decreases slightly in the dry season (Salawu 1993).

3.1.4 Geology

Ogoniland lies on the recent coastal plain of the eastern Niger Delta. Its surface geology consists of fluvial sediments. This includes the recent sediments transported by Niger River distributaries and other rivers, such as Andoni, Bonny and New Calabar. These materials deposited as regolith overburden of 30m thickness are clays, peat, silts, sands and gravels.

The depositional sequence exhibits massive continental sand stones overlying an alternation of sandstones and clays of marginally marine origin, but eventually grading downwards into marine clays. Sands, by far, form the largest group of rock types in Rivers State, while mud constitutes all the polluted brackish waters of the riverine areas. However, peat constitutes the various vegetal and animal remains that lie in bogs and

shallow pits. The gravel and pebbles form the last unit of the subsurface rock type, and are usually found at the base of the river channels.

3.1.5 Relief and Drainage

The land surface of Ogoniland can be grouped into three main divisions: the fresh water, the mangrove swamps and the Coastal Sand ridges zone. The freshwater zone is the plain that extends north wards from the mangrove swamps. This land surface is generally less than 20m above sea level.

This lower Niger floodplain has a greater silt and clay foundation and is more susceptible to perennial inundation by river floods. The value of the mean thickness appreciates upward to about 45m in the northeast and over 9m in the beach ridge barrier zones to the southwest. The flood plain is a geomorphic structure whose trends west wards and southwards are broken in many places by small hogback ridges and shallow swamp basins (Aisuebeogun, 1995). The southern part is affected by great tidal influence. Most water channels in the freshwater zone are bordered by natural levees, which are of great topographical interest and of great economic importance to the local people for settlements and crop cultivation. The upland is undulating to the hinterland and attains a maximum height of 30m above sea level at Okubie, to the southwest. The narrow strip of sandy ridges and beach ridges lie very close to the open sea.

The soils of the sandy ridges are mostly sandy or sandy loams and supports crops like coconut, oil palm, raffia palm and cocoyam. Fourteen of the twenty three LGAs of the State are located on the upland with varying heights between thirteen to 45m above sea level. These include Ogoni, Ikwerre LGAs, Ahoada, Abual/Odual, Ogba/ Egbema/Ndoni LGAs and Port Harcourt LGAs. The drier upland area of Rivers State covers about sixty-one percent while riverine area, with a relief range of 2m to 5m, covers about thirty nine per cent of the State. The entire topography of the State is also characterized by a maze of effluents, rivers, lakes, creeks, lagoons and swamps crisscrossing the low lying plains in varying dimensions.

The drainage is poor, being low lying with much surface water and a high rainfall, of between 3,420 mm and 7,300 mm. Thus, almost all riverine LGAs are under water at one time of the year or another. Again some areas of the state are tidally flooded, while others

are seasonally, thus limiting agricultural practices and nucleated/urban settlement development that would have enhanced social welfare facility provision. The State is drained by two main river systems, i.e. freshwater systems whose waters originate either outside or wholly within the coastal lowlands, and tidal systems confined largely to the lower half of the State. Drainage densities of rivers within the state have typical value of 1.5 km and sinuosity ratios are in excess of 1.9, indicating that the meandering channels are tortuous. These systems have a general downstream increase in width and velocity, especially in the freshwater zones. The State is drained by the Bonny New Calabar river systems and by a maze of effluent creeks and streams. River bank levees are prominent and valley side slopes are very gentle and experience a great deal of erosion and accretion. All the rivers enter into the sea through wide estuaries.

3.1.6 Socio economic Activities

The economic life of the people of Ogoniland is largely determined by their environment. Those who live around the coastal areas are largely fishermen and traders, whereas those in the hinterland cultivate food crops such as cassava, yam, vegetables etc, and cash crops such as oil palm and rubber. Given the regional occupational specialization between the coastal and hinterland Niger Delta, a bilateral trading relation existed between the two blocks over time. While the coastal fishermen supplied fish to the hinterland, they nevertheless depended on them for the supply of food items which could not be cultivated in the swampy areas.

3.2 Research Methodology

This section adopted the method used to conduct the research, for proper understanding, the steps include sources of data, research design, population of the study area, sample and sampling techniques, instruments for data collection, method of data collection and method of data analysis were employed.

3.2.1 Sources of Data

Primary Sources: The primary sources of data involved direct field observation through reconnaissance survey with the use of questionnaire and focus group interview were conducted.

Secondary Sources: This sources data involved the collection of information (data) from existing literatures, journals, published books, thesis, internet and other print media. Data collected from these sources were juxtaposed with the theoretical framework for logical and empirical analysis.

3.2.2 Research Design

A survey research design was used for this study; this focuses on peoples' perception, beliefs and opinions on the effects of oil resource exploration on political stability in Ogoniland, Rivers State as its affect Nigeria as a whole.

3.2.3 Sample Size and Sampling Technique

The sample size was drawn from the population of the study areas comprising Eleme, Gokana, Khana, and Tai local government areas that constitute the Ogoniland. A total sample size of 200 questionnaires was used to represent the entire population of the region. The respondents were selected using a systematic sampling technique. This was because it has to do with the selection of a sequence of units separated on the listing by the length of an interval. It involves systematical selection of (N) size of sample units from the total population of (N) unit. The researcher's choice of the systematic random sampling procedure was based on the avenue created for the selection of units by the length of intervals. It is considered as the most widely known sample design (Ngu, 2005). The findings from the sample population were used for the generalization of the whole population under study.

