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**OILPOLITICS AND VIOLENCE IN THE NIGER DELTA OF
NIGERIA: THE ROLE OF REGIONAL ELITE (2005-2016)**

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**OILPOLITICS AND VIOLENCE IN THE NIGER DELTA OF NIGERIA: THE
ROLE OF REGIONAL ELITE (2005-2016)**



**A Thesis submitted to the Ghazali Shafie Graduate School of Government, in
fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy
Universiti Utara Malaysi**



Kolej Undang-Undang, Kerajaan dan Pengajian Antarabangsa
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ABSTRAK

Perebutan minyak dan keganasan yang tercetus di rantau Delta Niger, Nigeria telah menarik perhatian para ilmuwan dan pembuat dasar dengan fokus kajian tertumpu pada faktor-faktor penyebabnya. Walau bagaimanapun, peranan golongan elit yang mencetuskan konflik ini kurang mendapat perhatian. Oleh itu, kajian ini bertujuan untuk mengisi kekosongan ini dengan mengkaji peranan yang dimainkan oleh golongan elit ini di dalam keganasan politik dan pilihan raya dan menganalisa tuntutan mereka terhadap pengawalan sumber dan penstrukturan semula politik Nigeria. Kajian ini menilai keberkesanan atau sebaliknya Program Pengampunan Presiden dan mengkaji ketelusan dan kebertanggungjawaban golongan elit di dalam pengurusan sumber. Pendekatan dalam menyelesaikan konflik ini turut dicadangkan di dalam kajian ini. Kaedah kualitatif telah digunakan di dalam kajian ini bagi mendapatkan maklumat yang mendalam mengenai peranan golongan elit di dalam konflik Delta Niger. Bagi tujuan mengumpulan data, seramai dua belas orang telah ditemubual di dalam kajian ini dengan menggunakan teknik temubual separa berstruktur. Temubual telah dijalankan di empat buah negeri dengan menggunakan “purposive sampling” dan teknik snowballing dalam merekrut peserta. Temubual direkodkan dan kandungannya telah ditranskripsikan secara verbatim. Analisis tematik telah digunakan di dalam menganalisa data. Dapatan kajian menunjukkan bahawa golongan elit telah menyumbangkan kepada konflik tersebut bukan sahaja melalui salah urus sumber di rantau ini, tetapi juga pembiayaan, pergaulan dan menyerapan kumpulan militia ke dalam kerajaan. Mereka juga telah menerajui pengkajian semula formula pengagihan pendapatan dan mengesyorkan pengampunan untuk militan Delta Niger. Dapatan kajian juga menunjukkan bahawa syarikat minyak multinasional dan Kerajaan Persekutuan Nigeria juga telah bertanggungjawab dalam mencetuskan keganasan di rantau ini. Kedua-dua teori elit - teori kawalan sumber dan teori frustrasi-pencerobohan, bersama-sama dengan model teoretis yang dibangunkan oleh penyelidik, dapat meningkatkan pemahaman tentang konflik ini. Kajian ini mencadangkan, antara lain, penggunaan sumber secara berhemat, penyediaan kemudahan sosial, pemantauan aktiviti-aktiviti syarikat minyak, dan menghukum ahli-ahli politik yang didapati bersalah kerana menyalahgunakan golongan belia untuk menimbulkan kekacauan. Untuk mencapai keamanan di rantau ini, kajian ini memutuskan bahawa pelbagai pihak berkepentingan, terutama golongan elit, perlu memiliki kesungguhan politik dan menunjukkan komitmen terhadap pembangunan di rantau ini melalui tindakan dan bukannya hanya dengan memberi ucapan retorik.

Kata Kunci: Politik Minyak, Keganasan Politik, Pilihanraya, Niger Delta, Nigeria, Peranan Elit

ABSTRACT

The scrambling for oil and the outbreak of violence in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria have attracted the attentions of scholars and policymakers, with most of the research focus on their driving factors. Nonetheless, less attention has been given on the roles played by the elites in generating this conflict. Hence, this study is intended to fill this vacuum by examining the roles of these elites in political and electoral violence and analyzing their demands for resource control and political restructuring of Nigeria. It also assesses the effectiveness or otherwise of the Presidential Amnesty Programme and examines the transparency and accountability of the elites in the management of resources. This study recommends several measures to resolve this conflict. Qualitative method is used in this study to elicit in-depth information on the elites' role in the Niger Delta conflict. Twelve interviewees took part in the study, and semi-structured interview technique was used for data gathering. Interviews were conducted in four states, with purposive sampling and snowballing techniques were employed in recruiting the participants. The recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim. Thematic analysis technique was used to analyze the data. The findings show that the elites have contributed to the conflict through mismanagement of the region's resources, and by financing, fraternising and co-opting militia groups into the government. They also spearheaded the upward review of the revenue allocation formula and recommended amnesty for Niger Delta militants. The research findings also demonstrate that multinational oil companies and the Nigerian Federal Government were also responsible for triggering terrorism in the region. Both elite theories - resource control and frustration-aggression theories, together with the theoretical model developed by the researcher, could enhance understanding of this conflict. This study recommends, among others, prudent use of resources, provision of social amenities, monitoring of activities of oil companies and sanctioning of politicians who are found guilty of misusing the youths to incite trouble. The study concludes that for peace to reign in the region, various stakeholders, especially the elites, should muster their political will and show commitment towards regional development through actions rather than just giving rhetorical speech.

Key Words: Oil Politics, Political Violence, Election, Niger Delta, Nigeria, Role of Elite

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my late father Mustapha Adeosun and friends Mohammed Usman Fagge and Mohammed Kabir Bui. May Allah forgive them and make Jannah Firdaws their abode (Amen).



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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

APC	All Progressive Congress
AU	African Union
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EFCC	Economic and Financial Crime Commission
FLP	First law of Petro-politics
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HRW	Human Right Watch
ICG	International Crisis Group
INC	Ijaw National Congress
INEC	Independent National Electoral Commission
IPOB	Indigenous People of Biafra
IYC	Ijaw Youth Congress
JTF	Joint Task Force
MASSOB	Movement for the Actualisation of Sovereign State of Biafra
MEND	Movement for the Emancipation of Niger Delta
MNDA	Ministry of Niger Delta Affairs
MNOC	Multi-national Oil Company
MOSOP	Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People
NAPIMS	National Petroleum Investment Management Services
NDA	Niger Delta Avengers
NDDB	Niger Delta Development Board
NDDC	Niger Delta Development Commission
NDPVF	Niger Delta Peoples' Volunteer Force
NDV	Niger Delta Vigilante
NNOC	Nigerian National Oil Corporation
NNPC	Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation
OMPADEC	Oil Mineral Producing Areas Development Commission
PAP	Presidential Amnesty Programme

PDP	Peoples' Democratic Party
PIMCO	Project Implementation and Monitoring Committee
PTDF	Petroleum Trust Development Fund
SALW	Small Arms and Light Weapons
TCND	Technical Committee on Niger Delta
TETFUND	Tertiary Education Trust Fund
TNOC	Trans-national Oil Company
UN	United Nations
WHO	World Health Organisation



CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Oil and political violence in the oil belt region of Nigeria called the Niger Delta and the part played by the elite of the Niger Delta in the conflict are the focus of this study. The chapter gives an overview of the whole study and sets the stage for the subsequent chapters that follow. The chapter incorporates the background to the study, a statement of the problem, research questions, and the objectives, the significance of the study, the scope of the study, research method, definition of key terms, reliability and validity as well as organisation or structure of the study.

1.2 Background to the Study

Oil is the most sought after natural resources in the globe by both developing and developed nations. It is strategic because is the lifeblood of modern economies and the force behind the military machine (Renner as cited in Ejibunu, 2007). Several violent conflicts experienced today in different parts of the world are traceable to this non-renewable natural resource. Ross (2004) and Humphreys (2005) considered oil to be prone to violence. For instance, Tombalbaye, former president of Chad was toppled in 1975 because of oil. Similarly, Humphreys (2005) avers that the control of oil wealth cannot be ignored in Chad's politics. It has brought and removed leaders from office and influenced the political agenda of the country. In a like manner, Johannes, Zulu, and Kalipeni (2015) argue that the inter-communal clashes between

the Turkana and Pokot communities in Northwestern Kenya were over land that contained about 600 million barrels of oil. Meanwhile, oil was the reason for the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and its subsequent annexation as one of the provinces of Iraq in 1991 (Le Billion, 2005).

Indeed, one distinct characteristic of resource abundance and dependent nations of the third world is a resource-based conflicts (MCNeish, 2011). Several studies have been conducted on the effect of abundant natural resources of developing countries on their development, conflict, and democracy. Prior to the late 1980s, there was a positive relationship between natural resources abundance and development, but since then, studies have shown that resource abundant nations are prone to unrest, poor governance and low economic performance (Collier & Hoeffler, 1998, 2000, Ross, 2004; Humphreys, 2005; Collier, 2007; Kaldor, Karl, & Said, 2007).

Nigeria, Africa's leading oil producing nation and thirteenth in the world (African vault, n.d) is a good example of resource curse nation. Like other natural resource-endowed countries like Algeria, Gabon, Congo DR, Angola, Iraq, Nigeria is confronted with numerous problems among which are slower economic growth rate, pervasive corruptions, and political violence. These problems are features associated with the resource endowed nations. For Ross (2012), non-oil states are getting wealthier, democratic and peaceful whereas the oil abundant and dependent nations in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, are not peaceful, democratic and wealthier.

The significance of oil and its consequences cannot be overemphasized. Oil contributes substantially to Nigeria's federally collected revenue. For example, from its initial N0.1 million contributions to government revenue in 1958, the share of oil contributions to government revenue rose to N3830.05 trillion in 2015 (Table 3.4, p. 125). But the 2015 figure is low when compared to previous years and the reasons for these are low production due to the ongoing damage to oil infrastructure and the fall in the price of crude oil in the international market.

Oil is instrumental to the growth and development of Nigeria. According to Murtala (cited in Martins, 2014) oil has promoted Nigeria's image as a leading oil producing nation in Africa and also improved the nation's economic advancement, infrastructural development, and welfare of the people. However, oil is also a source of conflict in resource endowed states. This 'black gold' has been the cause of violence in the Niger Delta of Nigeria. The resource curse thesis stipulates that natural resource-endowed countries are disposed to corruption, social crises, civil war and are also unable to use their wealth for economic growth (Pederson & Bazilian, 2014). The map below shows the 36 states in Nigeria and Abuja the capital city.



Figure.1. 1 Map of Nigeria

Source: Maps of the World (2014).

The Niger Delta is the economic powerhouse of Nigeria due to its oil and gas (Adeola, 2009) and this has made the region “economic jewel in the Nigerian crown” (Imobighe, 2004, p. 101). Oil from the Niger Delta region accounts for 90% total export and 80% government revenue (Madugba, Ekwe & Okezie, 2016; Sayne & Hruby, 2016).

The region derived its name from River Niger and is one of the trouble spots in the globe (Ogundiya, 2011). It has a landmass of 70,000 square kilometres, representing 7.5 % of Nigeria's total land area and a population of over 31million (Obi & Rustad, 2011; Adebajoko & Ojua, 2013).

It comprises about forty different nationalities speaking about two hundred and fifty (250) languages and dialects (Kashi & Watts, 2008; Campbell, 2011). Some of these ethnic groups are Ogonis, Etches, Ikwerees, Ogbas, Ekpeyes, Engennes, Kalabaris, Ndoni, Efiks, Urhobos, Itsekiris, Oron, Igbos, Ika-Igbos, Ibeno, Bini, Bekwarras, Anag, Ijaw, Yorubas, etc. Their traditional professions are farming, fishing, and hunting, trading, collecting, and processing palm fruits (NDDC, 2004).

Oil from the region has generated about \$600 billion to the coffers of the Nigerian government since 1958 (Obi, 2010). Despite the region's contributions, it lacks social amenities. For instance, it has 2% of federal roads, less than 30-40% of the settlements have electricity; educational facilities are inadequate (Olusola, 2013). According to Adeola (2009) "the region remains the most impoverished oil-bearing communities in the world." (p.135).

The Niger Delta incorporates nine states and this study focuses on four states in the area, namely: Akwa- Ibom, Bayelsa, Delta, and Rivers. They are the epic centres of the violence or militancy. The map below shows the states that make up the region.

The Niger Delta incorporates nine states and this study focuses on four states in the area, namely: Akwa- Ibom, Bayelsa, Delta, and Rivers. They are the epic centres of the violence or militancy. The map below shows the states that make up the region.



Figure.1. 2 Map of Niger Delta

Source: NDDC (2004) p. 51

Since the 1990s, the Niger Delta has been the hub of violence and revolt with a rekindled call for self-determination and resource control. It is vital at this stage to examine how the conflict started. In the early 1990s, the Niger Delta conflict took a new dimension with the formation of the Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP). The movement led by Ken Saro-Wiwa threatened to disturb the free flow of oil if the government did not meet their demands.

The Ogoni activism was met with stiff state repression, which resulted in violence and the militarisation of the region (Okoli, 2013). Since then, the region has been a scene of violent activities characterised by the bombing of oil installations, kidnapping and oil bunkering (Esikot & Akpan, 2013).

The conflict in the Niger Delta has been attributed to several factors. Some scholars have ascribed the problems to the centralised federal structure and the inequity in the distribution of proceeds from oil rent (Ikporukpo, 1996; Okoko & Nna, 1997; Ibaba, 2005; Orobator, Ifowodo, & Edosa, 2005; Omotosho, 2010; Ebegbulem, 2011; Aworawo, 2013; Esikot, & Akpan, 2013; Ikunga, & Wilson, 2013). While others have credited it to ecological debasement and human rights infringements (Okonta & Oronto, 2001; Aaron, 2006; Nwozor, 2010; Okumagba, 2012b; Oshwofasa, Anuta & Aiyedogbon, 2012; Ebegbulem, Ekpe, & Adejumo, 2013; Raji, Grundlingh, & Abejide, 2013; Akpan, 2014; Osah, & Alao, 2014; Nnorom, & Odigbo, 2015). Yet, other scholars such as Inokoba and Imbua (2010), Ojo (2012), Amadi and Abdullah (2012), Ako (2012), Ndu and Agbonifoh (2014), Enuoh and Iyang (2014) and Nwankwo (2015) have adduced poor corporate social obligation as a factor responsible for the conflict. Isumonah (2005), has ascribed the problem to hegemonic politics. Scholars like Ibaba (2005), Müller (2010) and Madubuko (2014) have attributed the cause to obnoxious laws that ruled the oil industry. For Suberu (1996), Frynas (2000), Obeanu, (2002), Okonta and Oronto (2003) and Ekpolomo (2015), the conflict is attributable to ethnicity.

As can be seen the causes of the Niger Delta conflict have elicited different positions. There is no consensus, the above accounts, no doubt, can enhance our knowledge of the conflict as there are different perspectives in which the conflict was explained. However, because each of the different explanations focuses on one apparent factor as the core factor accounting for the conflict, it might not offer a satisfactory account of the real cause of the conflict. In other words, a single factor cannot explain fully the conflict dynamics in the Niger Delta.

Interestingly, previous studies on Niger Delta paid little attention to the role the regional elites played in the conflict. The period under review witnessed the increasing roles played by the elite in fuelling the conflict. The return to civil rule in 1999 witnessed an increase in the derivation principle from 3 percent to 13 percent. This means more money or cash for the zone compared to other regions of the country. However, the increase does not have any impact on the lives of the people instead it resulted in the struggle for power among the elite of the region. Consequently, politics in the area became zero-sum in nature and the governing and non-governing elite alike employ unconventional means to retain and get into position. The 2003, 2007, 2011 and 2015 elections in the region were soiled by violence. Notable politicians or political heavyweights such as James Ibori, DSP Alamieyeseigha and many others from the region were found wanting in terms of embezzlement of public funds

Accordingly, the conflicts in the Niger Delta have led to the withdrawal of major petroleum companies from the region; increased the level of criminal activities such as kidnapping, oil bunkering, reduction in oil production and loss of revenue by the government (Oghoghoweh, & Ironkwe, 2012). It is against this backdrop that this study examines oil and political-related violence in the Niger Delta of Nigeria with a focus on the role played by the regional elite in the conflict.

1.3 Statement of Problem

This study examines the role of regional elites in the Niger Delta conflict. Several explanations have been advanced and different theories have been used to explain the conflict. A number of studies (Enweremadu, 2008; Otite, 2009; Watts, 2009; Ibaba, & Ikelegbe, 2010; Omotoso, 2011; Saka, 2011; Jegede, Joshua, & Olorunyomi, 2012;

Suleiman, 2013; Babalola 2014) have shown that the elite contributed to the violence in the region through corruption which has negative effects on the development of the region. However, many of these studies are descriptive in nature and focus their attention on national elite and political office-holders only. More so, these studies have been overtaken by events in the country.

Ordinarily, the discovery of oil in a community or state ought to be a thing of joy among the inhabitants because it brings about economic development by providing a development of infrastructure and industries for the communities where such resources are located. Unfortunately, oil has been a source of misery to the people of the Niger Delta region. The 'black gold' has destroyed their means of livelihood, environment, and created poverty. To the oil-bearing communities, oil is a curse rather than a blessing to them.

The region has been engulfed in violence perpetrated by militants demanding a fair share of oil wealth, development of the region and welfare package for the indigent people of the area. The insurgents financed and encouraged by some of the elite from the region kidnapped both nationals and foreigners for ransom (Etebu, Buseni, & Amamieyenimighan, 2011; Nte, 2011). For instance, the 2008 report on human rights practices in Nigeria by the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labour (2008) showed that 400 people were kidnapped in 2007. According to Nte (2011, p. 64), the regional elite, notably retired generals, traditional rulers, top civil servants, politicians and some religious leaders were part of the kingpins of kidnapers in the zone.

Consequently, the conflict has caused a decline in oil production. For instance, in 2005, the total oil production was 2.52 million bpd, it dropped to 2.11 million bpd in 2008, increased again to 2.45 bpd in 2010 and fell to 2.37pd in 2011 (Schultze-Kraft, 2013, p.25). The Technical Committee on Niger Delta (TCND, 2008, p. 9) report showed that Nigeria lost \$27.2 billion to militancy in 2006; \$18.8 billion in 2007 and \$ 20.7 billion in January- September 2008. Similarly, Idowu (2012), noted that Nigeria lost 150,000bpd to oil theft by the militants. This amounts to \$1,500, 000 US dollars.

The resumption of militancy in 2016 resulted in the destruction of critical oil infrastructure by the Niger Delta Avengers. Hence, Nigeria lost N1.3 billion daily to oil pipeline bombing and this affected the implementation of the 2016 budget. According to Babachir, Lawal, Secretary to the Government of Federation of Nigeria, the government's revenue dropped by 80% to 60% due to the militancy in the region (cited in Adeosun, Ismail & Zengeni, 2016).

Some studies have identified corruption among the elite as a reason for violence in the zone. Enweremadu (2008), posits that the misuse of oil rent by the political leaders of the region accounted for violence in the region. In a like manner, Omotosho (2011) argues that corruption and greediness of the elite triggered violence in the region. Similarly, Suleiman (2013) avers that corruption among the elite has worsened the conflict in the region. By the same token, Babalola (2014) argues that corruption among the political class accounted for the underdevelopment of the region.