The sample size of the population as projected from 2007 to 2017 at 3.0% was calculated as follows:

Total Population X 3

100

Table 3.1 Sample size base on proportion allocated for each local government area

Study Areas	Proportion Allocated
Eleme	50
Gokana	50
Khana	50
Tai	50

3.2.4 Instrumentation

The instrument used for data collection was questionnaire, which was design by the researcher and thoroughly scrutinized by the supervisor before administration of the instrument.

3.3 Method of Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics such as tables' charts, average mean, percentages and special package for social science (SPSS) were used for this study.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AD DISCUSSION

4.1 DATA PRESENTATION

This chapter presents the results of the questionnaire survey carried out in the study areas this was so because questionnaires were used as means of intervention to gain a wide-ranging of options and views from the inhabitants of the four affected Local Government Areas of Eleme, Gokana, Khana and Tai that constitute Ogoniland on the effects of oil resource exploration on Nigerian political stability as the study area.

Furthermore, the results were logically presented in order to address the research aim and objectives. Similarly, the results analyzed were complemented with interpretations and discussions and these notes the trends, patterns and their significance with relevance to the research problem. The data were analyzed using inferential statistics. The administered questionnaires survey comprised of four broad sections (A-D), each with its specific purpose hence the approach to analyzing the results were divided into aforementioned areas as well as the interpretation and discussion in addressing the research problem.

4.2 Socioeconomic and Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

According to Fellow and Liu (2003), research projects takes place in numerous contexts that impact on the research and results which include the sample group characteristics therefore, having awareness and understanding of the characteristics of the sample population help focus the analysis and put the results into perspective. These include gender, age, education, and occupational distribution thus a detailed explanation of the demographic characteristics of the respondents enumerated above were given in a tabulated format and subsections using the statistical package for social science to plot the results in statistical package as presented in the tables as follows:

Table 4.1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Sex Distribution	Eleme	Gokana	Khana	Tai	Total
Male	28	33	37	22	120
Female	22	17	13	28	80
Frequency	50	50	50	50	200
Percentage (%)	25	25	25	25	100
Age Distribution	20-29	30-39	40-49	50 - Above	Total
Frequency	33	56	54	57	200
Percentage (%)	16.5	28	27	28.5	100
Education	Tertiary	Secondary	Primary	Non Formal Education	Total
Frequency	45	57	46	52	200
Percentage (%)	22.5	28.5	23	26	100
Occupation	Farming	Public Servant	Trader	Undisclosed	Total
Frequency	93	53	34	20	200
Percentage (%)	46.5	26.5	17	10	100

Source Author's Field Work, 2018

Figure 4.1 Pictorial Representation of Sex Distribution of Respondents

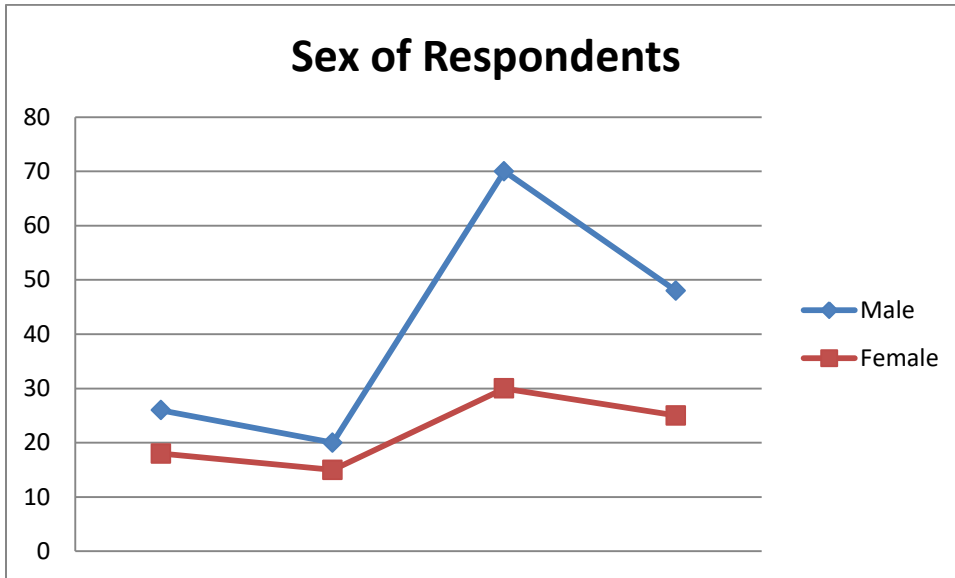
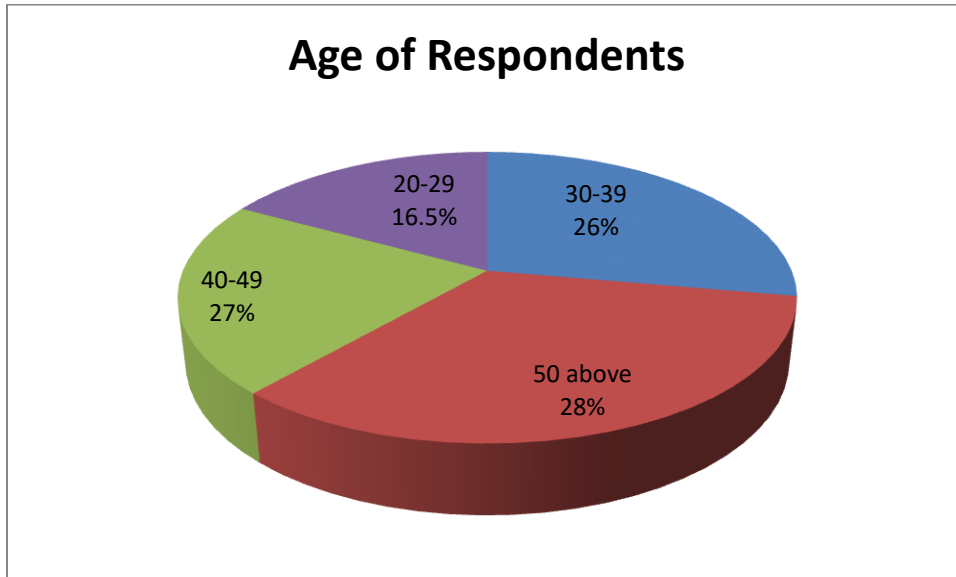


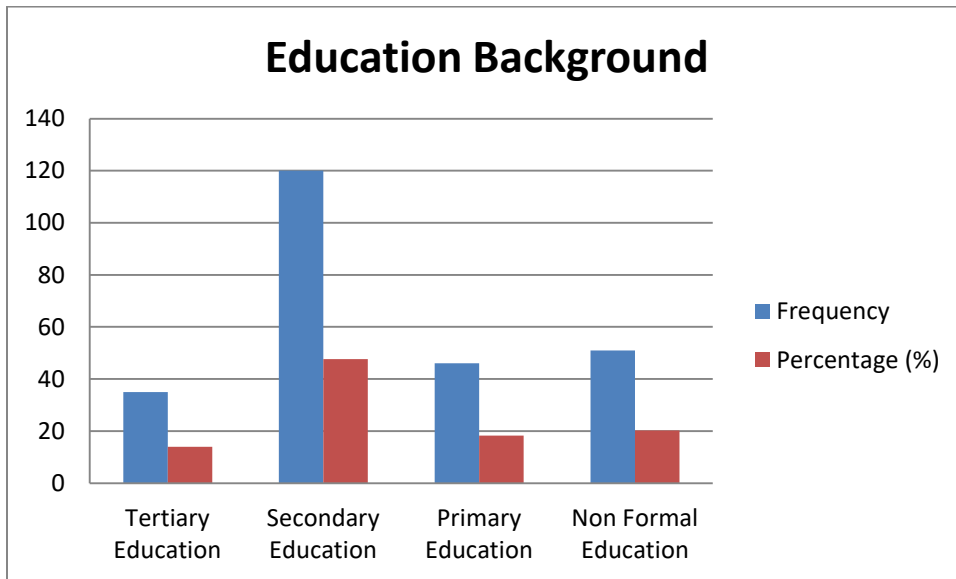
Figure 4.1 shows these sex distributions of the respondents in the four local government areas under study that were sampled for the purpose of distributing questionnaires with their pictorial representation showing their percentages. A total of 120 out of 200 respondents were mostly male while 80 were female. Hence, male accounts for 60% of the population while the female accounts for 40% of the population that were sampled. This showed that more male availed themselves than female in providing the information that was needed for this research.

Figure 4.2 Age Distribution of Respondents



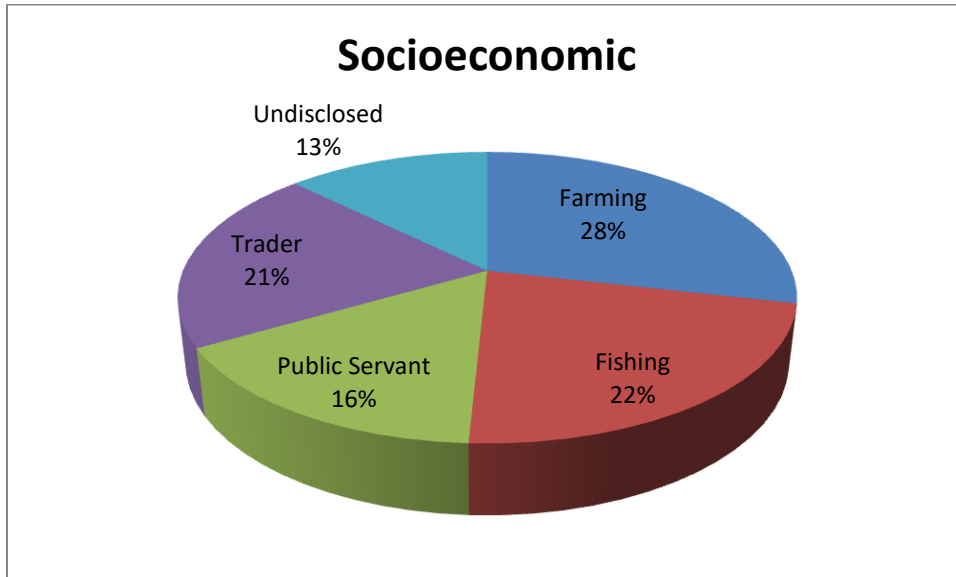
The above frequency of respondents' age distribution in Table 4.1 and Figure 4.2 showed that the age ranges between 30 and 39 with 26% respondents, 20 to 29 had 16.5% respondents, and 40 to 49 had 27%, while 50 and above had 28.5% respondents respectively. This showed that the highest proportion of respondents with 28.5% and 27% constitutes the most active population in the communities which were mostly youths. The results also showed that the respondents were in different age group which was good for the study because they were able to tell their different impacts of oil exploration on the socio-economic livelihood of the people and as well the peace and security of the area as practiced and observed by the respondents and how it has also affected the ecosystem environment as illustrated in figure 4.2.