The central question posed by this thesis is: To what extent does the elite of Niger Delta extraction fuel and sustain the conflict in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria? Hence, this thesis examines the role of the national and provincial elites in the encouragement and sustenance of the Niger Delta conflict. But the study will focus more on the provincial or regional elite of the Niger Delta and in answering the above central question, this study addresses the following specific questions:

1.4 Research Questions

1. How do the elites of the Niger Delta contribute to the political violence engulfing the region?
2. Why are the elite of the Niger Delta demanding control of natural resources of the region and political reorganisation of the country?
3. How transparent and accountable are the elites of the Niger Delta in the management of the oil proceeds of the region?
4. Has the amnesty programme advocated by the elite of the region tackled the Niger Delta conflict? If not, why?

1.5 Research Objectives

1. To examine the Niger Delta elites' contribution to the political violence engulfing the region
2. To analyse the reasons Niger Delta elites are demanding for resource control and political reorganisation of Nigeria
3. To examine the transparency and accountability of the Niger Delta elites in the management of the oil proceeds of the region.
4. To assess whether the amnesty programme championed by the elite of the Niger Delta has addressed the conflict.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The conflict in the Niger Delta has always been viewed from the lens of the institutional and national elite deprivation of the region resources for development. The national elites castigate the regional elites as the architect of the region's problem. Former Nigerian leader Olusegun Obasanjo accused the elites of Niger Delta extraction of encouraging the agitation in the region (Obasanjo, 2007). Thus, the state of anomie of the region in which militia groups have continued their violent activities unabated; the flow of resources to the region without commensurate development and the intense struggle among them for the control of these resources have made it imperative to examine their role in the conflict.

Hence, the study contributes to the growing body of literature on Niger Delta crisis. Specifically, it fills the lacuna in the extant literature. Previous studies (Ebegbulem, 2011; Aworawo, 2013; Esikot, & Akpan, 2013; Ikunga, & Wilson, 2013) have focused on institutions (Federal Government and Multinational Oil Companies) and little attention has been paid to the role of the elite of the Niger Delta extraction in the Niger Delta conflict. Thus, this study contributes to the understanding of conflict dynamics of the region through the new perspective it offers to the ongoing conflict in the region.

The study would be of utmost importance to the academia, security agencies, civil society organizations and non-governmental organizations. For the academia, the findings of the study would serve as resource materials that can be used in further research; the security agencies would equally find the study useful in their attempt to address the security challenges facing the region and the country at large; for the civil society organisations and non-governmental organisations, the study's findings would be of help to the groups who are engaging in advocacy and rendering assistance towards the development of the region but have little knowledge with regard to the region. Hence, this study will be of valuable assistance to them.

Several studies (Abegunde, 2013; Aminu, 2013; Olusola, 2013; Oluwaleye, 2013; Abang, 2014; Ojo, 2015; Akinbobola & Aderoba, 2016) have used frustration-aggression theory and others (Enweremadu, 2008; Watts, 2010; Jegede, et.al, 2012; Abegunde, 2014; Osaghae, 2015) have employed the resource curse theory to analyse the Niger Delta debacle. Also, elite theory has been used to analyse Niger Delta conflict (Orluwene, 2008; Otite, 2009; Omotoso, 2011; Suleiman, 2013).

This study combined elite, resource curse theory and frustration-aggression theories. The advantage of this is that it makes up for the inadequacies or weaknesses of the others.

1.7 Scope of Research

The research work covers the period from 2005- 2016. The logic behind the choice of this period is that 2005 marks a turning point in the Niger Delta struggle. It marked the commencement of insurgency in the region (Watts, 2007). The Movement for the Emancipation of Niger Delta (MEND) was formed in 2005 and it executed violent activities in the region such as kidnapping, killing, extortion and destruction of oil pipelines. During this period, armed groups received financial boost from some elite in the region (Watts, 2009; Ibaba & Ikelegbe, 2010). Indeed, the conflict in the region was at its zenith during this period. Moreover, some of the political office holders of the region were convicted during this period. In 2016, a new militant group called the Niger Delta Avengers (NDA) came on board and its activities led to devastating effects not only on the environment of the Niger Delta but also on the nation's economy, generation and distribution of electricity (Adeosun, et al, 2016).

During the period under review, there was also the change of baton from an indigene of the Niger Delta to a Hausa-Fulani man from the North. In other words, the nation witnessed for the first time an opposition candidate unseating an incumbent president. This change of guard also affected how Niger Delta conflict was handled. The policy thrust of this present administration about Niger Delta has started to emerge.

The president had revoked the juicy contracts of pipeline surveillance awarded by the previous administration to some of the ex-militant leaders (International Crisis Group, 2015). Also, the administration has signified its plan to discontinue the amnesty programme in 2017.

Akwa-Ibom, Bayelsa, Delta and Rivers States are the focus of this study and the four states put together produced eighty percent of crude oil production in Nigeria (Oil-Revenue, 2013), they are the epic centres of the violence. Moreover, the allocation to these states from the centre are more than others in the federation (Osaghae, 2015). The analysis will not foreclose other states of the region, but these four states are the focus of this study.

1.8 Definition of Terms

It is vital that in a study of this nature, there is a need to clarify concepts or terms that are used. Thus, this segment of the study clarifies the four concepts that are germane to this discourse and they are: oil politics, violence, Niger Delta and regional elite.

Oil Politics: It entails the various manoeuvring and actions by the key actors in the Niger Delta conflict regarding issue pertaining to oil such as its ownership, management, allocation of its proceeds and participation.

Violence: It means maiming, killing, kidnapping, bombing of oil installations, disrupting and destruction of election materials.

Regional Elite: It consists of elected and non-elected public servants in the region and also those representing the region at the centre. In addition, the traditional and economic elite from the region are also included. For instance, elected officials, civil servants, political appointees, members of the armed forces, heads of parastatals, extra-ministerial or departments and traditional rulers. Therefore, the regional elite are the ruling elite of the region as well as those representing the region at the centre (ministers, governors, senators, members of the HOR, Member State House Assembly, Civil Servant, Traditional Ruler and Chairman of local Council).

Niger Delta: It comprises Abia, Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Delta, Edo, Imo, Ondo, and Rivers. Thus, these four states namely Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Delta and Rivers states are the focus of this study.

1.9 Research Method

This segment of the study discusses issues relating to how the study was conducted. But before examining the nuts and bolts of how the study was conducted. It is vital to define the term method. According to Cohen and Manion (1980, p.26), method refers to “a range of approaches used in research to collect data which are used as the basis for inference and interpretation, for explanation and prediction”. This study adopted qualitative method and the rationale for this was to have an in-depth comprehension of the conflict in the Niger Delta. This type of research (qualitative) is flexible and the relationship between the researcher and the participants are less formal (Dawson, 2002).

Moreover, it enables the researcher to explore issues from multiple sources of information, including interviews, observations and published documents, etc. (Dawson 2002). Hence, the researcher obtained documents from the websites of the Federal Ministries of Finance and Budget and National Planning. The documents centred on monthly revenue allocation to the federation. In other words, the approach allows the researcher to find out people's views about the conflict and the part played by the elite in fuelling and sustaining it. It is vital to define what qualitative research is.

A Qualitative research is one “that uses data that do not indicate an ordinal value” (Nkwi, Nyamongo, & Ryan, 2001, p.1). It is a research that involves collecting and working with text, sound or images. Similarly, Creswell (2005) defined Qualitative research as:

a type of educational research in which the researcher relies on the view of participants, asks broad, general questions, collects data consisting largely of words (or texts) from participants, describes and analyses these words for themes and conducts the inquiry in a subjective, biased manner (p.39).

1.9.1 Research Philosophy

It is important to examine the epistemological and ontological perspectives of research philosophy. In research, epistemological issues are concerned with how knowledge is known (Creswell, 2013). According to Creswell (2013), it is incumbent on the researcher to conduct studies in the field where participants live and work. In the words of Mathews and Ross (2010), “epistemology is the theory of knowledge and how we know things” (p.17).

Ontology is concerned with the nature of reality and its characteristics (Creswell, 2013). Similarly, Bryman (2012) describes it as the nature of what we know. For Mathews and Ross (2010) ontology refers to “the science of what is, of the kinds and structures of objects, properties, events, processes and relations in every area of reality” (p.17).

The philosophical foundation of this work is Interpretivism. It covers varied philosophical approaches such as constructivism, symbolic interactionism, and ethnomethodology. It centred on understanding social phenomena from the perspectives of those involved. This approach rejects the application of scientific method to the study of social behaviour because human nature or behaviour are very difficult to understand and advocate for an approach that takes cognizance of the different social dynamism of a study (Bryman, 2012).

The import of the philosophical basis of this research is, it influences the formulation of the problem, research question and the method of data collection (Hull, 2009). The kernel of Interpretivism is well captured by Walsham (1993) in his explanation of the term. He notes that:

Interpretive methods of research start from the position that our knowledge of reality, including the domain of human action, is a social construction by human actors and that this applies equally to researchers. Thus, there is no objective reality which can be discovered by researchers and replicated by others, in contrast to the assumptions of positivist science (p.5)

1.9.2 Case Study

It is imperative at this juncture to examine the case study design. There is no agreement among scholars as to the meaning of case study. Scholars like Punch (2005); Bryman (2013) and Creswell (2013) see case study as a research design. For others Cohen, Manion, and Morrison, (2007), it is a style of research while Stake (1995) sees it as an object of research. In the light of this, Tight (2010) submits that case study can be “a method, approach, style, strategy or design.” (p.331).

Yin (2003) defines case study “as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used” (p.23).

For Stake (1995), case study research refers to a study and analysis of a single or collective case, intended to capture the complexity of the object of study. According to Stake (1998) a case study is “both the process of learning about the case and the product of our learning” (p.87). Hyett, Kenny, and Dickson-Swift (2014) identify two popular case study approaches.

The first is associated with Stake (1995) and Merriam (2009) and is situated in social constructivist paradigm while the second approaches associated with scholars such as Esienhardt (1989), Yin (2012) and Flybjerg (cited in Hyett, et al, 2014) is from the post-positivist standpoint. This study is situated within the first approach.

This research is situated within the social constructivism paradigm. The researcher looked at the issue from the standpoint of the participants and had personal interaction with the case. The case was developed in conjunction with the participants and the finding was based on the views expressed by the participants and the interpretation of these views by the researcher (Stake, 1995; Merriam, 2009).

Several writers such as Stake (1995), Merriam (2009) and Creswell (2013) have discussed how to select a case and one of the factors identified in the selection of a case to study, is the uniqueness of a case. Niger Delta is unique; it is the oil belt of Nigeria. The region is the goose that laid the golden egg but is the least developed part of Nigeria. Since the 1990s, it has been the hub of a limited war between the militant and the Nigerian State with no solution in sight.

The conflict is ongoing and the government needs a right diagnosis of the problem to be able to resolve it. Therefore, employing this design will enrich our understanding of the problem and thereby proffering a solution to the conflict.

1.9.3 Data Collection

The primary data for this study was collected through interview. Interviews are useful data collection for allowing interviewees give in-depth answers about a complex issue (Bowling, 2002). Semi-Structured Interview format was adopted and it involves a process whereby the researcher offers topic and questions carefully designed to the interviewee to elicit his or her view on the topic of interest or phenomenon being researched. In this type of interview, the interviewee has a latitude in how he responds to the questions being asked.

Besides, questions that are not part of the interview guide may be asked (Bryman, 2012). The secondary data sources include published interviews, journal articles, books, periodicals, newspaper articles, internet materials, etc.

1.9.3.1 Sampling Strategy

The study employed a non-probability sampling strategy as the researcher is only interested in analysing social process or phenomenon, not in achieving statistical representativeness (May & Pope, 1995). A purposive sampling technique was used and it involves a non- random way of selecting participants for research, which allow individuals to be selected because they have knowledge relevant to the study (Bowling, 2002). In accordance with that, twelve participants that cut across academic, military or para- military, civil society groups and youth were interviewed. This was augmented with interviews of prominent leaders of thought and politicians in the print and electronic media.

There is no accord among scholars about the appropriate number of those to be interviewed in the qualitative study. Bertaux (1981) contends that fifteen is the minimum acceptable sample size while Morse (1994) recommends six participants.

According to Bernard (2000), most ethnographic studies are based on thirty-sixty interviews whereas Guest, Bunce, and Johnson (2006) suggest twelve interviews and Creswell (2007) suggests ten participants.

A total number of twelve participants took part in the study and this is within the range suggested by Morse (1994), Guest Bunce and Johnson (2006) and Creswell (2007).

The saturation point was reached at the ninth person interviewed.

1.9.3.2 Preparing For Interview

As part of the preparation for the interview, the researcher acquainted himself with the extant literature to be current about the conflict in the region and to be able to ask vital questions during the interview proper. The researcher availed himself with necessary interview skills and materials that were to be used during the interview and ensured that they were all in good working conditions. The researcher called friends who were residing in the various states where the interview would be conducted for logistics support. During this period, the potential participants for the study were contacted to seek their consent and appointment.

1.9.3.3 Conduct of the Interview

The interview was conducted between May and July 2016. A total number of twelve interviewees took part in the study and out of which three of the interviewees did not allow the researcher to audio- tape them. The interview session was conducted in English Language and it took place in Warri, Delta State, Port-Harcourt, Rivers State and Yenagoa in Bayelsa. State. The last interview took place in Kano because the interviewee was in the state at the time of the interview and on an average, the duration of the interview was thirty- minutes.

Before the commencement of the interview, a written consent form was given to the interviewees to go through and sign. The interview centred on finding out their perceptions of the conflict in the oil-rich region of Nigeria and the part played by the elite in four major areas, political-cum electoral violence, resource control and political restructuring of the polity, management of resources and amnesty.

During the interview, techniques like probing for further information, asking for examples, seeking clarifications were employed, each of which is considered a core skill of interviewing (Gillham, 2005). The Table 1.1 shows the list of the interviewees.

Table 1.1

Coded list of Interviewees

S/No	Date	Code	Place/Location	Position
1	1/05/16	001	Taylor Creek, Yenagoa, Bayelsa State	Traditional ruler
2	3/05/16	002	Yenagoa, Bayelsa	Youth
3	3/05/16	003	Yenagoa, Bayelsa State	Youth
4	4/05/16	004	Secretariat, Yenagoa, Bayelsa State	Civil Servant/ CLO
5	30/5/16	005	Warri, Delta state	Lawyer/Politician
6	1/6/16	006	Warri, Delta state	Retired-Military officer
7	1/6/16	007	Diobu, Port-Harcourt, Rivers State	Youth leader
8	1/6/16	008	Tombia, Port-Harcourt, Rivers State	Civil-Society Organisation
9	2/6/16	009	Tombia, Port-Harcourt, Rivers State	Chief/ CSO
10	2/6/16	010	Tombia, Port-Harcourt, Rivers State	Academic
11	3/6/16	011	Tombia, Port-Harcourt, Rivers State	Academic
12	16/7/16	012	Mariri, Taurani, Kano state	Academic

Source: Fieldwork by the Researcher (2016).

1.9.4 Data Analysis

The interviews have been transcribed verbatim. This increases the strength of the research findings as it enables the researcher a valid account of what he heard during the interview (Robson, 2002). The interview transcripts were analysed thematically. Before describing how the analysis was conducted, it is essential to first discuss what thematic analysis is and its phases or procedure. According to Clarke and Braun (2014), thematic analysis refers to a method for identifying and analysing patterns of meaning (themes) in qualitative data.

The term was credited to Gerald Holton, who introduced it in 1970 and since then different versions have been introduced within psychology and social sciences to analyse qualitative data (cited in Clarke & Braun, 2014). It can be used to address most types of research questions; it analyses major types of qualitative data ranging from secondary to textual and interactive data; it analyses large or small data and can be used within different theoretical frameworks (Clarke & Braun, 2014).

Scholars have argued that there is no one generally acceptable way of conducting thematic analysis (Braun & Clark, 2006). However, Braun and Clarke (2006) identified the following steps in the thematic analysis of data and this serves as our guide.

The Table 1.2 contains the various steps involved in thematic data analysis

Table 1. 2

Phases of Thematic Analysis

Phase	Description of the process
1. Familiarising yourself with your data:	Transcribing data (if necessary), reading and re-reading the data, noting down initial ideas.
2. Generating initial codes:	Coding interesting features of the data in a systematic fashion across the entire data set, collating data relevant to each code.
3. Searching for themes:	Collating codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant to each potential theme.
4. Reviewing themes:	Checking in the themes work in relation to the coded extracts (Level 1) and the entire data set (Level 2), generating a thematic 'map' of the analysis.
5. Defining and naming themes:	Ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each theme, and the overall story the analysis tells; generating clear definitions and names for each theme.
6. Producing the report:	The final opportunity for analysis. Selection of vivid, compelling extract examples, the final analysis of selected extracts, relating back of the analysis to the research question and literature, producing a scholarly report of the analysis.

Source: Braun and Clarke (2006) pp. 77-101.

After transcribing the data verbatim, the data management and analysis were done manually. As already indicated or stated above, the researcher employed the use of thematic analysis of data. The researcher read and re-read the data to be familiar with the contents, making a preliminary observation about the data. Then went ahead to identify the themes and also code them.

The researcher combined prepared themes (based on the research questions) and emergent themes from the data to sort out the responses of the interviewees into different categories. As the iterative process continued, some adjustments were made along the line and the interviewee's responses were grouped together based on the themes and the relevant quotes or statements of the interviewees were used to buttress the issues discussed and these were supported by relevant works in the literature and published interviews.

1.9.5 Reliability and Validity

Scholars have queried the appropriateness of the use of these terms in qualitative research (Guba, 1981; Lincoln & Guba, 1985, 1986; Healy & Perry, 2000; Steinke, 2004) because these terms are synonymous with quantitative research and the worldview of this approach is different from that of qualitative research. Therefore, qualitative research should be judged by its own paradigm's term (Healy & Perry, 2000). However, Patton (2002) argues that reliability and validity should be applied to measure the quality of a qualitative study.

Following Lincoln and Guba (1985), trustworthiness and authenticity are the term used in qualitative research and trustworthiness is further divided into four aspects namely: credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability. Therefore, this study employs Lincoln and Guba (1985) trustworthiness concept which has four aspects and one of which is the credibility which deals with the truth of the findings and it has a number of strategies among which are triangulation, member-checking, prolonged

engagement and peer debriefing (Guba, 1981; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Creswell & Miller, 2000).

The researcher employed two of these strategies to establish the credibility of the research and these are member-checking and triangulation. Member checking involves a process whereby the researcher takes data and interpretations back to the participants in the study so that they can confirm the credibility of the information and narrative accounts (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). During the fieldwork, the researcher employed the member-checking among the interviewees to give their verdict on the interview transcripts whether it captured their views.

Triangulation involves the use of different sources of data collection methods and a wide range of interviewees (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The use of interviews, observation (verbal and non-verbal) and documents as well as the different interviewees that took part in the study ensure the credibility of the study by cross verifying the same information. For instance, the data obtained through the interviews and observation were verified through secondary source like the literature and documents. Also, the use of a wide range of interviewees such as political, traditional ruler, academician, youth leader, military personnel enabled the researcher to verify the data obtained from A by also going through B, C, to check the veracity of the information elicited from them. Thus, contributing to the trustworthiness of the research.

The transferability of the study is ensured through rich description of the method used in the conduct of the research. Thus, the study can be transferred to similar social

context. The dependability of this work has been established by two anonymous reviewers who examined the method of inquiry.