Figure 4.3 Educations of Respondents



From the results presented in Table 4.1, the responses indicated that 26% of the respondents had no formal education, 23% had primary education as their basic qualification, while 28.5% and 22% of the respondents possessed secondary and tertiary education respectively. This most likely explains the occupational distribution in the various communities based on the level of education acquired by them that availed them such opportunities. The information is also illustrated in the pictorial representation in figure 4.3 above. It was evident that the level of education also characterized the way of life of the people in the communities as could not have access to the early western education that guarantees economic prosperity of individuals.

Figure 4.4 Occupations of Respondents



The results of the questionnaire analysis showed that the economic lives of the people of the area were largely determined by their environment. Those who live around the coastal areas were largely fishermen and traders Table 4.1 and Plate 4.1 whereas those in the hinterland cultivate food crops such as cassava, yam, vegetables, and cash crops such as oil palm and rubber Table 4.1 and Plate 4.2. Given the regional occupational specialization between the coastal and hinterland in Ogoniland, a bilateral trading relation existed between the two blocks over time. While the coastal fishermen supplied fish to the hinterland, they nevertheless depended on them for the supply of food items which could not be cultivated in the swampy areas.

Results of the occupational distribution of the respondents above further revealed that 46% of the people engaged in farming activities, 26.5% were public servants while 17% of the respondents were traders. Also 22% of the population engaged in fishing as socio-economic activity, these showed that most people in Ogoniland engaged in farming activities plate 4.2 which by implication depend directly on the environment as their source of survival.



Plate 4.1 Fishing activities in Ogoniland



Plate 4.2 Farming activities in Ogoniland

4.3 Nexus between Oil Exploration and Poverty Level of Ogoniland

Results of the questionnaire analysis and interviews conducted indicated that, the economy of Ogoniland was characterized by the paradox of wanton economic destruction without poverty reduction, and the appalling increase in the number of the poor. This study however found out that about 75 percent of the Ogoni people lives in the rural area

without pipe borne water, electricity and motorable roads. The lands were devastated with oil exploitation, water pollution, frequent oil spillage and the air that is distorted daily with external gas flares.

The people in the region (like other residents in the other zones) depend solely on their environment for their source of livelihood. They were predominantly farmers, fishermen and hunters. These occupations make them seemingly inseparable from the land such that any activity, policy or arrangement that will take or snatch their lands or water away from them without alternatives was considered a 'death sentenced or life-imprisonment'.

The region is therefore described as poor. The incidence of poverty in the area has drastically been increasing after the oil boom.

Today, the peculiar identity of Ogoniland (Niger Delta) crisis, amplified by incessant communal clashes and youth restiveness was as a result of lack of development and increased poverty level in the area. The Ogoniland is now a place of frustrated expectations and deep-rooted mistrust. Though the long years of neglect could be adduced for this but it has implanted in the community, a mentality and feeling of hopelessness and eternal deprivation especially among the women and the youth. With this impression, persistent violence has become the order of the day notwithstanding several efforts of government and other stakeholders in changing the tide.

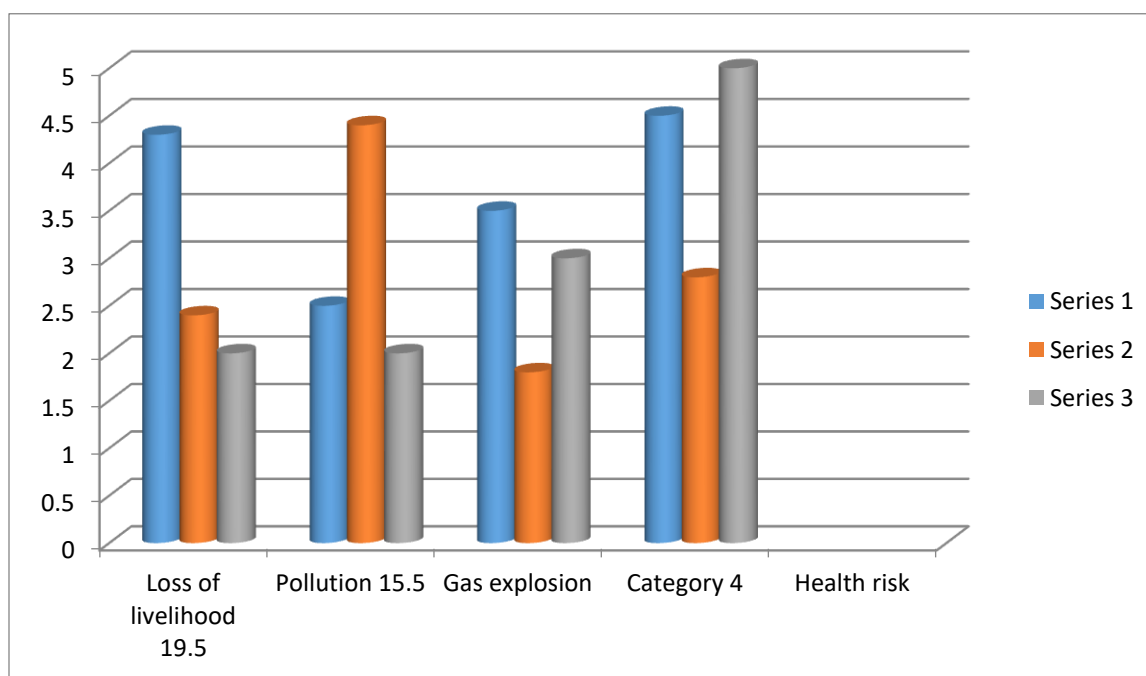
4.4 Extent of Oil Exploration and Impact on Socio-economic Livelihood

Table 4.2 Environmental impacts of oil exploration and production

Effects	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Destruction of the ecosystem	35	17.5
Gas explosion	28	14
Health risk	40	20
Clean-up obligation and cost	27	13.5
Loss of business and subsistence rights	39	19.5
Pollution	31	15.5
Total	200	100

Source: Author's Field work, 2018

Figure 4.5 Impact of oil exploration



Analysis of the questionnaire responses in Table 4.4 above has shown that oil exploration has caused extensive spill and long-lasting devastation to the claimant's lands and fishing

waters and has a profoundly detrimental impact on the life of the communities. Large areas of the mangrove ecosystem have been destroyed. The mangrove was once a source of both fuels for the indigenous people and a habitat for the area's rich ecosystem, but is now unable to survive the oil toxicity of its habitat. The oil spills have also had adverse effects on marine life, which has become heavily contaminated; in turn having negative consequences for human health from consuming contaminated seafood (plate 4.3). Oil spill has also destroyed farmlands, polluted ground and drinkable water in the area.



Plate 4.3 Visible hydrocarbon pollution on surface water in Ogoniland

Results further shows that gas pipeline transverse the mangroves leaked and cause fire incidences that have resulted in a large number of human fatalities with 14% of the respondents. Result also indicated that gas flaring on agriculture showed a direct relationship between gas flaring and productivity decline in agriculture.

The respondents also indicated that all their means of livelihood have been destroyed by the oil exploration activities.



Plate 4.4 Evidence of Oil spill polluted agricultural land

Plate 4.4 shows the hydrocarbon polluted land that has impacted negatively on the agricultural livelihood of the people, many communities in the oil producing areas have always complained of poor crop yield, animal production neglect and hardship. Many have left their homes because of the harsh economic effects of oil pollution on them. The communities can no longer fish, farm or hunt because oil production has polluted their rivers and made farmlands unproductive, see plate 4.3 and 4.4.

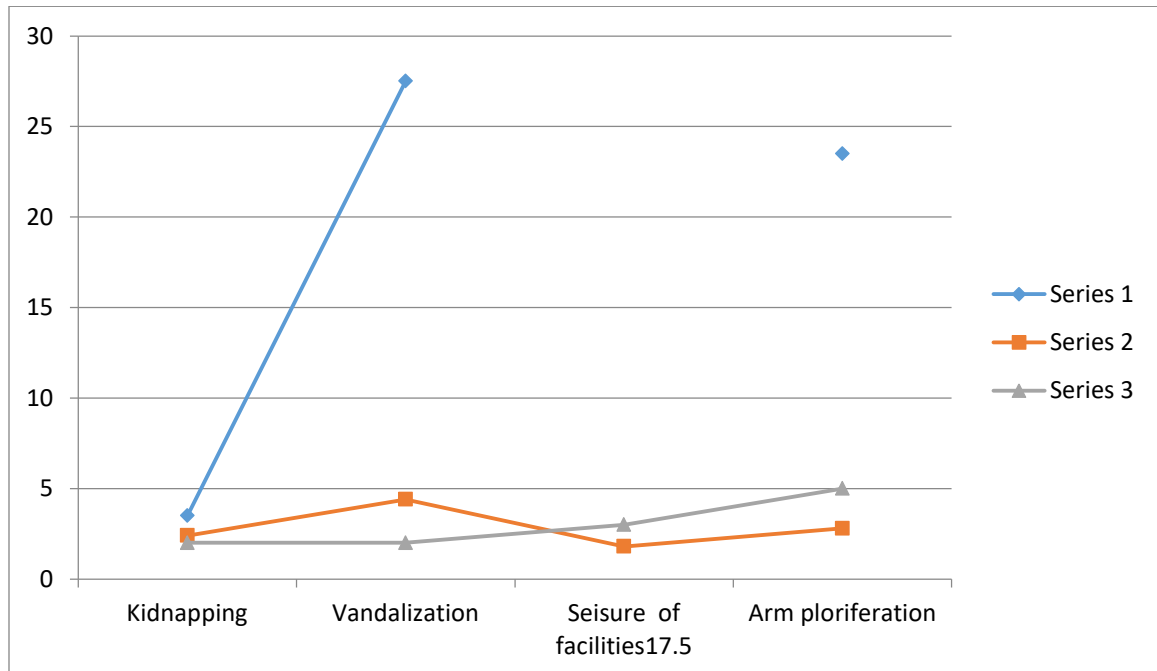
4.5 Oil Exploration and the Effects of Crisis on Oil Production