Lastly, confirmability which can be likened to the quantitative concept of objectivity has also been established through confirmability audit and this shows that data exist in support of every interpretation and that the interpretations have been made in ways consistent with the available data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The interpretations made are not only supported by available data obtained from the field, but also the researcher ensures that they are a true reflection of what transpired in the fieldwork and free of researcher biases.

1.10 Organization of Study

The study is partitioned into eight chapters. The first chapter is the general introduction and provides an overview of the work. It incorporates the background of the study, a statement of the problem, research questions, research objectives, significance of the study, scope of the study, research method, the definition of terms, and organisation or structure of the study.

The second chapter is the literature review and theoretical framework. The chapter examines the related works on the Niger Delta conflict, dissect and synthesis them and also analyses the underlying theories employ for the study while Chapter three discusses the evolution of the Nigerian state and Niger Delta conflict. It examines, among others, history of Nigeria, Niger Delta agitation and the contribution of oil to the Nigerian economy.

Chapter Four titled the roles of elite in Niger Delta conflict examines the political contribution of the elite to the Niger Delta conflict. Issues such as emergence and composition of elite and political-cum electoral violence are examined.

Chapter Five is a follow-up to the preceding chapter and is titled Resource Control and Political Restructuring. It analyses among others, the meaning of resource control and its rationale, federalism and its other components such as fiscal federalism and revenue allocation.

Chapter Six titled Elite and Management of Resources deals with the management of resource of the Niger Delta. The chapter focuses on the mismanagement of oil wealth. It discusses how elite at the federal and region have managed the resources of the state. Besides, it discusses how the elite have ignored the social sector in budgetary allocation and focus more on those sectors that are beneficial to them. The impacts of mismanagement of resources which are identified as corruption, underdevelopment, poverty and debt accumulated by the region were thoroughly discussed.

Chapter Seven titled Elite and The Presidential Amnesty Programme. As the title suggests, the chapter examines the amnesty programme, its strengths, and weaknesses. The chapter also discusses previous attempts to address the conflict. While chapter eight is the summary and conclusion. The chapter gives an overview of the study, suggests solutions to the problems raised and make suggestions for further study.

1.11 Summary

This chapter introduces the study and stating the fundamental problems and objectives of the study. A brief background of the study has been discussed and details will be analysed in the chapter that follows this one. This chapter also examines among others, the significance of study, scope, and the definition of terms. This chapter has given a general overview of the study and the next chapter examines the conceptual review of literature germane to the study, a review of existing studies and the review of theories used in the study.



CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

This segment of the study is divided into conceptual review of the literature, empirical and theoretical review of the literature. The conceptual review of the literature discusses the three concepts that are germane to this study and these concepts are politics, violence, and elite. An idea expressed in a short phrase or word is known as concept (Heywood, 2001, p. 1).

2.1.1 Politics, Violence and Elite: An Explanation

i. Politics

Any attempt to define politics must first and foremost, free it or disentangle it from popular misconceptions. Politics is seen as deceit, manipulation, disruption, violence and lies. Henry Adams described it as 'the systematic organization of hatreds' (cited in Heywood, 2002, p.4). It is important at this juncture to define politics. The concept politics belongs to what Gallie (cited in Heywood, 2000, 2002) calls "essentially contested" concept. This is because it has several acceptable meanings (Heywood, 2002, p.5).

Politics in its widest sense means activity involving law enactment, preservation and reformation of laws under which people live. There are four angles from which politics can be viewed. Firstly, it is an art of government and essentially state activity.

Secondly, it entails management of community's affairs. Thirdly, it involves resolution of conflict by compromise, conciliation, and negotiation rather than using physical force. Lastly, politics entails production, distribution, and use of resources. This implies that power is central to politics. Power may be defined as the ability to achieve an outcome via whatever means (Heywood, 2000).

In line with these different viewpoints, scholars have defined politics in diverse ways. For examples, Easton (1979, 1981), sees politics as the 'authoritative allocation of values'. This implies that politics includes the different methods via which government reacts to demands from the people by a way of rewards or punishments.

Authoritative values are commonly accepted in the society and are believed to be binding on the people. For Lasswell (cited in Hanley, 2010), politics refers to who gets what, when and how. Ryan (2012) defines politics as the practice and theory of influencing people at an individual or civic level for directing them toward the desired destiny. Leftwich (2015) describes politics as actions concerning making and implementing collective decisions. For Hay (2010), politics involves compromising, building consensus and forming coalitions. Hanley (2010) defines politics as all behaviour applied to determine who gets what, when and how in a situation where there are two or more people. Politics has also been defined as the art and power of influencing resource distribution (Henrik-Serup, 2014).

From the foregoing, there is no consensus among scholars as to the meaning of politics and this points to the fact that politics means different thing to different people. Harold Lasswell conceptualization of politics as “who gets what, when and how” is appropriate to this study as it enables us to understand the intrigues and manoeuvring concerning how the proceeds from the oil wealth are distributed and the conflict that arises from such distribution as well as its resolution.

Therefore, oil politics may be described as the machinations concerning government policies over issues relating to oil resources ownership, participation and the distribution of proceeds from oil resources (Abraham, 2009). Similarly, Eghweree, (2015, p. 239), defines oil politics as the “intrigue that accompanies the exploration of oil mineral resources in oil-rich and dependent states.” Thus, oil politics is the manoeuvres and power play surrounding the ownership of oil and the distribution of proceeds from its sale among the component units of the Nigerian federation.

ii. **Violence**

Violence, like other social sciences concepts such as authority justice and rights, belongs to a class of concept known as contested. This stems from the fact that there is no unanimous agreement among scholars as to its meaning. Pontara (1978), contends that defining violence has been the major preoccupation of political philosophers, political scientist and peace researchers over the years. Similarly, Imbusch (cited in de Haan, 2008) describes the concept violence as “one of the most elusive and difficult concepts in the social sciences” (p.37). This is because there is no generally accepted definition of the concept.

Ikelegbe (2011) describes violence as “the use of force, intimidation and psychosocial and physical injury in the context of personal or social relations, or in the pursuit of set goals” (p.125). World Health Organisation (2002) defines violence as

the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group of communities, that either result in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, mal-development or deprivation (p.5).

This study will use Ojakorotu and Gilbert’s (2010) definition of violence as its working definition. For them, violence means:

the deliberate deployment of instruments of physical force by the various stakeholders in the oil industry in Nigeria, for the achievement of their respective objectives and goals with regards to the exploration, exploitation, and appropriation of crude oil and its accruable benefits in the Niger Delta region (p.1)

iii. **Elite**

Elite is a widely-used concept in everyday discourse and academia. There is no agreement among scholars as to who introduced the concept into the social science lexicon- cum political science. Korom (2015) credited Vilfredo Pareto to have introduced the term while Zuckerman (1977) credited Mosca as the originator of the concept. According to Lasswell (1952, p. 6), “elites are the power holders of a body politic; they are the holders of high positions in a given society”. By the same token, Soanes, Hawker, and Elliott (cited in Ibietan, & Ajayi, 2015, p. 15) define the elite as “group of people regarded as the best in a particular society or organization.

In the same vein, Yamokoski and Dubrow, (cited in Lopez, 2013) define elite as actors controlling resources, occupying key positions and relating through power networks. Equally, Menges (cited in Azeez & Ibukunoluwa, 2015, p. 152) define the elite as, “a descriptive term designating those who hold high positions in a society”.

For Azeez and Ibukunola (2015, p. 152) “elite is a group of persons exercising the major share of authority or influence within a larger group or society. That is, they are sets of people with the highest indices in their areas of endeavour”. Putnam (cited in Ibodje & Allen, 2009, p. 166), defines elite as those with more power than others.

According to Ibodje and Allen power in this sense is the ability to influence directly or indirectly politics and state activity. Higley (2010, p.163) defines elite as “persons who by virtue of their strategic locations in large or otherwise pivotal organisation and movements are able to affect political outcomes regularly and substantially”. For him, elites are people with the capacity to cause political trouble without being suppressed. He describes the elite as including not only the established and prestigious ones such as top businessmen, politicians, senior military officers, civil servants but also less known leaders in their own rights. For this study, Higley’s conception of elite shall be our guide.

The foregoing definitions clearly show that there is no common agreement among scholars as to its meaning and this can be seen in the different phrases ‘holders of high or key positions’ the ‘best’, ‘major share of authority’. The problem of some of these definitions is that there are some elites that are not holding high or key positions and they exercise influence on those who hold these positions.

The notion that elite constitute the best in a society has its own limitation. Sometimes, a group of elite occupying a key position may not necessarily be the best or the society first-eleven. Moreover, the above definitions are too broad and we need to narrow down to specific and therefore for the purpose of this study, elite refers to the political or ruling elite that comprise of both elected and non-elected officials, economic elite and traditional rulers who exercise influence on policy making and execution.

2.1.2 Nigeria's Niger Delta Conflict: A General Overview of Existing Studies

This section of the study analyses related works on Niger Delta conflict. It examines among others, the role of elite in the conflict in other climes, Nigeria as well as Niger Delta.

Several studies have shown that elite played a critical role in conflict (Migdal, 1988; Reno, 1998a; 1998b; De Juan, 2008; Gore, 2008; Sebudubudu & Botlhomilwe, 2011; Day & Enough Project Team, 2016; Melendez, 2016). For example, Migdal (1988) argues that the politics of survival played by the elite accounted for conflict. Similarly, the political and religious elites played prominent role in the 1990s Bosnia conflict. For instance, Slobodan Milosevic needed the support of Orthodox Church leader to legitimise his rule and also his expansion agenda. The Cleric supported him in order to pave way for their influence in the Bosnian Society (De Juan, 2008). Hence, elites make or mar a country.

Nigeria is bedevilled with numerous conflicts ranging from communal, ethnic and religious conflicts. There are several studies on the conflict in Nigeria (Jacob & Saad, 2011; Haliru, 2012; Onapajo, 2012; Saheed, 2012; Joshua, 2013; kalejaiye & Aliyu, 2013; Suleiman, 2013, Ebeh & Nkemnole, 2016). These studies examine the issue of violent conflicts in Nigeria from different angles. For example, Jacob and Saad (2013) argue that the manipulation of the Constitution by the political and religious leaders in the country who are not able to meet the needs of their people in their respective states accounted for violent conflict in the country.

Haliru (2012) focuses on ethnicity and how the elite have employed it to cause disaffection among the people to achieve their selfish ends. Onapajo (2012) work centres on religion and political violence while Saheed (2012) focuses on an economic dimension of the social conflict in Nigeria. On their part, Obeidi (2012) and Suleiman (2013b) examine corruption within the governing elite in Nigeria and argue that it has led to the re-routing of public funds into private pockets and contributed to socio-economic maladies confronting the country. These works examine corruption from the national perspective and how the various elite across the country have been involved in these social vices. However, no attempt was made to focus on a detailed study of a particular region or state. It is important to note that these studies provided background to the examination of specific cases.

Omilusi (2015) work centres on the nature and character of Nigeria's political elite and how it has affected the structure of Nigerian federalism. He argues that the elite used state machinery to amass power and distribute resources based on loyalty (which group supports the administration) as well as control social values.

Similarly, Adeyeri (2013) examines the factors militating against political stability and development in Nigeria and avers that the way elite sustain themselves in power accounted for instability in the country. He maintains that elite hold on to power because of patronage and this they do through the creation and control of a large chunk of the wealth which they distribute to those that support them and denied those that do not and this has resulted in violence because those who were denied also wanted to have access to such resources. These are insightful analyses of the use of patronage to garner support by those who are at the helms of affairs in the country and it is also a source of discord among groups in the nation, who may have been neglected due to their uncompromising stand against the power that is or their relative position in the scheme of things in the country.

Kuka (2012) blames the elite for the numerous socio-economic and political problems confronting the nation. Similarly, Abdullahi Ganduje, the governor of Kano State, maintains that the elite in the country had contributed to the promotion of violence and conflict in the country and warned that it would no longer be tolerated (Today, April 12, 2015).

Mbah and Edeh (2017) argue that the struggle for state power between Northern and Southern elites has intensified national conflict and insurgencies in Nigeria. Though this work focuses on Boko Haram, its arguments are relevant to the Niger Delta conflict because the southern elites, especially those from the Niger Delta has attributed their predicament to the domination of the political leadership of Nigeria by the Northern oligarchy. The study is descriptive and makes use of secondary data only.

Folami (2017) argues that the imbalance in the distribution of oil wealth generated conflict in the region. Although the study centered on ethnic conflict, these conflicts have an economic undertone. That is the struggle for the control of oil wealth.

While numerous studies have been conducted on Niger Delta conflict, there have been few studies that focus on the role of the elite in the Niger Delta imbroglio. Besides, many of these studies are descriptive in nature and have been overtaken by events. For instance, Ogungbemi (2010) argues that elite made up of political office holders are the “unseen hands” supporting the militants in the region. Others such as Omotosho (2011), Ayokhai (2013), Suleiman (2013a), Babalola (2014) and Bakare (2015) maintain that the elite have added to the aggravation of the Niger Delta crisis through corruption and recommend that resources should be well managed for the benefit of the oil producing communities in particular and the nation at large. Most of these studies are descriptive and relied on secondary sources of data while the present study uses both primary and secondary sources of data and is also based on a combined theories of elite, resource curse and frustration- aggression.

A majority number of studies (Akpabio & Akpan 2010; Omotosho 2010; Ebegbulem, 2011; Aworawo, 2012; Mahler 2012; Egbe, 2013; Esikot & Akpan, 2013; Ikunga and Wilson 2013; Raji, Grundlingh & Abejide, 2013; Abegunde 2013; Aaron, 2015) have pointed to the defective federal system and absence of equity in the disbursement of revenue among the federating units as the cause of conflict in the Niger Delta. The people of the Niger Delta are dissatisfied with how rents accrue from oil proceeds are distributed among the component units of the federation.

This is one of the major grievances of the people and is responsible for the armed conflict against the Nigerian state. As Cederman, Wimmer, and Min (2010) and Cederman, Weidmann, and Gleditsch (2011) contend that countries that exclude and discriminate against minorities ethnic group are prone to internal armed conflict.

In contrast, Osaghae (2015) questions the view that the defective federal structure and injustice in the revenue allocation formula as reasons for the conflict. He argues that there is no exact proof, especially with regards to public expenditure to strengthen the statement and further goes to argue that state governments are not answerable to the central government for the way domestic and foreign loans are used.

On the impacts of oil on the environment in Niger Delta, studies have shown that it has negative effects. It affects the people means of livelihood; creates poverty and unemployment and causes health related problems. Studies and report (Aaron, 2006; Akhakpe, 2012; Akpan, 2014; Amnesty International, 2009; Environmental Rights Action/Friends of the Earth Nigeria and Oil Watch Africa, 2012; Oshwofasa, Anuta, & Aiyedogbon, 2012; Madubuko, 2014) have examined the effects of oil exploration activities of the multinational oil companies operating in the region on the ecosystem. The findings show that the activities of the oil companies result in wiping out the aquatic life, environmental debasement of the region through oil spills, gas flaring, and hazardous gases, which have adverse effects on the oil-bearing communities.

Meanwhile, the narrative on the environmental problem in the Niger Delta has been associated with ethnic hegemony. This narrative holds that the dominant ethnic groups, namely the Yoruba, Hausa-Fulani, and Igbo which in local parlance are known as WAZOBIA (a term that stands for “come” in the three major ethnic groups' languages. WA- Yoruba word for come; Zo- Hausa word for come and BIA- Igbo word for come) used their position as the major ethnic groups occupying top positions in the nation to benefit their people and deprived the Niger Delta region of development funds to solve myriads of problems including environmental problems confronting the region (Osaghae, 1995; Ukaga, Ukiwo & Ibaba, 2012).

However, this view has been debunked by Akpan (2006), who contends that environmental neglect, social exploitation and other problems confronting the region is not peculiar to the region alone and cannot be attributed to ethnic victimisation. Besides, a single factor cannot sufficiently explain the happenings in the Niger Delta.

Other studies that have examined environmental conflict in relation to poverty abound in the literature. For instance, Saliu, Saka, and Abdullahi (2007) and Ebegbulem, Ekpe and Adejumo (2013) argue that the unfriendly attitude of the oil exploration by the multi-national oil companies in the Niger Delta have caused environmental degradation which in turn caused poverty. Opukiri and Ibaba (2008), examine the connection between environmental degradation and population displacement in the Niger Delta and submit that oil-related conflict has reduced the productivity of the oil-bearing communities, resulting in occupational and income losses, and affecting both voluntary and involuntary migration.

Similarly, Aworawo (2013), asserts that environmental degradation is central to the Niger Delta debacle, as it has hindered rural economic activities and threaten human security.

The above studies and numerous others that centred on the environment and its affinity with other contemporary socioeconomic problems put to rest the primacy of environmental factor in the Niger Delta conflict. This further confirms the assertion made by Aworawo (2013), that environmental degradation is central to the Niger Delta conflict. However, another scholar sees the alienation and dispossession of the people of their resources at the heart of the violent conflict in the region (Ukiwo, 2011).

The socio-economic factors which include poverty, unemployment, corruption, and underdevelopment are drivers of violence in the Niger Delta region. For political marginalisation, the thesis holds that Niger Deltans have been excluded in the national politics of Nigeria. However, Aaron (2015) and Osaghae (2015) reject this claim. The happenings in the polity between 2010 and 2015 served as an evidence that the region was not marginalised in national politics.

Prior to his ascension to the prestigious office of the President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria in 2010, Goodluck Jonathan was the vice-president of Nigeria from 2007-2010, the first by any civilian of Ijaw ethnic extraction and since then, indigenes from the region have been appointed into covetable positions as Minister of Petroleum, National Security Adviser, Chief of Defence Staff, Chief of Army Staff, Director-General of Nigerian

Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA) and so on (Aaron, 2015; Osaghae, 2015, p. 120).

Other studies (Watts, 2008; Emmanuel, Olayiwola and Babatunde, 2009; Babatunde, 2010) attribute the Niger Delta debacle to economic and political marginalisation and suggest improvement in the infrastructure and fair distribution of resources. Other studies, (Wali, 2008; Saka, 2011a) have ascribed the conflict to governance deficit and suggest good governance as a panacea to the conflict.

Scholars such as Duru (2010), Gilbert (2010) and Ojakorotu (2010) examine the consequence of oil violence and contend that it has deepened the country's problem and that of the Gulf of Guinea. For instance, Ojakorotu (2010) examines the consequences of oil violence in the Niger Delta and contends that the major stakeholders in the conflict have different views of the meaning of security. He further maintains that the Nigerian state and the multi-national oil companies views of security centred on state-centric while the people of the region view it as human security. The failure to reconcile these views have perpetuated violence in the region. This position improved our understanding of the conflict but it is insufficient to explain the dynamics of the conflict in the region.

Ugoh (2010) and Agbiboa and Maiangwa (2012) studies centred on the issue of development confronting the Niger Delta. They argue that the developmental challenges facing the region cannot be isolated from the general predicament facing the Nigerian state. Nigeria state is weak and marked by wasted oil rents, bureaucratic corruption, and political violence.

Other works examine the activities of the security forces of the Nigerian state, militants and the propelling factors for militants' emergence. Scholars like Osaghae, Ikelegbe, Olarinmoye and Okhonmina, 2007, Ibaba, 2011, Okumabga, 2012 and Madubuko, (2014) examine the issue of militancy in the region and argue that the militarisation of the region through the Joint Task Force (JTF) has added to the increment in violence and the infringement of human rights of the general populace through the activities of the force who maimed, murdered and assaulted ladies.