Table 4.3 Oil exploration and instability

Types of Crime	Frequency	Percentages (%)
Kidnapping	63	31.5
Vandalization of oil installations	55	27.5
Occupation of sites and seizure of facilities	35	17.5
Proliferation of arms and the emergence of militia groups	47	23.5
Total	200	100

Researcher's Field work, 2018

Figure 4.6 Effect of crisis on oil exploration



The Table 4.5 analysis of results showed that the increasing rate of marginalization, deprivation, perceived insensitivity on the part of the State (i.e. Federal Government),

environmental degradation and the failure of State and multinational corporations' interventionists' effort at ameliorating the socioeconomic conditions of the inhabitants of the region brought about the various types of crimes being perpetrated in the area. The crises in the region are usually generated via oil production related causes. This condition mostly carries a frustrated anger that results to oil pipe vandalism that will lead to oil spills. Oil spills either man made or equipment failure has resulted in the loss of lives and property.

The respondents further stated that before the advent of violence in the area, there were however, peaceful non-violent approaches towards redressing the problems of the region. People in the region have peacefully engaged the government Nigerian State for the development of the region without much success. At inception of the struggle, they have channeled their demand through several non-violent community based organizations. Through these organizations, the oil producing States have demanded greater participation in the control and management of oil resources which includes the following: (i) The restoration of the principle of derivation as the criteria for the allocation of oil revenue (ii) Demand for increase in oil revenue allocation from the current 13 percent to 25 percent which subsequently graduate to 50 percent (iii) the abrogation of all repressive and obnoxious legislation such as the Petroleum Act, Land Use Decree that have concentrated too much power at the centre and at the time disempowered the people of the oil rich region, the failures of the aforementioned for several years of peaceful engagement heralded a violent phase of the struggle.

The results of the analysis also indicated that this situation has resulted in the reinforcement of the option of violence as against peaceful means. This is manifested in the increasing rate of violence which is manifested by incidence of kidnapping, with 31.5%, vandalism of oil installations, having 27.5% rate which has the highest rate of crime in the area. Others include the occupation of oil sites and seizure of facilities, which recorded 17.5% and the proliferation of arms and the emergence of militia groups who have combated the State having 23.5% Table 4.4.

The results also show that the activities of ethnic militia groups in the study area occasioned by the frustration characterizing the region have transformed from struggle

against deprivation and marginalization to criminality. Frustration leads to some form of aggression. The socio-economic conditions of the people of this region coupled with lack of political will to find possible solution to the problem of the region by the Nigerian State, militia groups have mounted several violent attacks on the Nigerian State. The state of insecurity occasioned by the activities of ethnic militia of oil exploration activities in the Niger Delta has affected the socio-economic well being and political stability of the Nigerian State.

The people further states that, the sustained exploration and production activities in the region without strategic and holistic efforts aimed at managing the impacts of these activities have resulted in undesirable consequences, as a result, the region has become an unstable area in the Nigerian State where access to vie revenue has become a source of violence.

4.6 Oil Host Communities and Infrastructural Neglect

Oil exploration in Ogoniland has not translated to improvement of infrastructural facilities. Responses from the respondents indicated that, over 95% of the people live in small rural settlements with less than 500 in populations. About 85% of these rural populations depend on informal enterprises such as fishing, canoe carving, subsistence agriculture, blacksmithing, and so many other economic activities as their primary source of livelihood. The oil industry has impacted negatively on them. Similarly, these rural communities lack basic infrastructural amenities. The social services here are grossly deplorable, inadequate and absent in most cases, hence, encouraging the drift of their youths to urban centers.

The proceeds of these oil fields and others were not used to develop the community's infrastructure and otherwise, hence Ogoniland till date lacks social and infrastructural development at the communities. The region epitomizes a condition of political oblivion, social obscurity and developmental neglect and decay because of loss of economic pre-eminence as her oil wells dry-up. Indeed, presently fertile oil wells communities in Ogoniland had not received anything significantly different in terms of

developmental strides than the previous years of oil exploration and exploitation in the communities.

According to a staff engineer of Shell BP who confirmed that the injustice of these oil rich region of Ogoniland stated thus: “I have explored oil in Venezuela, Kuwait and Nigeria, I have never seen any oil rich town as completely impoverished as Ogoniland”.

4.7 The Struggle for Resource Opportunities

Report had it that youth groups or gangs acting on their own or on behalf of community youths or community leaderships make demands and blackmail or threaten the Multinational Oil Companies (MNCs) to respond. When the multinational oil companies (MNCs) fail to respond or respond too slowly, they disrupt or stop MNC productions, take over or even vandalize oil facilities, take hostages and seize vehicles and properties, see Table 4.6as adopted.