Nwonwu (2010) argues the activities of the militants are unconstitutional but that they are inevitable because of the neglect of the region by both the Nigerian state and the multi-national oil companies while Epelle (2010) avers that oil violence in the Niger Delta is the manifestation of the failure of the social contract between the Nigerian state and the people of the region. In other words, the neglect of the region by the central government to provide essential service for the people of the region and the country in general.

Interestingly, Oyefusi (2009) and Agiboa (2013) attribute the violence to lack of trust and break down of the social contract between the government and the people. There are pertinent questions that they failed to address. What was the content of the agreement and how did the breakdown lead to violence in the region?

In contrast to above studies, Enweremadu (2008) and Okonofua (2013) disagree with the narratives on the Niger Delta conflict which attribute the violence to corruption, unemployment, underdevelopment, poverty, weak state institution, defective federal structure and militarisation. For example, Okonofua (2013) argues that the role played

by powerful individuals who use violence to secure an economic advantage from the transnational oil companies. He submits that unless the contribution of these powerful groups is painstakingly teased out and the structures they have constructed which serve their interests are destroyed, peace would remain an illusion in the Niger Delta.

In as much as these studies offer a valuable understanding of the conflict in the region by critically examining the role of powerful individuals in the society, it fails to consider the collaboration between the powerful individuals and the ruling elite in the region. This present study incorporates these powerful individuals and the ruling elite in the region and also provides an updated analysis of the conflict in the region.

From the foregoing studies or literature reviewed, the main causes of conflict are the defective federal system, environmental degradation, poor corporate social responsibility, unfair revenue allocation formula, ethnic-based political domination and so on (Ojatorotu, 2009). The studies identify the Federal Government and oil companies as being the cause of the problems confronting the region.

This is buttressed by the Human Rights Violations Investigation Commission otherwise known as Oputa Panel, which accused both Federal Government and Multinational oil companies (MNOC) as being responsible for the Niger Delta crisis.

According to the report (as cited in Ojatorotu, 2009), the Nigerian state represented by the FGN was accused of not protecting the minorities by abandoning its primary responsibility of delivery of social amenities.

The MNOCs were accused of not operating under internationally acceptable minimum standards, as their activities have caused oil spillage, gas flaring, and others. They have also been accused of nonchalant attitude towards their host communities where they drill oil. Moreover, they gave the communities token as compensation, which cannot improve their standard of living. They also employed a divide and rule tactics to cause disaffection and conflict among different oil bearing communities in the region through a divisive strategy of compensation payment (Ojakorotu, 2009).

From the literature -reviewed above, the roles played by the elite both political and non-political office holders of the Niger Delta extractions have been given little attention by previous studies (Enweremadu, 2008; Orluwene, 2008; Otite, 2009; Watts, 2009; Ibaba, & Ikelegbe, 2010; Omotoso, 2011; Saka, 2011a; Jegede, Joshua, & Olorunyomi, 2012; Suleiman, 2013a; Babalola 2014). Besides, many of these studies are descriptive in nature and focus on corruption. Furthermore, many of them also centred their attention on national elite and political office-holders only. More so, these studies have been overtaken by events in the country.

Orluwene (2008) enumerates elites contribution to the Niger Delta conflict through environmental degradation, obnoxious laws, among others. This study used a secondary source of data and analysis centred on the elites at the centre. In a like manner, Otite (2009) argues that the elites of the Niger Delta extraction have been responsible for the underdevelopment of the region through the pillage of the treasury. Nevertheless, the paper fails to give the details of how this corruption was perpetrated.

Moreover, a single factor cannot explain the complexity of the conflict. The paper relies on secondary sources of data. Notwithstanding, the paper offers an insightful analysis on the role of elites in the conflict.

By the same token, Omotoso (2011) argues that corruption and the accumulation of wealth by the elite are the causes of the Niger Delta conflict and identifies other actors as government officials, oil cartels, ethnic militants and other groups as being responsible for the conflict. However, it fails to specify which of the elite- national or regional. Besides, the paper is a desk research that relies on secondary source data only. Nevertheless, it gives an insight into the cause of the conflict and the actors involved in the conflict.

Jegede, Joshua, and Olorunyomi (2012) argue that corruption among the indigenous elites supported by the oil companies have been the bane of the problem in the Niger Delta. The paper relied on secondary sources of data. Agbiboa and Maiangwa (2012) contend that the elites at both local and state levels are corrupt and are responsible for the poor state of governance in the region. However, they failed to pinpoint how the corruption was perpetrated. Similarly, Suleiman (2013a) analyses the role Niger Delta elites played in the underdevelopment of the region and avers that they have contributed to its underdevelopment through corruption. By the same token, Babalola (2014) argues that corruption among the regional political officer cannot be ignored in the reason for the underdevelopment of the region.

These studies offer an invaluable contribution to the understanding of the elites role in the conflict. However, their focus on corruption alone cannot explain the dynamics and complex nature of the conflict and the numerous roles played by the elites. This study takes a holistic view of the conflict and examines the different roles played by the elites in the conflict.

This study will fill this gap in the literature by analysing the part played by these elite. This new explanation offers by this study will improve upon the previous ones and enable us to have a clearer picture and better understanding of the Niger Delta conflict to be able to find a lasting solution to the conflict. The figure 2.1 below shows the actors in the Niger Delta conflict.



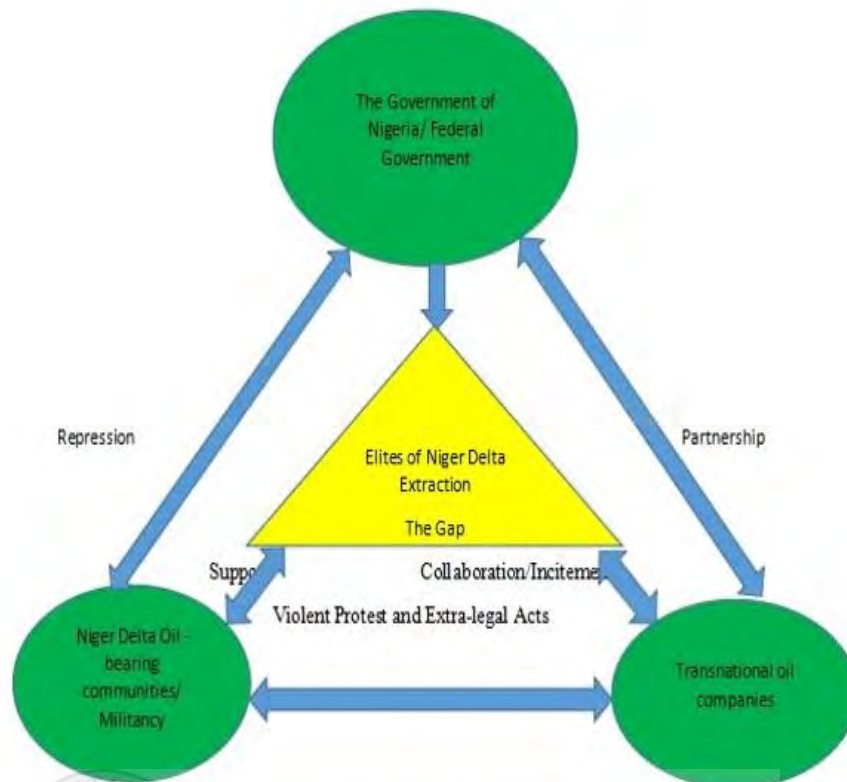


Figure 2. 1 Actors in the Niger Delta Conflict

Source Adapted from Adeola (2009) p.146

From the above diagram, the unholy alliance between the Federal Government and the Transnational Oil Companies (in the form of 60: 40 joint ownership of oil revenue) is responsible for the insensitivity to environmental issues and outright disregard for environmental law and human rights violation by the oil companies. The poor corporate social responsibility and inadequate compensation infuriated anger and violent conflict between the oil-bearing communities and the transnational oil companies operating in the area (Adeola, 2009).

The state instead of acting as an unbiased arbitrator in mediating in the conflict, it became part of the problem and this is evident in the militarisation of the region and the use of force to repress the legitimate demands of the people of the region.

Thus, the oil-bearing communities have no confidence in the government to mediate in the conflict because of its vested interests. The inner triangle represents the gap (the elite of Niger Delta extraction) and their roles in the conflict have not been fully examined in the literature. This study, therefore, fills that gap.

As the figure above shows, there is a collaboration between the federal government and the elite at the regional level in the Niger Delta in the form of appointment of the indigenes to federal agencies (NDDC, MNDA) saddled with the responsibility of developing the area and different collaborative efforts between the centre and the regions in developing the area. The elite of the region failure to provide good governance and prudent management of the scarce resources elicited violence on the part of the oil-bearing communities and the power struggle among the elite for the control of oil wealth led to militancy in the region (Adeola, 2009).

For the elite to finance their activities such as payment of their retinue of staff and political campaign, they need extra cash; for security surveillance contract, for compensation pay to oil-bearing communities for the destruction of farmland or spillage; for corporate social responsibility and lot more. There is a collaboration between the elite and transnational oil companies in these areas.

Where incitement/ violence takes place is when the multinational oil companies pursue divide and rule policy playing one community against the other and also a situation in which contracts are awarded to rival companies or outsiders by the multinational oil companies, the businessman/ businessmen who are affected by this action may incite their people against the oil companies by brain-wash them that what is their right has been awarded to outsiders and indigene of such oil-bearing communities will be incited to destroy oil infrastructure. Some section of the elite of the region connived with some staff of the transnational oil companies and security agencies to steal crude oil (Akpomera, 2015).

2.2 Theoretical Framework

Scholars have used different theories to explain the Niger Delta conflict and some of the most popular theories are frustration-aggression theory, resource control and elite theory. Numerous studies (Abegunde, 2013; Aminu, 2013; Olusola, 2013; Oluwaleye, 2013; Abang, 2014; Ojo, 2015; Akinbobola & Aderoba, 2016) have used frustration-aggression theory while others (Enweremadu, 2008; Watts, 2010; Jegede, et.al, 2012; Abegunde, 2014; Osaghae, 2015) have employed resource curse theory to analyse the Niger Delta debacle. Also, elite theory has been used to analyse the Niger Delta conflict (Orluwene, 2008; Otite, 2009; Omotoso, 2011; Suleiman, 2013a, 2013b).

This study combined elite, resource curse and frustration-aggression theories to form an integrated theoretical approach. The advantage of this is that it makes up for the inadequacies or weaknesses of the others.

The choice of elite theory as the main theory is because elite decide how the political and socio-economic life of a nation is organised. Moreover, the elite shape the

developmental direction of a country by the way they allocate resources. When resources are equitably distributed, development and peace prevail but when resources are unjustly allocated, underdevelopment and violence prevail (Eghweree, 2015). While frustration-aggression and resource curse theories enrich our comprehension of the motive or driving force for the conflict. The figure 2.2 below illustrates the framework of this study.

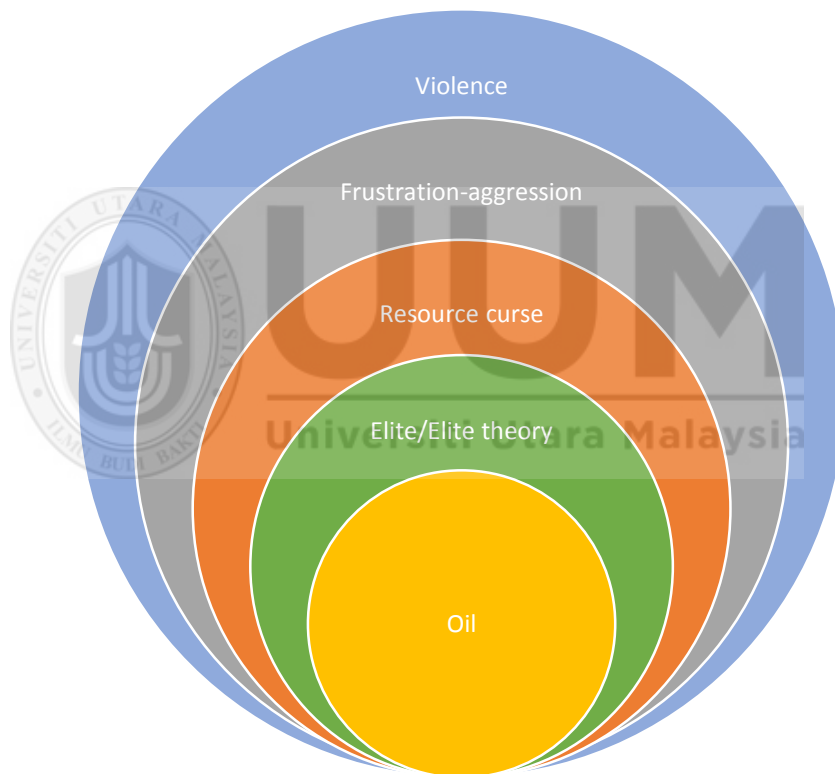


Figure 2. 2 Theoretical Framework Model.

Source: The Researcher.

The figure 2.2 above represents an onion which displays the relationship among the various layers of the concentric circles where the items in each ring depend on the items in the smaller rings. In the above concentric circle/ onion model, the innermost

part represents the oil and the fierce battles or struggle for its control among elite lead to violence.

More so, the action or inaction of elite about oil resources management or its distribution among component units in a federation like Nigeria and among units within a federation can lead to violence. To paraphrase Lasswell (1950), the elite decide who gets what of the oil wealth, when and how. Moreover, the control of this resource as earlier pointed out is a source of conflict among different elite group.

Meanwhile, elite are the managers that direct and allocate resources among competing groups in the society. The failure of the elite to use these resources to improve the living condition of all may cause people revolting against those they perceive to be responsible for their predicament (unemployment, poverty, etc.).

The resource curse thesis states that resource (oil) abundance countries tend to perform poorly when compared to less endowed nations and are also associated with poor management of resources which results in corruption and violence. From the resource curse theory, it can be deduced that oil instead of being a blessing to the inhabitant of the area where the resources are found, it becomes a curse to them because of mismanagement of the proceeds of the wealth.

For the inhabitants of oil-producing communities or states, they expect to derive benefits from this resource in terms of the development of the region. For instance, employment, provision of social amenities such as hospital, schools, roads, water,

electricity and other good things of life that make life meaningful. Unfortunately, these social amenities are lacking and the people live in abject poverty. As a result, they became frustrated and blamed those they perceived to be responsible for their predicament. For instance, the youth in the Niger Delta consider the multi-national oil companies and the federal government represented by the elite from the dominant ethnic groups as being the stumbling block to the realisation of their dreams of benefiting from the abundance natural resources found in their region and because of this the multi-national oil companies were the targets of the youth who used violence means to show their displeasure to them for depriving them of enjoying the benefits of being owner of the oil and gas resources found in their domains. They destroyed oil installations or facilities and also kidnapped oil workers for ransom.

Thus, frustration-aggression arises because of the youths being unable to benefit from the oil wealth which has been cornered by the elite and used to take care of themselves and their immediate families. The consequence of this is violence which is also instigated by the elite.

2.2.1 Elite Theory

In every society or organisation either developed or developing, simple or complex, a class of people selected or elected occupies the topmost position in such society or organisation and this is due to their educational attainment or skills position and in some cases, birth (royalty) this category of people are known as elite.

The term elite refers to “a selected and small group of citizens and or organizations that control a large amount of power. It is also used to analyse the groups that either

control or are situated at the top of societies” (Vergara, 2013, p.32). The elite theory stipulates that power is concentrated in the hands of a small group known as the ‘elite’ in any given society (cf. Julius, 2014). This small group is called ‘Guardians’ by Plato in his work “Republic” (cf Julius, 2014). There are several versions of the elite theory ranging from that developed by Vilfredo Pareto, Gaetano Mosca, Robert Michels, C, Wright Mills, Floyd Hunters and a host of others (Ibietan & Ajayi, 2015; Odubajo & Alabi, 2014).

Pareto, in his insightful study of the elite, divided the elite into governing and non-governing elite and ascribes to the group scholarly prevalence or predominance which differentiated them from the general populace. Similarly, Mosca (cited in Odubajo & Alabi, 2014), divides society into the ruling class and non-ruling class. The ruling /political class is the elite and the sub-elite. The sub-elite class in this setting alludes to technocrats, managers and civil servants, who are above the masses as far as access to opportunity from a state. The elite class which consists of governing and non-governing elite are highly organised compared to the masses and, as a result, they cannot be dared by the masses (Odubajo & Alabi, 2014).

Mitchel analysis is centred on bureaucracy and not the actual government undertakings. He contends that every social and political organization in a society is run by a few minorities, which make the decisions. He attributes the oligarchic tendencies of an organisation to the complex nature of the organisation, the nature of human beings and the phenomenon of leadership (cited in Odubajo & Alabi, 2014). Other notable elite theorists include James Burnham (1943) and Wright Mills (1956).

Both classical and modern elite theorists emphasised the domination of the masses by the elite. Burnham (1943), examines the economic dimension of this domination while Mills (1956), discusses the institutional aspect of elite domination (Eghweree, 2015).

The major thrust of the elite theory is as follows:

In every society, there is and must always be a minority which rules. According to Michels (1962), “it is an organisation, which gives birth to the domination of the elected over the electors, of the mandataries over the mandators, of the delegates over the delegators. Who says organisation says oligarchy” (p.15). This indicates that the oligarchy is a rational derivative of the organisation. In addition, Pareto argues that minority is inevitable in all societies – developed or developing simple or complex society. This minority that rules derived its initial power almost always from a force like the monopoly of military power. But with time, this power is transformed into domination through routinization. The minority ruling circle comprised all those who occupy powerful political positions.

Changes in the ruling class occur through many ways; the recruitment of those from the lower strata of the society into the ruling elite group. Another way is that a new group is integrated into the governing elite or by a complete replacement by a “counter-elite” through a revolution. These changes in the composition of the elite group are known as the circulation of elite.

According to Pareto, people are ruled by elite, where throughout human history, the continuous replacement of certain elite with another, new elite rise and old elite fall.

In his words, “elite or aristocrats do not last. They live or take a position in a certain time. History is a graveyard of aristocracies” (cited in Ibietan & Ajayi, 2015, p. 16). Interestingly, the changes in the composition of the elite group affect just the form and not the structure of society, which remain always minority dominated (Aregbesola, 2013). In other words, the rule by few minorities is unavoidable in human society. The importance or utility of this theory (elite theory) to Niger Delta conflict is that it enhances our understanding of the conflict. The elite through their actions such as sponsorship and financing of the militia group, involvement in oil bunkering and mismanagement of resources of the region have worsened the conflict in the region.

2.2.2 Resource Curse

The resource curse is a phenomenon in which country endowed with abundant natural resources experiences poor economic growth, poor governance and political violent compared to poor resource endowed state. As Heston (2013), aptly notes, one of the most puzzling and perplexing discoveries of modern scholarship is a paradoxical phenomenon called resource curse. Similarly, Di John, (2010) described it as one of the influential ideas in development discourse.

Auty (1993) coined the term resource curse to depict how nations with abundant natural resources are unable to use their resources to support their economies and how they have a lower economic development contrasted with those nations without rich natural resources. In other words, the resource curse thesis stipulates that the resource endowed nations tend to have developmental issues like corruption, poor budgetary performance, political violence and so on. For these groups of nations, the resources

are a curse rather than blessing (Di John, 2010). This theory can be categorised into the following:

2.2.2.1 Natural Resource and Economic Performance

Before the twentieth century, natural resources consisting of primary commodity played an essential role in global trade. Several countries including Canada, United States, Norway, Sweden, the Netherlands and Australia benefited immensely from the natural resources export (cited in Bakwena, Bodman, Le & Tang, 2009; Di John, 2011).

However, since twentieth century, primary products have been described as harmful to the economic growth and causing conflict in the developing world. Karl and Gray (2003) argue that oil abundant and dependent states “are among the most economically troubled, the most authoritarian and the most conflict-ridden states in the world.” (p.8). By the same token, Wenar (2016) argues that resource endowed states are disposed to conflict as opposed to those without abundant resources; they are 50% more liable to be ruled by the authoritarian government; are financially not transparent. Moreover, resource-rich states have a high proportion of poor people. About 40% of the resource-abundant countries in the world lives on less than US\$2 a day.

Sach and Warner (1995, 1997) contend that there is an association between resource abundance and poor economic growth. However, they fail to take cognizance of the institutional and socio-economic factors that may affect the relationship and also fail to take into account the success stories of Botswana, Indonesia, Norway and Malaysia that are resources endowed countries.

In contrast, Sala-i-Martin and Subramanian (2003) argue that it is not the existence of natural resources per se that are causing resource-abundant countries to fail; instead, it is the quality of the institutions and public policies that result in the low economic development. Controlling for institutions, these authors found that natural resources are not significantly related to economic growth. Institutions are important to overturn resource curse and are also part of the solution to countries facing this problem.

Similarly, Holden (cited in Kumah-Abiwu, 2017) notes that the success story of Norway is due to good governance, protection of property rights, high quality democracy and strong institutions. On the contrary, Kumah-Abiwu (2017) argues that Ghana is unlikely to escape the resource curse as long as the emphasis is on the democratic credentials (strong institutions and democratic governance). He suggests a shift in focus to resource governance.

2.2.2.2 Natural Resources and Conflict

Collier and Hoeffler (2000, 2002) note that natural resources abundant and dependent countries are susceptible to civil violence. They contend that conflict may result from greed or grievances and submit that to comprehend the current civil war; there is need to ignore the political explanation and pay attention to an economic explanation. That is, the greed of the rebels to use the natural resources to finance their operations. In their words “those factors which determine the financial and military viability of a

rebellion are more important than objective grounds for a grievance.” (Collier & Hoeffler, 2002, p.1).

On the contrary, Karl (1997, 2007) argues that resource curse is not an economic problem but political/ institutional problem. She maintains that oil itself does not cause resource curse rather the arrangement that govern its exploitation. She attributes it to international oil regime. By international oil regime, She meant “the institutions shaped by multinational oil companies, their host governments, and foreign lenders -- as it is to the structures of states and private actors in oil exporting countries -- another inconvenient reality that is often not addressed.” (p.259).

In another study, Collier and Hoeffler (2004) identify six mechanisms through which oil-conflict connection occurs and these are honey-pot explanation which states that resources are subject of political struggle among political elite and this results in politics of corruption and supported by foreign corporate behaviour.

The second is government detachment. The government is detached from the citizens because it does not rely on them for the running of affairs of the state. Accordingly, the citizens cannot hold it accountable. Put differently, if the people pay taxes to the state represented by the government, they hold their government accountable but because in the oil endowed states, governments do not rely on their citizens for taxes, the rent from oil revenues are not seen as belonging to the people in the way as income from taxes. Thus, governments are unaccountable to the people (Collier & Hoeffler, 2004).

The third is a resource itself, which most of the time is located in a section of the country. The people of the area (s) where these resources are situated are brainwashed to believe that the resources are being used to develop other areas.

Thus, the need for the secession of that part of the country. The fourth mechanism is that it provides a source of finance for the rebel groups. The revenues from the sale of the resources are used to purchase arms and ammunition and to finance their operations. The remaining two are Dutch Disease and price of natural resources (Collier & Hoeffler, 2004).

The Dutch Disease is a scenario in which natural resource bursts hamper both agricultural and industrial sectors of the economy which are the vital drivers of the economy either through currency appreciation or the absorption of factors of production (Torre, Afonso & Soares, 2013). As the price of natural resources particularly oil at the international market fluctuates and this causes unstable economy due to booms and busts. The resultant is a decline in the economy which itself is a cause of conflict or civil war. This explanation is not backed by an empirical evidence (Auty, 2001; Leite & Weidmann, 2002; Sala-i-Martin & Subramanian, 2003). According to Di John (2010), they are weak in terms of theory and evidence.

Similarly, Nathan (2005) argues that Collier and Hoeffler (2002) explanation of the causes of civil war was empirically, methodologically and theoretically flawed. According to him, the result was unsubstantiated, incomplete, inaccurate, and biased, thereby preventing an adequate understanding of the causes of the civil war. But this explanation is not supported by empirical facts (Torres, Afonso & Soares, 2013).

Collier and Hoeffler (2005) examine whether resource rent affects conflict risk. They suggest that the rents effect exists but contend that it is indirect. Elite embezzle resource rent instead of investing them in worthwhile projects that will impact on long-run growth. Stagnant growth rate increases the likelihood of conflict. Unlike Collier and Hoeffler (2004), Hegre and Sambanis (2006) identify non-resources specific features such as income level and growth, rough terrain, population and size as having a strong link with civil war than resources.

Ross (2003) asserts that natural resource abundance plays a significant role in the conflict. He found that 13 resources abundant countries from Sub-Saharan Africa support the assertion that resource abundant leads to conflict. While oil and non-oil, a mineral such as diamond and illicit drugs influence conflict, other primary commodities, like agricultural products are unrelated to civil war in the 13 countries he studied. But resource abundance has an effect on the duration of the conflict. However, Snyder and Bhavnani (2005) maintain that whether resource abundance nations experience conflict is a function of the quality of economic institutions and government spending of revenue. To put it in another way, if government generates sufficient revenue through taxation or other income engendering activities, it will be able to discourage rebellion.

Humphreys (2005) examines the link between natural resources and conflict and discusses six mechanisms through which the linkage occurs. Firstly, the greedy rebel thesis which has three variants. The first variant associated with/ credited to Collier and Hoeffler (2000), it states that rebel groups may engage in criminal activities to

finance their operation independent of the state; the second variant championed by Fearon and Laitin (2003) stipulates that natural resources increase the “prize” value of capturing the state. Nigeria fits into the first variant of the greed thesis where the armed groups fighting for the emancipation of the region engaged, among others, in oil bunkering, kidnapping of oil workers to finance their activities and also to acquire arms for their operations.

The third variant emphasizes that if natural resources are concentrated in the section of the country, this may serve as an impetus for a disgruntled group to want to secede from the country. Other mechanisms are greedy outsiders (entails the role of state and corporation in conflict escalation), grievance, feasibility, weak state and sparse network. He finds among others that the impact of natural resources on conflict cannot be caused by weak state structure; that the association between natural resources and conflict is caused by agricultural dependence rather than by natural resources.

However, scholars like Frynas, Wood, and Oliviera (2003, 2007a), Lewis, (2007), Shaxson, (2007), and Akpan and Umoh, (2016) argue that oil abundant and dependent states are susceptible to state incapacity-violent conflict. They point to the threat they posed to international security. On the contrary, Rosser (2006) and Wennmann (2007) maintain that the idea of natural resource abundance having a negative economic outcome is inconclusive. Rosser examines the resource curse thesis from its economic and political perspectives and contends that it is difficult to prove that the abundant resources in the resources dependent states account for the many economic and political problems they are facing and the phenomena may be the product of unforeseen factors. What is this unforeseen factor?

This the author did not discuss. He argues further that it is unclear whether the myriad studies measured natural resource abundance. Some scholars measured resource abundance in terms of the ratio of country's exports to GDP or a ratio of the countries natural resources exports to total exports. Rosser suggests more research on the resource curse as other factors may have accounted for the curse.

In the same vein, Ron (2005) submits that to prove a link between resources and conflict, there is need to delve deeper into its inner workings and show its conditions of validity that are likely universal. By the same token, Basedau and Lacher (2006), demystify the claim that resource endowed states are prone to violent conflict. In their study of 37 third world countries, they found that oil states with high revenue are stable. The examination of the methods by which government spends oil proceeds shows two types- large scale state and the patronage-based system. The latter is linked to instability or its absence. By the same token, Ross (2004) argues that the connection between natural resources and violence is a mere probability.

2.2.2.3 Natural Resource (Oil) and Democracy

Scholars have examined the effects of the oil on democracy (Barro, 1999; Ross, 2001, 2004; Wantchekon 2002; Jensen & Wantchekon 2004; Friedman, 2006; Smith 2007; Papaioannou & Siourounis 2008; Golberg, Wibbels, & Myukiyehe 2008; Aslaksen 2010; Aytac, Mousseaub & Orsun, 2016) and contend that oil hurts democracy.

However, there are other scholars that do not subscribe to the view that oil hampers democracy (Herb, 2005; Dunning, 2008; Haber & Melando, 2011; Brooks & Kurtz, 2012).

Ross (2001, 2006, 2012) argues that oil hampers democracy and discusses three mechanisms (taxation, spending, and group formation) through which this occurs. The taxation effect involves the use of government revenue to “relieve social pressures that might otherwise lead to demands for greater accountability” (2001, p.328). This implies that government reliance on the bulk of its revenue from oil wealth makes it unaccountable and unresponsive to the yearning and aspirations of the people. It also makes it possible for the citizen to be uninterested in democracy and holding their leaders accountable.

The spending effect entails government use of oil wealth on patronage, to prevent agitation for democratisation. The group formation involves the use of revenue by the government to prevent groups that are critical of its activities from being formed. Moreover, he contends that overabundance of revenue serves as an incentive for the government to use such revenue to equip the armed forces and security agencies to deal with agitators for democratic reform.

Lastly, he discusses modernisation effect and this entails a situation in which the abundance oil wealth leads to diminishing social pressure for securing of higher education, urbanisation, and occupational specialisation. In other words, modernisation effect emphasises oil rent, lack of modernisation and the argument is that since oil has not motivated change in the society, it does not support democratic order. These effects are not mutually exclusive, all of them could function at the same time.

Likewise, Jensen and Wantchekon (2004) maintain that there is a strong negative association between resource abundance and levels of democracy in Sub-Saharan Africa. They argue that oil wealth causes the democratic government to break down and authoritarian government to endure in resource endowed states. According to them, oil wealth causes an intense battle for the control of the state which results in political violence while in resource-poor nations such as Benin and Mali, there is less competition for the control of the state and this encourages elite cooperation and preservation of democratic governance.

In the light of events in Mali, this assertion cannot hold. In 2012, there was a fierce battle between the rebels in the North and the Central government in Bamako and attempts were made by the rebels to take over the control of the seat of government in Bamako but for the prompt intervention of French and ECOWAS forces prevented the rebels takeover of Bamako (Francis, 2013; Adeyemi, 2014; Nizeimana & Nhema, 2015).

In a like manner, Friedman (2006) argues that there is an association between oil and politics. He maintains that the “price of oil and the pace of freedom always move in opposite directions in oil-rich petrolist states.” (p. 31). The higher the average price of crude oil in the world market, the more the essential features of democracy such as an independent judiciary, freedom of speech, freedom of the press, rule of law, free and fair elections are deteriorated.

Also, the higher the price of oil, the less the leaders of these states are accountable and responsive to public opinion. The lower the price of crude oil, the more the petrolist

countries are transparent and sensitive to public opinion. More so, leaders are also sensitive to public opinion when prices are lower. However, this law does not hold true of Nigeria as there is no difference when the prices are high or low, the tenets of democracy are abused.

Wacziarg (2012) criticised the first law of petrol-politics (FLP) because there is no econometrically important relationship between oil price and the pace of freedom. Meanwhile, Atzori (2013) queries the appropriateness of the econometric tools used by Wacziarg to measure “the pace of freedom” and the combined polity score used to rank countries from the most autocratic (-10) to most democratic (+10). Herb (2005) avers that resource-dependent states would have been poorer if they have not found oil and that lower GDP would have caused them to be less democratic.

Haber and Melando (2011) contend that “oil and mineral resources-reliant does not promote dictatorship over the long run. If anything, the opposite is true.” (p.25). By the same token, Brooks and Kurtz (2012), assert that the connections between democracy and oil revenue are intricate because both are internal to the industrialisation processes and submit that oil wealth is not harmful to democratic development.

From the literature survey on resource curse, three dominant topics have emerged and they are: natural resources abundance and poor economic performance, resources abundance and conflict and natural resources abundance and low level of democracy. Besides, there are no agreements among scholars on the means through which the

resource curse occurred. Several methods have been suggested as the path through which resource curse occurred.

However, analysis of the resource curse has centred on the state ignoring the sub-state system and other actors that may have also contributed to the linkage between oil and conflict. And some of these are the elite, the international financial institutions, the multi-national oil companies and their home governments.

This theory is relevant to this study because it practically shows the problem confronting the oil-bearing communities of Niger Delta, how the wealth of the region has not transformed into development because of mismanagement of the oil wealth. Its assumption of a linkage between oil and violence has enabled us to understand the dynamics of the conflict in the Niger Delta.

2.2.3 Frustration-Aggression Theory

The frustration-aggression thesis states that aggression is a product of frustration and frustration is a product of aggression. The theory analyses violence from the point view that when someone is prevented from realising his goal, he vents his anger on those he perceives as a hindrance to the realisation of his/her goal.

The frustration-aggression theory is the brain-child of John Dollard (a psychologist) and his associates namely Doob, Miller, Mowrer and Sears (cited in Berkowitz, 1989) in their spearheading work on the subject and in the later research led by Leonard Berkowitz (1962). This theory has been used by scholars to explain violence in the Niger Delta of Nigeria (Ojakorotu, 2009; Adeyemo & Olu-Adeyemi, 2010; Agbibo,

2013; Kaur, 2013; Okumagba, 2014). The theory as articulated by Dollard et.al (1939) states that “the occurrence of aggression always presupposes the existence of frustration and, contrariwise, that the existence of frustration always leads to some form of aggression.”(p.338).

However, Miller (1941) modified the second part of the statement that states “the existence of frustration always leads to some form of aggression to read: “frustration produces investigations to a number of different types of response, one of which is an instigation to some form of aggression”. Dollard et.al (1939) cited in Berkowitz (1989, p.60), sees frustration as “an interference with the occurrence of an instigated goal-response at its proper time in the behaviour sequence”. It is important to note that a hindrance does not constitute frustration. It becomes frustrating when one strives to achieve this goal. For Dollard, et.al (1939) cited in Berkowitz (1989, p.60), aggression means “any sequence of behaviour, the goal-response to which is the injury of the person toward whom it is directed”.

However, aggression is not likely to occur if aggressive behaviour is repressed through strategy associated with punishment (Feierabend, & Feierabend, 1966, p.250). Eminent political scientists such as James Davies (1962), Ted Gur, (1970) Ivo and Rosalind Feierabend (Feierabend & Feierabend, 1966), have applied this theory to the study of political violence.

The theory examines violence from the psychological viewpoint and attributes it to inhibition or blockage of goal attainment (Okumagba, 2014). While trying to clarify aggression, researchers point out the contrasts between what individuals feel they need

or should and what they get, the need -get-proportion (Feierabend and Feierabend, 1966) and contrasts between expected need fulfillment and actual need fulfillment (Davies, 1962). Where the people wants or desire is unmet, the inclination is for individuals to go against those they consider in charge of disappointing their aspirations (Anifowose, 2011).

The crux of this theory is that aggression is the result of frustration and in a circumstance where the actual yearning of an individual is denied either directly or indirectly by the outcomes of the way the society is organised, the feeling of disillusionment may lead such a person to express his displeasure through violence that will be targeted at those he /she considers to be responsible for his/her predicament (Faleti, 2007). The revolts in the Niger Delta zone by the different militias against constituted authorities and the transnational oil companies in the area can be seen or attributed to frustration.

The frustration-aggression theory is employed as an analytical tool to explain the conflict in the Niger Delta. The region exemplifies the unbearable gap between value expectations and value positions (Agbibo, 2013). For instance, the oil wealth in the region has the potential for economic prosperity for the inhabitants but instead, it has caused repression, poverty, environmental debasement, etc. And due to this, the people became frustrated and revolt against the Nigeria state and multi-national companies.

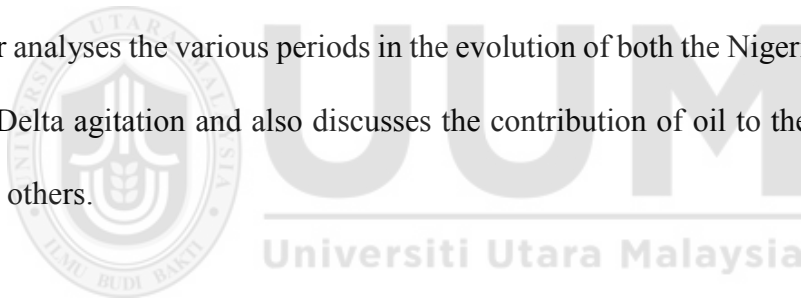
2.3 Summary

The chapter reviews both the concepts and related studies on Niger conflict and from the review the following themes have emerged: defective federal structure and inequity

in the distribution of oil proceeds, governance failure, impacts of oil on the environment and strategies for addressing the conflict.

The chapter argues that there is a paucity of studies on the role of the elites in the conflict. It also examines the combined theories used for the study and these are elite, resource curse and frustration-aggression theories and the rationale behind their uses were thoroughly examined. Also, a theoretical model develops for the study was analysed.

To understand the Niger Conflict, the next chapter is an exposition or expose on the conflict which is seen as part of the forceful formation of the Nigerian state. The chapter analyses the various periods in the evolution of both the Nigerian State and the Niger Delta agitation and also discusses the contribution of oil to the Nigerian state, among others.



CHAPTER THREE

EVOLUTION OF NIGERIAN STATE AND NIGER DELTA CONFLICT

3.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the historical evolution of Nigeria state with the aim to shed more light on how its formation affected the Niger Delta Struggle. And in doing this, Nigeria's history is classified into three periods, pre-colonial era, colonial and post-colonial era. The chapter also discusses the evolution and agitations of the Niger Delta and the contributions of its oil to the economic well-being of the country.

3.2 Nigeria: Precolonial Era

The conflict in the Niger Delta cannot be isolated from the history and violent nature of the Nigerian state formation. Otohile (2012), notes that the problems confronting Nigeria since independence can be understood by examining its nature and evolution. Though, Nigeria came into being on 1 January 1914 when the Northern and Southern protectorates were merged to together. Prior to this period, there was no country called Nigeria (Efemini, 2009; Ojo, 2009; Osaghae, 2011).

Although life in the geographical expression called Nigeria did not start in 1914, nor did the European incursion or penetration into the continent start in that year. For instance, in 1472, in the time of the greatest Benin monarch, Ewuare, a Portuguese sailor Captain Ruy de Siqueria brought a sailing ship as far as the Bight of Benin (Davidson, 1985, p. 131). The year 1914 was used by Nigerian scholars to mark the birth of the Nigerian state and as the source of the numerous problems confronting the country (Niger Delta inclusive).