Table 4.4 Selected Cases of Youth Actions in Respect of Oil Based Resource Benefits (2000–2003)

S/N	Incidents/ Time	MNC	Community/ Youth Group/ Ethnic Group/State	Demands
1	Invasion of Qua Iboe Terminal, Seizure of 3 Vessels, Production Disruption/April 2000	Exxon Mobil	Community Youths/Ibena Community/Aqua Ibom State	Electricity
2	Occupation of Shell Rigsat Tunu & Opukulli, 165 staff held hostage/July–August 2000	Shell	Militant Youths of Egbema, Agalabiri & Agbichiama Communities/Bayelsa State	Jobs
3	Stoppage of work on Gas Project, Shut down of 5 flow stations/January 2001	Shell	Youths of Odidi/Delta State	Facilities, registration of indigenous contractors
4	Seizure of Shell Housing Estate, Kolo Creek Camp/February 2001	Shell	Youths of Otuasega/Bayelsa State	Employment, scholarships and environmental compensation
5	Sealing off of Off shore Oil rig, Hostage of 88 workers/April 2002	Chevron/ Texaco	Ilaje Youths/Ondo State	Employment
6	Occupation of Etobele Flow stations/May 2002	Shell	Ogboloma Youth Federation, Ijaw/Bayelsa State	Employment, Scholarship
7	Abduction of staff/July 2003	Chevron/ Texaco	Egbema National Front, Youth/Delta State	Development and empowerment
8	Invasion of premises/August 2003	Oil Servicing co.	Itsekiri Community Youths/Delta State	Employment

Adopted from: Abugo 2000; The Guardian 26.04.2012

Table 4.6 indicates, there have been numerous incidents of community and youth actions to compel benefits from the MNCs. These usually relate to employment, contracting, facilities and scholarships. But often aside these are numerous cash payouts and settlements paid out to communities and their leaders and youths as part of MNC pacification of actual or potential rancor and disruptive elements or as part of general inducements and rewards for community co-operation. But the more direct actions of

compelled cash benefits from the MNCs are in the form of abductions and kidnappings for ransom. This has been pervasive in the core oil producing areas of Rivers state for a long period of time. Dozens of indigenous and expatriate workers, particularly foreign nationals and security personnel attached to MNCs have been kidnapped and ransom demands made. It does appear that there are kidnapping syndicates and warlords to which some militias are loyal.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary of Findings

Oil exploration and exploitation in Ogoniland should have been concomitantly addressing the developmental challenges of the Oil Host Communities and the Niger Delta region when the resultant monetary value attached to oil production is imagined.

However, the fundamentally centralized governance character of the Nigerian State and systematic injustice has rendered the oil proceeds from Ogoniland a mixed blessing to the region and Nigeria at large. The oil exploitation activities have indeed devastated the fundamental bases for the development of the region. Corruption hugely funded by oil has damaged the culture of hard work and in general the work ethics of many of the people in the region. Governance has largely lost its focus as the key development institution in society and now is mostly seen as an instrument for primitive accumulation by the privileged few.

Oil exploitation by the Multinational Oil Companies (MNOCs) were expected to manage exploitation activities responsibly, sensitively and effectively in such a way that biodiversity, ecosystem, fauna, the soil system and the atmosphere were preserved, clean, productive, stable, healthy and adequate for human livelihood. Oil exploitation in the region for over 50years has not guaranteed the positive externalities for the local economies to realize livelihood sources, traditional occupations, employment, incomes and other socioeconomic development indices towards the region.

In the absence of exemplary character in the issues of good governance, human rights, civility and democracy in the oil exploitation activities in the region, the region especially oil Host Communities has become a breeding ground for crime, youth restiveness, state repression/violence, disarticulated and divided communities, deaths, prostitution, heightened health hazards/illness, destroyed communal tradition/social fabric and aggressiveness all over the region.

This abnormal conditionality surrendering the oil exploitation business coupled with the developmental Challenges in the region creates a clear condition of alienation of the people of Ogoniland and their oil and gas resources.

5.2 Conclusion

In conclusion, exploration in Ogoniland (Niger Delta) of Nigeria avail the country the opportunity of harnessing an important natural resource like oil and gas, that has made Nigeria famous internationally. But sarcastically, the region especially oil host communities do not reflect that such an important natural resources deposits that are found and exploited in the area judging from their physical looking in terms of developmental strides.

After decades of wanton degradation of the natural environment which is the associate syndrome of oil prospecting and the refusal of both the oil companies and the Federal Government to accede to the wailings and clamors for unjust exploitation with the accompanied challenges of development in the region. The inhabitants of the region resorted for solace in a rancorous manner resulting in commotion, convulsion, disturbances, turmoil, discomposure, distraction and violence in the region. This situation of agitation was started by the Ogonis then followed by the Ijaws, Itsekiris and the Urhobos. Subsequently, the clamors for development in the region metamorphosed to the present merger of pan Niger Delta struggle for a fair portion of the oil resource to be used for the development of the region in all realms/spheres of development.

The activities of oil prospecting companies appear to improve the incidence of growing level of poverty in the region. As already postulated in the work, the Ogoniland which once had friendly, habitable, fertile and receivable lands, topography, atmosphere, climate, rivers, creeks, lakes, streams, seas, vegetation and wildlife are being destroyed by the activities of oil exploration and exploitation in the region. Hence, the people suffer the results of scarcity of the natural products that makes life more meaningful.