As stated above, prior to the British colonisation of Nigeria, there was no country or state called Nigeria (Efemini, 2009; Ojo, 2009; Osaghae, 2011). There were different nationalities such as Yoruba, Hausa, Igbo, Fulani, Edos, Igala, Kanuri, Urhobo, Ijaw, Ibibio, Annang, Isoko, Efik, Kalabari. They set-up sustainable pre-colonial states which included those with a centralised political system like the Benin kingdom, Oyo empire, Sokoto caliphate, Kanem-Bornu Empire and others with fragmented political system such as Igbos, Tiv, Ekoi, Ibibio/ Efik and many others in the middle belt of Nigeria now North-central (Ikime, 1980; Cookey, 1987; Ajayi, & Crowder, 1988; Osaghae, 2011; Agbiboa & Maiangwa, 2012). These various kingdoms and stateless societies had efficient systems of administration before the occupation by the British. For example, the Benin Kingdom in today's Edo state started as a city-state and rose to become an empire comprising many tribes. At the zenith of its power in the 17th century, it extended to Lagos, Niger, and Idah in the Northern part of the present day Nigeria (Ighodaro, 2005; Okonofua, 2011; Osaghae, 2011).

Similarly, Oyo kingdom in Yoruba land, grew from a small town to become an empire that extended to neighbouring countries of Benin and Togo Republics and Nupe in the present Niger state of Nigeria. It was the largest forest state in the West Africa and had efficient political institutions characterised by checks and balances (Ighodaro, 2005; Okonofua, 2011; Osaghae, 2011).

The people of the areas that constitutes the South-South of Nigeria was independently ruled and had states institutions that were developed and efficient. It was the epic centre of trade in both slaves and later palm oil with the Europeans in the 19th and 20th centuries. Consequently, the slave trades led to the emergence city-states along the coast such as Sapele and Warri in Delta state; Nembe, Brass, Akoso, and Twoa in Rivers state; Bakana, Buguma, and Abonnema in Bayelsa state and Duke Town in Calabar, Cross-Rivers state. These states had well-developed institutions that controlled family life, health, religion, commerce, and education.

The Igbos occupied the South-Eastern part of Nigeria and by nature egalitarian and independent. They lacked a centralised political structure like the Yorubas and Edos. The Igbos belonged to a class of society Fortes and Evans-Pritchard (cited in Osaghae, 2011) called stateless society. They had a small village republic where every adult male had a direct voice in governance.

The Hausa-Fulani are in the present-day Northern Nigeria. Prior to Uthman Danfodio Jihad of 1804, there were different states in the Hausa land, such as Kano, Rano, Gobir, Zauzau (Zaria), Katsina and several others and were autonomous of one another. In 1804, the Fulani waged a holy war known as Jihad in Hausa land which led to the

conquest of Hausa land and their rulers replaced by the Fulani. The conquered states were divided into two kingdoms with headquarters in Sokoto and Gwandu. The pre-colonial Hausa-Fulani political system was centralised with power vested in the Emir who was very powerful, an efficient taxation and Alkali court characterised the traditional political system. The British used this traditional institution in the governance of their territories.

3.3 Nigeria: Colonial Era

As the earlier section, has shown, the various nationalities in the country before British occupation and subsequent administration of the country had effective and efficient systems of administration with paraphilia of modern organs of government namely legislature, executive and judiciary. In some of the nationalities, for example, Yorubas and Edo, they had checks and balances incorporated into their systems.

Therefore, there was already an efficient system in place which the British used in the administration of the areas they colonised. According to Mai-Lafia (2010, p.105) “it is fallacious and misleading the view expressed that Africans had no system of government before their invasion of the African continent.”

The scramble for and partitioning of West Africa by the major European powers marked the beginning of colonial administration in West Africa. At the Berlin Conference of 1885, the major powers set a guideline for the state to fulfill before laying claim to a territory.

There must be the physical occupation of the area and the colonial lord in question must have set the machinery in motion for the proper administration of the territory.

As Okonofua (2011) noted that the conference not only divided areas of exploitation but also pronounced the principle of governance known as the dual mandate. The principle stipulated that the colonisation of African territories would be beneficial to both the coloniser and the colonised.

Under the mandate, European powers would have unhindered access to the resources and trade of the continent, while the continent would enjoy the Europe's superior civilisation (cited in Okonofua, 2011). The European powers, particularly Britain colonised Nigeria and other territories in Africa because she needed cheap and secure raw materials for her industries, market for surplus goods and re-investment of her surplus capital among others.

Nigeria, a name invented or created by Miss Flora Shaw later Mrs. Lord Lugard on 8 January 1897, which she used it as the title of an article in *The Times* to describe the huge land round the River Niger and its basin. It was then called Niger-area, but after a long usage, it was condensed to Nigeria (Adebanwi & Obadare, 2010; George, Amujo & Cornelius 2012; Gberevbie, & Oni, 2014).

Nigeria, as already noted was a British creation and between 1861 and 1914, through several mechanisms or processes such as a treaty of protection or cunning, trade monopoly, gunboat diplomacy or force, divide and rule, outright conquest, the colonial Lord (British) subdued the different nationalities in the country and brought them under the protection of colonial authority (Osaghae, 2011; Cooney, 1987).

In the same vein, Fatile and Adejuwon (cited in Ajayi & Fashagba, 2014, p.13), note that “Nigeria is one state that owes their existence to the imperialistic activities, which by virtue of a superior technology economy subjugated people from diverse nationalities and organised them to construct Nigeria in 1914”. By the same token, Osaghae (2011) notes the way the various nationalities who have distinct cultures, and political systems were brought together had far-reaching implications for nation-building. According to Falola (1998), by 1860, the British had established their control over Lagos.

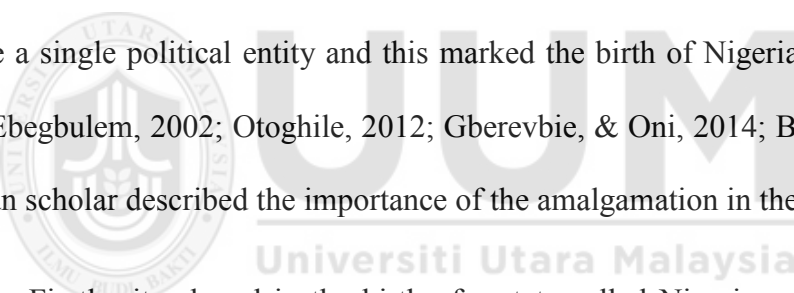
In fact, Lagos was annexed in 1861 and subsequently declared a crown colony (Uche, & Uche, 2004; Jegede, Joshua, & Olorunyomi, 2012). From 1869 to 1874, it was ruled from Freetown and from 1874 to 1886; it was governed from Accra as part of the Colony of the Gold Coast. In 1886, it was granted autonomy and rechristened Colony and Protectorate of Lagos and placed under a governor (Emelonye, 2011). And thereafter, they (British) began to extend their rule to the hinterland notably Niger Delta.

By 1903, a substantial portion of what is today Nigeria was under the control of the British and was divided into three and administered by separate authorities. The colony of Lagos and the Yoruba hinterland (Western) protectorate were administered by the Colonial Office. The Oil Rivers and later renamed Niger Coast Protectorates comprised the Bight of Benin and Biafra with their hinterlands was manned by the

Foreign Office. It later became the Protectorate of Southern Nigeria and was administered by the Colonial Office (Ayoade, 1998).

The Northern Nigeria was initially managed by The Royal Niger Company and when the British government revoked the license of the company and took over its administration, it was administered by the Colonial Office (Ayoade, 1998; Osaghae, 2011). In 1906, the colony of Lagos and the southern protectorate were merged and became the colony and Southern protectorate of Nigeria.

A step in state formation occurred in 1914 when the then colonial governor-general of Nigeria, Fredrick Lugard amalgamated the Northern and Southern protectorates to become a single political entity and this marked the birth of Nigeria state (Albert, 1998; Ebegbulem, 2002; Otoghile, 2012; Gberevbie, & Oni, 2014; Bourne, 2015). A Nigerian scholar described the importance of the amalgamation in these words:



Firstly, it ushered in the birth of a state called Nigeria as a new addition to the conglomeration of states on the world political map. Secondly, it signified the commencement of formal British occupation, colonisation and administration of Nigeria, which lasted till 1960. Thirdly, it introduced western, albeit British political system, structure, and culture in Nigeria. Lastly, it was the starting point for a number of issues, including political and constitutional changes and crises that shaped Nigeria's socio-political history, with reactions of southern Nigerians to the amalgamation being the signpost of the crises to plague the country (Akanji, 2014, p.35).

The merger of the diverse nationalities was not done to integrate them but was carried out for economic, administrative and strategic reasons without consulting the various ethnic groups to agree on the terms of the union. The merger was described as a “forced brotherhood and sisterhood” (Ayoade, 1998, p.117).

For Kalu (2008), the amalgamation prepared the ground for later events that occur in the history of the nation. Similarly, Muhammad (2007) maintains that Nigeria as at 1914 had been installed with sufficient seeds of dissonance that would deface its future political stability. Similarly, Rafiu, Owolabi, and Folasayo (2009, p.157), see the merger as a “by-product of a fraudulent social contract and not of a negotiated will of the welded parts”. For Adu (2015), the uneven union of 1914 created hindrance to constitutional development of the country.

According to Odenigwe (cited in Ojo, 2009), the amalgamation was necessitated by two factors. The two administrations were answerable to the Secretary of State of the Colony and secondly, the economic and security of both required unity. Despite the amalgamation of the two protectorates, they were administered separately. This development has been attributed to some British officials in the North who were determined to keep the region away from the “corrupt” south (Osaghae, 2011, p. 5).

As earlier highlighted that the various nationalities were not consulted and so the amalgamation did not receive their blessing. An eminent nationalist and statesman, late Chief Obafemi Awolowo stated that:

Nigeria is not a nation. It is a mere geographical expression. There are no Nigerians in the sense as there are “English”, “Welsh” or “French”. The word “Nigerian” is merely a distinctive appellation to distinguish those who live within the boundaries of Nigeria from those who do not (cited in Coleman, 1986, p.320).

Also, another prominent Nigerian, Alhaji Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, who later became the first and only Prime Minister of Nigeria concurred with Obafemi Awolowo when he declared that:

Since the amalgamation of Southern and Northern Provinces in 1914, Nigeria has existed as a country only on paper; it is still far from being united. Nigerian unity is only a British intention for the country (cited in Ojo, 2009, p.35).

After the amalgamation of the northern and the southern protectorates, Lord Lugard extended the policy of indirect rule to the South. The British adopted two colonial policies in her colonies namely direct policy (Crown colony) and indirect rule. Indirect rule was a colonial policy in which existing political institutions were used to govern the people. Lugard (cited in Kirk-Green, 1965, p.68) defined indirect rule as:

rule through the native Chiefs who are regarded as an integral part of the machinery of Government, with well-defined powers and functions recognized by the government and by Law, and not dependent on the caprices of an Executive Officer (p.165).

The adoption of the policy was caused by lack of manpower, economic factor, administrative convenience, language barrier, etc. These points are discussed below:

There was a shortage of British personnel to administer the vast territories occupied by the British and thus the colonial lord settled for an indirect rule system of administration using the traditional rulers and institutions to govern the people under the supervision of a British officer.

Furthermore, the direct administration would have cost the British enormous amount of resources which were needed at home for its own development. Therefore, indirect rule was adopted because of lack of capital to run the vast colonial territories.

Administrative convenience also accounted for the introduction of indirect rule. The size of the country was too large and diverse with different nationalities scattered all over the territories which the colonialists had little knowledge about and coupled with the fact that some of these nationalities had well-developed and efficient political institutions which the colonialists found attractive decided to use them in the administration of the occupied territories.

Moreover, language barrier, only a few Nigerians could understand and speak the English Language. Equally, the British officials could not speak Nigeria languages which made communication with the indigenes difficult. Therefore, the alternative was to allow the traditional rulers to govern their people (Mai-Lafia, 2010).

An assessment of indirect rule policy shows that it was successful in the North and failed in the South (combination of East and West). Some scholars (Oronsaye & Bello, 2011) argued that indirect was partially successful in the West and complete failure in the East.

The success of the policy in the North could be attributed to the existence of a centralised traditional political system in which the Emirs enjoyed absolute and unquestionable loyalty from their subjects. Whereas in the West, the Yoruba's Obas had no same powers as the Emirs in the North, there were institutions that acted as a check on the excesses of the Obas. In other words, the powers and authority of Obas in Yoruba land could be challenged by other institutions or directly by the people (Oronsaye & Bello, 2011).

Moreover, the attempt by the British to reinstate the highest authority of Yoruba land to the Alaafin of Oyo, whose power had reduced significantly in the 19th century was disliked and opposed by other Obas in Yorubaland. Furthermore, the barring of the educated elite in local administration provoked serious protest from them (Okonofua, 2011).

The cause of the failure of indirect rule policy in the East, particularly in Igboland was because, it lacked centralised political institutions (Oronsaye, & Bello, 2011). The Igbo society being stateless, egalitarian and democratic had no centralised traditional political system like the Emirs in Hausa-Fulani land and the Obas in Yorubaland to command the obedience of their people.

Anxious to accomplish the success it recorded in the Northern Nigeria, the British appointed warrant chiefs conferring on them powers unknown in the Igbo traditional political system. These chiefs using arbitrary powers and control of the judiciary became tyrannical and unpopular among the people of the area. The attempt by these chiefs to collect taxes on behalf of the Colonial Masters caused the Aba Women Riot of 1929.

In 1939, Benard Bourdillion, then colonial Governor-General of Nigeria split the country into three administrative units, namely the Northern, Eastern and Western provinces. He proposed a federal system of government for the country with regional assemblies to be created in North, East and West and a central legislative council in Lagos. His proposal could not be implemented before he left the country in 1943. He was succeeded by Arthur Richards.

The Richards Constitution of 1946 which came into operation in 1947 was aimed at promoting the unity of Nigeria and ensuring greater participation of Nigerians in the discussion of their affairs. For the first, the Northerners sat side by side with their counterparts from the South in the same legislative council. Under Richards, the provinces became regions but were still governed from the centre. Thus, the constitution introduced regionalism into the country (Akanji, 2014). The constitution also compounded the shared suspicion among the different ethnic groups in the country and marked the cause of rancorous ethnic politics in the country (Albert, 1998). It was replaced by a Macpherson constitution in 1951.

The Macpherson constitution was the first pre-independence constitution that Nigerians took part in its making. The consultations started from the village and ended at a national conference held in Ibadan in 1950. The decisions reached at the conference formed major provisions of the constitution. It empowered the regional legislature to make laws on specific matters, but subject to the approval of the central legislature. The Constitution collapsed in 1953 because of many problems and crises which attended its implementation. These included the exclusion of Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe from the House of Representative in 1951, the Eastern regional crisis of 1953, the 1956 motion for self-government moved by Chief Anthony Enahoro in 1953 and the Kano riot of 1953.

These developments led the British government to redraw the constitution for one that would provide for “regional autonomy and removal of power of intervention by the

centre in matters which could without detriment to other regions be placed entirely within the regional competency.” (Omu, 1996, p.184).

The 1954 Constitution named after Mr. Oliver Lyttelton, colonial secretary. The constitution retained some of the features of the 1951 constitution which included regionalism, unicameral legislatures at the centre and Eastern and bicameral in North and West. It introduced federalism, with the existing regions forming the constituent units. The civil service, judiciary, and marketing boards were regionalised and the constitution also divided powers between the centre and the federating units (Nwabughuogu, 1996; Ojo, 2009; Akanji, 2014; Lucky & Olarenwaju, 2014). According to Nwabughuogu (1996, p.55), Nigeria federation was hunted by “regional imbalances and the search for sectional security”.

Before Independence in 1960, two constitutional conferences were held in London in 1957 and the resumed conference in 1958 in Lagos. The 1957 London was significant to this study because the issue of the minority was part of the agenda and a Commission to allay the fear of the minority was set-up. The Commission was headed by Sir Henry Willink and the commission terms of reference included:

To ascertain the facts about the fears of minorities in any part of Nigeria and to propose means of allaying those fears whether well or ill-founded; to advise what safeguards should be included for this purpose in the constitution of Nigeria; if, but only if, no other solution seems to the commission to meet the case, then as a last resort, to make detailed recommendations for the creation of one or more new states, and in that case: to specify the precise area to be included in such state or states; to recommend the governmental and administrative structure most appropriate for it; to assess whether any state recommended would be viable from an economic and administrative point of view and what the effect of its creation would be on the region or regions from which it would be created and on the federation (Cited in Elaigwu, 2005, p.37).

The minority groups from various parts of the country appeared before the commission and they included those from the North, East and West. From the North came the minorities from Southern Zaria, Niger, Borno, Kwara, Plateau, Adamawa, Kogi and Southern Bauchi. From the Eastern region were the Ogoja, Calabar and Rivers; in the West were the Edos, and Deltas (Elaigwu, 2005).

The findings of the Commission showed that:

Each regional minority expressed the fear that independence would make it difficult for autocratic regional governments to be changed because of their dependence on the votes of majority ethnic groups. In the West, minorities feared Action Group (AG) dependence on a Yoruba majority; in the North, minorities expressed anxiety about Hausa-Fulani domination through the Northern People Congress (NPC); while minority groups in the East feared Igbo domination through the National Council of Nigerian Citizens (NCNC) (cited in Elaigwu, 2005, p.38).

The commission found proof of discernment and other problems, purported by the minorities and recommended the entrenchment of fundamental human rights, in the constitution and the establishment of a special commission to tackle the peculiar needs of the Niger Delta (Elaigwu, 2005; Ibodje, 2008; Wali, 2008; Osaghae, 2011; Watts & Ibaba, 2011).

3.4 Nigeria: Post-Colonial Era

The Nigerian state is a classic example of the disappointment of the African postcolonial state venture. Notwithstanding its tremendous human and natural

resources, she has failed to utilise them for the progress of the country and the well-being of its people. Since independence fifty-six (56) years ago, she is still grappling with numerous challenges such as nation-building, economic problems, insurgencies in the Niger Delta and Boko Haram in the North-East. This segment of the study is the concluding part of the trilogy of historical origin of the Nigerian state.

Nigeria lies in the tropics, on the eastern frontier of the Gulf of Guinea on the West Africa and shares border with Chad and Niger Republics in the North, Cameroun in the East, Benin Republic in the West and Atlantic Ocean in the South (Otuene, 2006). She has a total area of about 923,768 square kilometres (km²) out of which 13,000 km² constitutes water and the remaining 910,768 km², land. She is the most populous black nation on earth, with an estimated population of about 186,053, 387 (CIA, 2016). The country is rich in natural and mineral resources like gold, limestone, oil, copper, rubber, uranium, natural gas, diatomite, bauxite, timber and many others (Otuene, 2006).

Nigeria has different geographical features, ranging from tropical to arid. The region nearest to the Niger delta contains thick mangrove swamps while the residual of the southern division of the land is heavily forested. The southern forests were replaced by hills and plateaus further north, in the area called the middle belt. There are also mountains in the east. Farther north are the plains of the savanna and, in the extreme north, the semi-desert region called the Sahel.