This research further affirmed that oil exploitation in the region has not translated to improvement of infrastructural facilities. The conditions of under development were proven with the empirical lack of infrastructural facilities at Oloibiri (the mother community of crude oil in Nigeria). Equally demonstrated were the ill-fated

developmental studies by administrative boards put in place by the Federal Government of Nigeria. The non-inclusion of Host Communities as partners of the oil business is being strengthened by the obnoxious laws of the Federal Government thereby leaving the development challenges of the region.

The crisis situation in the area has created an unstable oil production rate in Nigeria. Here, the factors and contribution of elites of the region to crisis was explored and incidents of conflicts in their chronology also x-rayed. Then, the clear notion of dwindling oil revenues was seen as a result of crisis that affects or truncates the production process from time to time in the oil producing region of Nigeria.

Sequel to the above therefore, the series of persistent, spontaneous, organized actions against the oil firms and Nigerian state by Oil Host Community members are a function of the feelings of aggravated frustration and deprivation. The consistent failure of government policy instruments set up to address the challenges of sustainable development in the region, over the years, that worsened these feelings of resentment.

The use of oil proceeds to empower groups and communities is very important to finding an enduring remedy to the issues of dislocations and disharmonies in the region knowing that socioeconomic transformation of any society and the creation of a decent standard of living for the people is tied in how well individuals have been empowered to be able to contribute to the process of societal transformation.

The above situation suggests that identification of the most affected groups such as, farmers, fishermen, women and youths with their heart-felt needs entails access to capital for self-reliance. More so, while emphasis is placed on oil bearing communities, community felt needs should be prioritized if quick impact is to be made.

To be able to achieve the above, the responsive agencies must be adequately empowered and guided by the principles of accountability, probity and service. Sustainable development of the Ogoniland can be realized when the need for environmental protection is taking into cognizance. Stringent environmental policies and the will for enforcement must be made if the gains of empowerment are to be sustained in the region.

1.3 Recommendations

In the intricacies, intrigues, power-play, deprivation, acrimony and crisis that surrounds the oil wealth of the Ogoniland which is occasioned with development challenges in the region and for the purpose of oil exploitation to strive with peace and sustainability, hereby recommend as follows:

- Oil companies should partner proactively with oil Host Communities.
- Land acquisition should be in a cost effective way.
- MNOC should act as responsible corporate entities by adopting the same high environmental standards applicable in their home countries in the Ogoniland and not lowering the standards as the case now.
- Government and MNOCs should seek to improve the quality of life in the areas of oil exploitation activities.
- Government and MNOCs should always take steps to enhance, resuscitate and improve on the environmental degradation challenges of the people of the Ogoniland.
- MNOCs should attach priority to payment of compensation for damages that results from operations
- Above all, moral laws favourable to the oil bearing communities/region should be put in place to regulate; land tenure ship, derivation, compensation, development plans, environmental hazards assessment, targets to meet emergency situations and corporate governance with honesty and service to the people.

These proposed tenets, when explored and diligently practiced, will afford the Federal Government, Multinational Oil Communities (MNOCs), Oil Host Communities (OHCs) and the entire Oil region the opportunity to peacefully exploit the oil resources to the zenith at every given point in time in the region.

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APPENDIX A
QUESTIONNAIRE
NASARAWA STATE UNIVERSITY, KEFFI
DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am a postgraduate student of the above named institution, and presently undertaking a research on *“Effect of Oil Resources Exploration on Nigerian Political Stability in Ogoniland, Rivers State.”*

I solicit for your assistance to fill the items below, which shall be used strictly for academic purpose and success of this research and the information given in this regard will be treated with absolute confidence.

Yours Sincerely,

Ishaku Huzi Mshelia.

Instruction: Tick as appropriate in the boxes provided/write in blank spaces where applicable.

Section (A) Demographic Characteristics

1. Community _____

2. Age of respondent: 15 – 25 26 – 35 36 – 45 46 above

3. Gender: Male Female

4. Educational qualification: Non-formal Primary

5. Secondary Tertiary

6. Occupation: Farmer Civil Servant Trader

Section (B) Socioeconomic Activities

7. What are the types of economic activities common in your community? Farming

Fishing Trading others specify -----

8. What is your main source of livelihood? -----

Section (C) Impact of oil exploration related conflicts

9. How has oil exploration impacted your community? Negatively Positively

10. Has oil exploration affected the economic livelihood of the people in the community?

Yes No

11. How does oil resource exploration triggers political stability in the area? -----

12. Has your community ever fight over the ownership of oil resource? Yes No

13. What is the nexus between oil explorations, political stability and poverty in the area? -----

14. Have u been given attention for development as a result of oil exploration activities? - -----

15. What are the environmental challenges being experienced and their implications to security in the area? -----

Section (D) Oil resources political instability Measures

16. How can we mitigate the potential impact of oil exploration as threat to conflicts? ----

17. How can oil resources exploration crisis be resolved or averted in your area? -----

18. Has there been any effort by the Government/MNOC to resolve the crisis on resources exploration in your area? Yes No others specify-----

19. What are your demands from MNOCs and the Government to salvage this lingering problem? - -----