Nigeria has two main seasons namely the wet and the dry seasons. The wet season lasts from March to October, reaching its peak in June and followed by a short dry season called August break which lasts for two-three weeks in the same month and this is followed by a short wet or rainy season starting from September to Mid-October. The long dry season commences from October to March, reaching its peak between December and February (Falola & Heaton, 2008). Precipitation diminishes from south to north, and temperatures are for the most part entirely high all through the nation. Amid the dry season, a strong cool wind called the Harmattan blows in from the Sahara, bringing respite from the hotness but also carrying particles of desert sand, increasing the desertification of the northern savannas (Falola & Heaton. 2008).

Nigeria is a multi-ethnic and multi-religious state and belongs to the category of problematic states called divided or deeply divided state (Osaghae, 2011). There is no agreement among scholars as to the actual number of nationalities or ethnic groups that make up the Nigeria state. For example, Osaghae (2011), puts the figure at more than 250 on the basis of different languages and dialects, while Osuntokun (2013) puts the figure at 350. The doyen of Nigerian studies in Britain, Kirk-Greene (1967) estimated that Nigeria is inhabited by over 400 ethnic groups. Some of these ethnic groups are Edos, Efik, Kanuri, Isoko, Itsekiri, Angas, Jukun, Igala, and many others. The most populous and political influential ones are the Hausa- Fulani- 29%; Yoruba- 21%, Igbo-18%, Ijaw-10%, Kanuri-4%, Ibibio-3.5%, Tiv-2.5% (CIA, 2016) and others 12%. Meanwhile, these nationalities are always in conflict and competition over resources (Ojo, 2009).

In terms of religion, the Nigeria's religious population is split between Islam (50%), Christianity (40%) and traditional religion or beliefs (10%). Religious issues have set groups apart and at loggerhead in the country. Inter-religious conflict has been a major destabilising factor in the Northern part of the country. Evident of religious intolerance have been demonstrated over and over in the north and it has caused the death of thousands of people, mostly Christians (Ajayi & Fashagba, 2014).

Nigeria became independent on October 1, 1960 with a strong region and a centre with a limited power. In other words, Nigeria operated a federal system with weak centre and strong regions. The major ethnic groups (Hausa-Fulani- North, Yoruba- West and Igbo-East) held sway in the regions and in 1963, the country became a republic thereby removing the remaining traces of colonialism. In addition, the country practised a Westminster or a parliamentary system characterised by dual executives (a ceremonial president and prime-minister). Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe was the ceremonial president while Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa was the prime-minister.

In 1963, Nigeria became a federation of four regions, North, East, West and Mid-West. The Mid-West region was carved out of the Western region. The creation of the Mid-Western region was borne out of the protest by the minorities in the defunct Western region that they wanted their own region that would protect their interests and accelerate the development of their various communities. Besides, the region was created to nip the overwhelming dominance of the Action Group in the bud and to ensure the continued domination of both the NPC and the NCNC over the country's polity (Adeniyi, 2014). The region was the first and only to be created by a civilian

administration in Nigeria and subsequent state creation exercises were done during the military regimes.

On 27 May 1967, then Head of State, Major General Yakubu Gowon created twelve (12) states out of the existing four regions to check the Biafran breakaway threat. Put differently, the state creation exercise of 1967 was aimed at whittling the influence of Odumegwu Ojukwu then Governor of Eastern Region at the height of conflicts between the Region and the Federal Government of Nigeria (Adeleye, 2015).

The states created were: Lagos State (comprising the Colony Province and the Federal Territory of Lagos), Western State (comprising the existing Western Region but excluding the Colony Province), East-Central State (comprising the existing Eastern Region but excluding (Calabar, Ogoja, and Rivers Provinces), South-Eastern State (comprising Calabar and Ogoja Provinces), Mid-Western State (comprising the Mid-Western State), Rivers State (comprising Ahoada, Brass, Degema, Ogoni, and Port Harcourt Divisions), Benue/Plateau State (comprising Benue and Plateau provinces), North-eastern State (comprising Bornu, Adamawa, Sardauna, and Bauchi Provinces), North-Western State (comprising Sokoto and Niger Provinces), North-Central State (comprising Katsina and Zaria Provinces) and Kano State (comprising Kano Province). The map below shows the state created in May 1967 by Major General Yakubu Gowon administration.

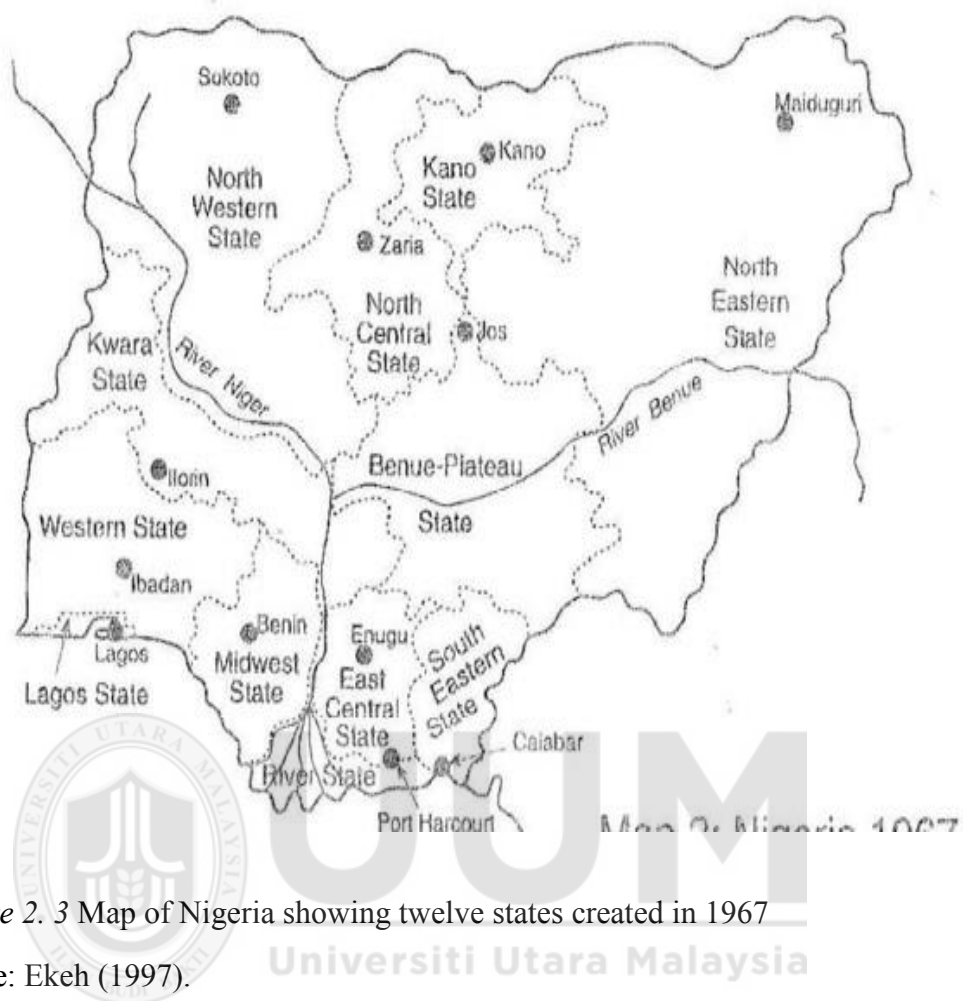


Figure 2. 3 Map of Nigeria showing twelve states created in 1967

Source: Ekeh (1997).

In 1976, the Late General Murtala Mohammed administration following the demands by various nationalities for states created seven additional states and this brought the number states then in Nigeria to nineteen (19) states. The states were Anambra, Bendel, Bauchi, Benue, Bornu, Cross River, Gongola, Imo, Kaduna, Kano, Kwara, Lagos, Niger, Ogun, Ondo, Oyo, Plateau, Rivers, and Sokoto States.

In 1987 and 1991, the administration of General Ibrahim Babangida created Akwa-Ibom (from Cross-River) and Katsina States (from Kaduna state) and nine others namely Delta (carved out of Bendel state), Edo (created from Bendel state), Enugu (carved out of Anambra state), Jigawa (carved out of Kano state), Kogi (created out of Kwara and Benue states), Osun (carved out of Oyo state), Taraba (carved out from Gongola state), Anambra (from old Anambra State) and Kebbi (carved out of Sokoto state). This brought the number of states in Nigerian federation to thirty.

In 1996, the late maximum ruler General Sani Abacha in his nationwide broadcast marking the thirty-six years independence anniversary announced the creation of Ekiti (created from Ondo), Ebonyi (carved out of Abia and Enugu states), Gombe (created out of Bauchi state), Nassarawa (carved out from Plateau state), Yobe (created from Borno state) and Zamfara (carved out from Sokoto). With this exercise, Nigeria became a federation of thirty-six states and with a federal capital located in Abuja.

As Okonofua (2011) has rightly noted, the politics of state creation in Nigeria is the politics of ethnicity. Ethnic awareness continues to play a key role in the political process and in the sharing of political positions, patronages, and rewards. Therefore, there is no limit to the requests for states creation in Nigeria, for as long as ethnic bigots and political vendors keep agitating for state creation in order to resolve the alleged relegation of their people (Vande, 2012).

It is important to note that the exercise has not only failed to tackle the problem of ethnic minorities or majorities but also become a tool employed by successive military rulers to weaken the structure of Nigerian federalism. The state creation exercise has weakened the federating units, vis-à-vis the federal government.

The discussion on Nigeria's post-colonial era will be incomplete without examining the role played by the military during this era. On 15th January 1966, five Majors (Nzeogwu, Ifeajuna, Anuforo, Okafor, and Adeboyege) led by Major Patrick Chukwuma Kaduna Nzeogwu staged a coup that led to the collapsed of the First Republic of Nigeria. It was a bloody coup and some prominent civilians and military officers were killed, among whom were the first and only Prime Minister of Nigeria, Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, the then Finance Minister, Chief Festus Okotie-Eboh, Sir Samuel Ladoke Akintola, Premier of Western Region and the powerful Premier of Northern Nigeria, Sir Ahmadu Bello, the Sardauna of Sokoto. The military officers killed in the coup included Colonels Shodeinde, Kur Mohammed, Lt. Colonel Yakubu Pam, Brigadiers, Ademulegun, Maimalari and many others (Osaghae, 2011). The coup was executed to end tribalism and corruption (Falola, & Heaton, 2008).

Unfortunately, the coup was unsuccessful, the top brasses in the military hierarchy thwarted it, and Major-Gen. Aguiyi Ironsi became the beneficiary of the coup by becoming the first military Head of State of Nigeria. The coup was perceived as Igbo coup because of the sectional nature of those killed and the organiser of the coup. General Ironsi's actions further confirmed the speculation that the coup was executed by the Igbos to lord it over the rest of the groups in Nigeria.

Several reasons were adduced for these, his failure to put the coup plotters on trial as demanded by segment of the army; acceleration promotions he gave to officers of Igbo extraction; he surrounded himself with Igbos intelligentsia and bureaucrats and the abrogation of Nigeria's federal system by decree no.34 of May 24, 1966; by that decree the country ceased to be a federation (Osghae, 2011). A counter- coup was staged by the northern officers in which Aguyi Ironsi and his host (Colonel Adekunle Fajuyi, military governor of the Western Region) were killed.

On 29 July 1966, Gen. Ironsi's government was toppled in another violent coup led by Murtala Mohammed, T.Y Danjuma, and others. Lt-Col. Yakubu Gowon was appointed as Head of State and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces ahead of most senior army officers such as Brigadier Ogundipe. Colonel Odumegwu Ojukwu, the then governor of Eastern Region declined to accept Gowon's accession to power. The personal conflict between Gowon and Ojukwu, over the Igbo officers killed in the counter-coup of July 1966 and the killings and destruction of Igbo properties in the various parts of the North culminated in the secession of the Eastern Region in 1967 (Osaghae, 2011; George, Amujo, & Cornelius, 2012).

On 29 July 1975, General Yakubu Gowon was overthrown while attending the annual summit of Heads of State and Government of defunct Organisation of African Unity (O.A.U) in Kampala, Uganda. The Gowon regime was accused of ineptitude, corruption, crimes, leading to national insecurity and lack of economic development (Soboyejo, 2014). He was succeeded by Brigadier Murtala Mohammed who was assassinated six months later in a military putsch led by Lt.Col. Busaka Dimka on 13 February 1976.

The then Brigadier Olusegun Obasanjo succeeded General Murtala Muhammed after his assassination on 13 February 1976 and he handed over the rein of government to elected civilian government of Alhaji Shehu Usman Aliyu Shagari on 1 October 1979.

On 31 December 1983, the military struck and Major-General Muhammadu Buhari became the Head of State and Commander -in- Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The civilian administration of Alhaji Shehu Shagari was ousted due to mismanagement of the economy and consequent decline in the living condition of Nigerians, electoral malpractices and democratic instability which followed the 1983 general elections (Osaghae, 2011).

Major- General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida who was then the Chief of Army Staff in what scholars referred to as palace coup (George, Amujo, & Cornelius, 2012) deposed Muhammadu Buhari in a bloodless coup twenty months later (27 August 1985). The reasons advanced for Buhari being toppled were among others, failure to salvage the country's economic decline, lack of consultation with the members of the supreme military council and failure to articulate a programme for the return to civil rule (Osaghae, 2011).

General Ibrahim Babangida stepped aside on 26 August 1993 because of the popular protest of annulment of the freest and fairest elections ever conducted in the annals of Nigeria political history- the June 12, 1993, Presidential Election won by Chief Moshood Kashimawo Olawale (MKO) Abiola. He handed over the government to Chief Ernest Shonekan, who was unseated by Abacha eighty-two (82) on 17 November 1993.

The maximum military ruler, General Sani Abacha died while in office on 8 June 1998, the acclaimed winner of the 12 June 1993 elections died a month late (George, Amujo & Cornelius,2012).

General Abdulsalam Abubakar then Chief of Defence Staff succeeded late General Sani Abacha and handed over to a democratically elected civilian president Chief Olusegun Aremu Okikiola Obasanjo on 29 May 1999. He ruled for two terms of four years each and was replaced by Umaru Musa Yar'adua on 29 May 2007.

Dr. Goodluck Ebele Azikiwe Jonathan succeeded Yar'adua after the latter death and contested for the presidency in 2011 General Elections, which he won. In 2015, he lost to his 2011 opponent in the person of Muhammadu Buhari. President Muhammadu Buhari, thus, became the first opposition candidate to unseat the then incumbent president and Dr. Goodluck Jonathan would also go down in history as the first sitting president to accept the verdict of the people and congratulate his opponent before the formal declaration of the winner by the electoral body.

3.5 Niger Delta Conflict: Evolution and Agitation

The Niger Delta region of Nigeria dubbed by Osaghae (2015) as the “Oil Republic” of Nigeria has been the theatre of militancy since the restoration of democratic rule in 1999. This section of the study examines the evolution of the conflict in the region.

Following the Berlin Conference of 1884-1885, in which African territories were shared among European powers, British declared the area known today as Niger Delta as Oil Rivers Protectorate. Before the formal occupation of the area by the British,

it was a centre for both legitimate and illegitimate trades. To put it another way, it was known for trade in human known as Trans-Atlantic trade or slave trade and when trade in a human being was abolished, it became famous for palm oil trade.

In conquering this area, British adopted two strategies. The first involved the signing of a treaty with local rulers compelling them to open their areas to the British market and or to accept Christianity in a swap for guns and ammunitions. These treaties were written in the English language, which the local rulers did not comprehend and when the local rulers discovered that the treaty amounted to taking over of their possession, the treaties were rejected and this attracted punishment in form of full - scale war against the erring local rulers and this war is termed expedition (cited in Ekpolomo, 2015).

The Niger Delta people during the colonial era opposed economic deprivation by the British merchants (Oloya, & Ugeyaywighren, 2009; Obi, & Rustad, 2011; Adebajoko & Ojua, 2013; Etekpe, & Ibaba, 2013; Okoli, 2013; Saka, Azizuddin, & Omede, 2014; Nwankwo, 2015). According to Oloya and Ugbeyavwighren (2009), prominent traditional rulers from the region such as King William Dappa Pepple of Bonny was removed from the throne and banished to Fernando Po in 1884; Jaja of Opobo was unseated and deported to West Indies; Nana of Itsekiri was exiled to Accra in 1894; the Oba of Benin was deposed and banished to Calabar in 1897 where he died sixteen (16) years after.

The root of the conflict in the Niger Delta has also been linked to the Akassa Raid which occurred in 1895. The Royal Niger Company denied the people of Nembe (Akassa) to take part in oil and palm produce business and the people revolted and attacked the company's depot in Akassa (Aghalino, 2006; Ako, Okonomah, & Ogunleye, 2009; Oloya & Ugbeyavwighren 2009; Nwankwo, 2015). After the oil palm trade, came the discovery of oil in the region in 1956.

However, the pre-independence conflict in the region was not concerned with oil. This was because oil has not become foreign exchange earner for Nigeria. It was centred on infrastructure development and marginalisation by the major ethnic groups in the East and Western regions. According to Ekpebu (2008), the present state of affairs in the Niger Delta was caused by abandonment and repression by the Igbos of former Eastern region of its minority ethnic groups in present states Akwa-Ibom, Rivers, Cross-River, Bayelsa and Southern part of Cameroun.

The neglect and domination by the Yoruba ethnic group of the West accounted for the agitation by the minority in the region for the creation of Mid-West region. For Ibaba (2011), the dominance of oil as the live-wire of the Nigerian economy, politicisation of the principle of revenue allocation, the struggle for access to oil resources by both the majority and minority ethnic groups, among others, brought oil into the conflict (Ibaba, 2011).

The conflict in the region took a different dimension when in 1966, Isaac Adaka Boro, together with Sam Owonara and Nottingham Dick attempted to secede the Niger Delta region from Nigeria through armed struggle and proclaimed the region as an independent state called Niger Delta Republic (Okolie-Osemene, 2013). The action of these trios was grassed by the perceived marginalisation and deprivation suffered by the people of the region because of oil exploration activities (Okoli, 2013). This rebellion was crushed by the federal troops twelve (12) days later. The rebellion is known as the Twelve Days Revolution. The revolution was symbolic because subsequent protest derived its inspiration from Boro's twelve days' revolution. In fact, Asari Dokubo group name Niger Delta People Volunteer Force was derived from Boro's Niger Delta Volunteer Service (Asuni, 2009).

The current conflict in the Niger Delta dates to the Ogoni uprising of the early 1990s and it arose because of tension between multi-national petroleum companies and the ethnic minorities in the Niger Delta, who felt cheated or short-changed. Since then, competition for oil has caused violence in the area contributing to the militarisation of the area by the ethnic militias and the Nigerian armed forces.

As earlier highlighted, the present crisis was ignited by the Ogoni uprising of the 1990s. The Ken Saro-Wiwa led Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP) demanded compensation from the oil companies for the environment debasement and presented to the government a list of their demands. The Bill expressed the anguish of the masses because of petroleum exploration, neglect by central and state, infrastructural deficit and political marginalisation (Adebajoko & Ojua, 2013).

Consequently, they demanded the control of their resources. A thirty-day ultimatum was issued to all oil multi-national companies in the communities to pay the sum of US\$10 billion in arrears as royalties and damages for environment degradation and total stoppage to gas flaring in oil producing communities in Ogoni land (Adebajoko & Ojua,2013). The federal government reacted by banning all public gatherings and declared disturbance that prevents the free flow of oil production as treasonable and punishable by death. Subsequent revolts among the Ogonis caused the death of four prominent chiefs from the area and the later hanging of the “Ogoni Nine” including Saro-Wiwa by the military administration of Late General Sani Abacha. The hanging of Saro-Wiwa marked a new phase in the Niger Delta struggle. This new phase featured violence, the bombing of oil installations, hostage taking, kidnapping and much more (Esikot & Akpan, 2013).

Scholars have identified distinct phases of the conflict in the Niger Delta. Idemudia (2009), categorised the conflict in the Niger Delta into three phases. The first phase which was characterised by need dimension of the conflict occurred from 1950 to 1980s. This period was marked by political and economic exclusion as well as the hegemony of the ethnic majority nationalities in the eastern and western regions of Nigeria. The main actors that spearheaded the struggle during this period were the traditional rulers and elite of the minority ethnic groups.

The second phase which he dubbed the era of the creed was from 1990s-2000 and this era was powered by “proliferation of a sense of ‘relative deprivation’ based on collective experiences and perceptions” (Idemudia, 2009, p. 136).

According to Idemudia (2009), three factors accounted for these relative deprivations and they are the issues of revenue allocation, the social responsibility of transnational oil companies operating in the region and the rapacious nature of the military rule.

The third phase which he called the era of grievance and greed was from 2000 to date. The period featured an increase in the strength of violence. Several factors were identified as responsible for this and these are the socio-economic reality and the experience of oil-bearing communities such as Olobiri and Ogoni that have nothing to show for their contributions to the economic well-being of the country; the realisation by other oil communities that oil was not renewable and do not want to be another empty Olobiri. These experiences prompted the people to take their destiny in their hands.

The proliferation of social movements also accounted for the increase in violence activities during the period. Social movements such as National Youth Council of Ogoni People, Isoko Development Union, Chikoko, Itsekiri National Patriots and many others, have different objectives, for instance, environment, democratisation and human rights. And due to this, they were pushed in different directions by different social forces (Idemudia, 2009). The youth who led these social movements also belonged to other associations with different agenda. These social movements were weak and vulnerable to organisation capture by either youth leaders or political elite who used them to ferment trouble and thereby increasing violence in the region. Besides, the use of force to manage conflict in the region was also responsible for the increase in the violence during the period under review.

The destruction and killing of innocent people of Odioma village in 2005 by the administration of Obasanjo further worsen the conflict in the region. Unlike in the previous era when government alone controlled the monopoly of violence, the militia groups have acquired sophisticated weapons which they got through resources obtained from oil bunkering, transnational oil companies social license of operation and many others. The effect is that they can meet the armed forces of the Federation force with force (Idemudia, 2009). Others like Ibaba and Ikelegbe (cited in Watts & Ibaba, 2011) identified six phases and these phases are contained in the Table 3.1.

Table 3. 1

Phases of Conflict in the Niger Delta

	Period	Nature of the Agitation
1	Pre-independence	Agitation for special developmental attention because of unique ecological difficulties
2	1966	Militant insurgent engagement by Adaka Boro and the NDVS. Separation or autonomy was the goal of engagement
3	1970s	Agitations by host communities against oil TNC's demanding for basic social infrastructure/amenities and payment of compensation for damages to land and property.
4	Mid 1980s	Conflict between host communities and oil. MNC' sever payment of adequate compensation for damages to property. Litigation was the instrument of engagement
5	1990–1996	(a) Emergence of civil, community, ethnic, and regional groupings in response to state and oil TNC's insensitivity and repression. (b) Peaceful demonstrations by host communities and occupation of oil production facilities, demanding for adequate compensation for damages and development attention.

6	1997– till date	(a) Militant and militia actions against Oil TNC's (b) Demand for resource ownership and control by civil, political, and militia groups (c) Violent confrontations and low -intensity war between militia groups and the military
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Source: Adapted from Ibaba and Ikelegbe (cited in Watts & Ibaba, 2011).

3.5.1 Niger Delta Avengers and the Conflict in the Niger Delta

The current crisis in the Niger Delta share some features highlighted in the table 3.1 above. However, the current conflict has moved beyond the issue of resource control and ownership to self-determination and glorification of corruption by those that are wanted or being prosecuted for corruption-related offences.

The Niger Delta Avengers, one of the current militia groups fighting for the emancipation of the Niger Delta came into being in February 2016 and declared that they were a group of educated and well-travelled individuals that were ready to take the Niger Delta struggle to another level that has never been seen in the annals of the country. They claimed to possess both the equipment and human resources to accomplish this task (Ewokor, 2016).

The emergence of the group has been linked to the present administration cancellation of the juicy pipeline security contracts awarded to the ex-warlords by the previous administration. For instance, a pipeline security protection contract worth US\$103 million a year was awarded to Global West Vessels Specialist Ltd owned by Government Ekpemupolo alias Tompolo (Ezugwu, 2016). The prosecution of ex-militant leader Tompolo for alleged corruption.

He is being tried in connection with US\$231million missing government fund (Ewokor, 2016). Also, the cut in the budget of the Amnesty Programme from N60 billion to N20 billion which resulted in the reduction in stipend pay to the ex-militants (Ezugwu, 2016).

The Niger Delta Avengers demands included implementation of the 2014 National Constitutional Conference; commencement of academic programme at newly established Nigerian Maritime University at Okerenkoko in Delta State; cleaning up of Ogoni land and other oil polluted areas in the region; funding and continuation of Presidential Amnesty Programme; the allocation of 60% of the oil blocs to the indigene of the region; unconditional release of Mr. Nnamdi Kanu,, detained leader of the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) and the release of Sambo Dasuki, erstwhile National Security Adviser to immediate past president of Nigeria, Goodluck Jonathan((Durdan, 2016).

A critical assessment of these demands show that some of the items listed have nothing to do with the region and this is an indication that the group was formed to destabilise the administration of President Muhammadu Buhari by some politicians whose present administration anti-corruption policy they opposed. It behoves on this administration to ensure that the root causes of the militancy such as poverty, unemployment, environmental degradation, underdevelopment, resource control and political restructuring of the polity are quickly addressed in order not to give room in future for another group to emerge and claim, it is fighting for the cause of the people of the region. The militia group has carried out several attacks on oil infrastructural facilities.

The Table 3.2 shows the timeline of Niger Delta Avengers attacks on oil installations.

Table 3. 2

Timelines of Niger Delta Avengers Violence Activities in the Niger Delta.

S/no	Date	Nature and location of attacks
1	January 14, 2016	Several gas pipelines and oil installations located in Warri South West were blown up
2	February 10, 2016	Bonny-Soku Export Gas line was blew-up
3	February 14, 2016	The SPDC underwater 48 inch crude oil export pipeline at Forcados Export terminal was bombed
4	February 19, 2016	Agip pipeline manifold Clough Creek-Tebidaba Pipeline in Bayelsa State was destroyed.
5	May 4, 2016	The Chevron Valve Platform located at Abiteye, Warri South was bombed by militant.
6	May 4, 2016	Shell's underwater Forcados 48 inch crude oil Export Pipeline was blown up by militants after repairs commenced following the February 14 attack
7	May 5, 2016	The Escravos-Lagos Pipeline System, linking Warri to Lagos was blown up by militants.

- 8 May 5, 2016 A coordinated attack on several Chevron oil installations located in Abiteye, resulting in the destruction of Chevron Well D25 and several other major pipelines in the area.
- 9 May 6, 2015 The crude oil pipeline linking Warri to Kaduna and gas line that supplies both Lagos and Abuja with electricity.
- 10 May 6, 2016 Oil pipelines located near the villages of Alero, Dibi, Otunana, and Makaraba were destroyed by militants
- 11 May 9, 2016 3 Nigerian soldiers were killed during a shootout with militants in the village of Foropa, Southern Ijaw LGA, Bayelsa.
- 12 May 13, 2016 The Chevron pipeline at Makaraba was blown up for a second time in 7 days following repairs done by Chevron
- 13 May 17, 2016 Agip's sagbama-Tuomo gasline in Bayelsa was destroyed by militants
- 14 May 20, 2016 Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation's Escravos-Lagos Pipeline System was once again blown up by militants following the commencement of repairs being done on the pipeline following the May 5 attack.
- 15 May 22, 2016 Agip oil Pipeline, Azuzuama axis of the Tebidaba- Brass pipeline in Bayelsa State



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- 16 May 25, 2016 Chevron's main electricity feed pipeline, located at the Escravos Tank Farm at Ciera Creek was blown-up by militants
- 17 May 26, 2016 NNPC gas and crude trunk line in Warri were destroyed by militants
- 18 May 27, 2016 Eni and Shell's pipelines 1, 2, and 3 located at Nembe, Bayelsa State were blew by the militants
- 19 May 27, 2016 Several gas and oil pipelines belonging to the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation located near Warri were bombed by the militants
- 20 May 30, 2016 Militants were forced to retreat from the villages of Gulobokri and Eweleso, Brass following a series of clashes with Nigerian soldiers, resulting in the deaths of approximately 20 civilians, 2 police officers, and an unknown number of militants and soldiers
- 21 May 31, 2016 Chevron's Oil Wells RMP23 and RMP24 located near the village of Dibi, Warri South-West, Chevron's highest producing wells in the Niger Delta, were destroyed by the militants
- 22 June 1, 2016 Five boats loaded with heavily armed militants attacked a houseboat near the village of Ijere, Warri South, where Nigerian



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soldiers were reportedly stationed. 2 Nigerian soldiers and 4 civilians were killed during the attack.

- | | | |
|----|---------------|--|
| 23 | June 2, 2016 | Militants blew up the Ogboinbiri-Tebidaba and Cough Creek-Tebidaba pipelines, belonging to Eni in Bayelsa state |
| 24 | June 2, 2016 | Boat belonging to NNPC in Warri, Delta State was destroyed by militants |
| 24 | June 3, 2016 | Militants blew up Shell's Forcados 48-inch Export Pipeline for a third time following a series of repairs done by Royal Dutch Shell. |
| 25 | June 3, 2016 | Militants bombed Eni's Brass-Tebidaba oil pipeline in Bayelsa State |
| 26 | June 8, 2016 | Militants blew up Chevron's Well RMP20, located 20 meters from the Dibi Flow Station in Warri North Local Government Area |
| 27 | June 9, 2016 | Militants blew up the Chanomi Creek oil facility, belonging to Royal Dutch Shell, near the village of Ogidigben, Warri South West. |
| 28 | June 10, 2016 | Militants bombed the Obi Obi Brass trunk line, belonging to Eni. It is one of Eni's most important crude oil pipelines in Bayelsa State. |



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- 29 June 16, 2016 Militants destroyed a crude oil pipeline belonging to the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation in Oruk Anam in Akwa Ibom State
- 30 July 1, 2016 A crude oil trunk line belonging to the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation linked to the Warri refinery was bombed by militants
- 31 July 2, 2016 Two major crude oil trunk lines belonging to the Nigerian Petroleum Development Company, located near the Batan flow station in Delta State was blew up by the militants
- 32 July 3, 2016 Militants blew up Chevron Wells 7 and 8, located near the Abiteye flow station in Warri South-West Local Government Area of Delta state
- 33 July 5, 2016 Militants blew up Chevron Well 10, located near Otunana flow station.
- 34 July5, 2016 Militants blew up a manifold belonging to the Nigerian Petroleum Development Company, located near Banta, as well as two crude oil trunk lines belonging to the Nigerian National Petroleum Company



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- 35 July 6, 2016 Chevron's manifolds RMP 22, 23 and 24 in Delta State were blew up. These manifolds are major convergence points for numerous crude oil pipelines operated by Chevron Corp.
- 36 July 8, 2016 Militants blew up Nembe pipelines 1, 2, and 3, belonging to Shell and Eni, in Bayelsa State while simultaneously blowing up the Brass-Tebidaba trunk line in Rivers State
- 31 July 11, 2016 Militants blew up Exxon Mobile's Qua Iboe 48 Crude oil pipeline
- 32 July 12, 2016 Militants blew up a natural gas pipeline belonging to the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation located in Ogijo, Ogun State.
- 33 July 18, 2016 Militants blew up a crude oil trunk line belonging to Shell located near the Batan Flow Station in Warri South-West Local Government
- 34 July 24, 2016 A natural gas pipeline belonging to the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation located in Nsit-Ibom LGA, Akwa Ibom was blew-up by the militant

35 July 31, 2016 Militants blew up the Trans Ramos crude oil pipeline, owned by Royal Dutch Shell, located near the village of Odimodi, Burutu LGA, Delta State.

Source: Adapted from Amaize and Brisibe (2016) and updated by the Researcher

3.6. Origin and Development of Oil in Nigeria

The historical origin of oil in Nigeria dates to 1908 when a company called Nigerian Bitumen Corporation, a subsidiary of a German company, began exploring for oil in Western part of Nigeria and its exploration activity was conducted at Araromi area (Eghweree, 2015). The effort was unsuccessful, but further exploration by Shell D'Arcy turned out to be a success.

In 1956, oil was discovered in marketable quantities at Oloibiri, the present day Bayelsa State in South-South geo-political zone of Nigeria, and exploitation began in 1958. Nigeria crude oil is of high quality and contains low sulphur and may be applied to create more light oil products such as kerosene and propane. This, paired with other ingredients, such as low operating costs, high success rate of drilling, number and size of proven oil reserves, high incentives offered by the Nigerian government, high gain potential and propinquity to the western market, makes Nigeria's oil attractive, very much in demand and of great international importance (Otuene, 2006). The Table 3.3 highlights the major developments that have taken place in the oil sector in Nigeria.

Table 3. 3

Major Landmark in Oil and Gas in Nigeria

S/No	Year	Events
1	1908	Nigerian Bitumen Co. & British Colonial Petroleum commenced operation
2	1938	Shell D' Arcy granted exploration rights for oil throughout Nigeria
3	1956	First successful well drilled at Oloibiri by Shell D' Arcy
4	1956	Shell D'Arcy changed to Shell-BP Petroleum Development Company of Nigeria Limited
5	1958	First Shipment of oil from Nigeria
6	1961	Shell's Bonny Terminal was commissioned
7	1961	Texaco Overseas started operations in Nigeria
8	1962	Elf started operations in Nigeria as Safrap
9	1962	Nigeria Agip Oil Company started operations in Nigeria
10	1962	Construction of the first refinery at Alesa—Eleme, PortHarcourt
11	1963	Elf discovered Obagi field and Ubata gas field
12	1963	Gulf's first production
13	1965	Agip found its first oil at Ebocha

14	1965	Philips Oil Company started operations in Bendel State
15	1965	Commissioning of the Alesa—Eleme Refinery
16	1966	Elf started production in Rivers State with 12,000 bb/d
17	1967	Philips drilled its first well (Dry) at Osari-1
18	1967	Philips first oil discovery at Gilli—Gilli-1
19	1968	Mobil Producing Nigeria Limited was formed
20	1968	Gulf's terminal at Escravo was commissioned
21	1970	Mobil started production from four wells at Idaho Field
22	1970	Agip started production
23	1970	Department of Petroleum Resources Inspectorate commenced
24	1971	Nigeria joined the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC)
25	1971	Shell's Forcados terminal commissioned
26	1971	Nigerian National Oil Corporation (NNOC) established by a decree
27	1971	Mobil's terminal at Qua-Iboe commissioned
28	1973	First participation agreement; Federal Government acquires 35% shares in the oil companies
29	1973	Ashland started PSC with then NNOC (NNPC)

30	1974	Second Participation Agreement, Federal Government increases equity to 55%
31	1974	Elf formally changed its name from Safrap
32	1974	Ashland's first oil discovery at Ossu-1
33	1975	First oil lifting from Brass terminal by Agip
34	1975	DPR upgraded to Ministry of Petroleum Resources (MPR)
35	1976	MPE renamed Ministry of Petroleum Resources (MPR)
36	1976	Pan Ocean commenced production via Shell-BP's pipeline at a rate of 10,800 b/d
37	1977	Government established Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) by Decree 33 (NNOC & MPR extinguished)
38	1978	Warri Refinery Commissioned with an installed refining capacity 100,000 bpd and upgraded to 125,000 bpd in 1986
39	1979	Third Participation Agreement (throughout NNPC) increases equity to 60%
40	1979	Fourth Participation Agreement; BP's shareholding nationalised, leaving NNPC with 80% equity and Shell 20% in the joint venture
41	1979	Shell-BP changed name to Shell Petroleum Development Company of Nigeria (SPDC)

-
- 42 1980 Kaduna refinery commissioned with an installed capacity refining capacity of 100,000 bpd and upgraded to 110,000 bpd in 1986
- 43 1984 Agreement consolidating NNPC/Shell joint venture
- 44 1986 Signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)
- 45 1988 NNPC restructured into six Directorates
- 46 1989 Fifth participation Agreement (NNPC = 60%, Shell = 30%, Elf = 5%, Agip = 5%)
- 47 1989 The second Port Harcourt Refinery commissioned with 150,000 bpd
- 48 1990 Ken Saro—Wiwa founded the Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP)
- 49 1990-91 Jump in oil prices due to the First Gulf War
- 50 1991 A private indigenous company—Consolidated Oil, recorded its first discover, Bella-1
- 51 1993 Production Sharing Contracts signed –SNEPCO
- 52 1993 Sixth Participation Agreement (NNPC = 55%, Shell = 30%, Elf = 10%, Agip = 5%)
- 53 1993 The coming on-stream of Elf's Odudu blend, offshore OML100
-

54	1995	SNEPCO starts drilling the first Exploration well
55	1995	NLNG's final investment decision taken
56	1995	Ken Saro-Wiwa and five others hung and buried in an unmarked common grave
57	1999	NLNG's first shipment of gas out of Bonny Terminal
58	2000	NPDC/NAOC service contract signed
59	2001	Production of Okono offshore field
60	2002	New PSC's agreement signed
61	2002	Liberalisation of the downstream oil sector
62	2002	NNPC commences retail outlet stream
63	2002	Nigeria estimated to have emitted more than 34.38 million tons in gas flaring
64	2005	The Federal High Court of Nigeria ordered that gas flaring must stop in Niger Delta community as it violates guaranteed
65	2012	Consideration of the Petroleum Industry Bill by the National Assembly
66	2012	National Assembly rocked by \$3million oil subsidy bribery scandal
67	2013	Dutch Court ruled that Shell can be held accountable for the pollution in the Niger Delta

Source: Adopted from Kwaghe (2015) pp. 75-76

The Table 3.2 shows the major developments that have taken place in the Nigerian oil and gas sector. As the table indicates the search for oil began in 1908, oil was discovered in 1956 and exported in 1958 and among other major events are the ruling by a Nigerian Court that gas flaring must stop in the Niger Delta as well as the Dutch Court verdict that Shell be held responsible for pollution in the Niger Delta.

3.6.1 Oil and its Contributions to Nigeria Economy

Nigeria is Africa's leading oil -producing nation with a daily production of 2.05 million barrels per day in 2016 (Statista, 2016). And she occupies 13th position in the world (African Vault, n.d). She also has the second largest proven oil reserve in Africa estimated at 37.5 billion barrels (OPEC, 2016). Nigeria is also the 10th largest proven oil reserve in the world (African Vault, n.d). Thus, oil is central to the Nigerian economy and is the nation's major foreign exchange earner and the fiscal base of the country's economic growth and development. The Table 3.4 shows the contributions of oil to the Nigerian economy.

Table 3. 4

Contribution of Oil and Non-oil revenue to Total Federally Collected Revenue 1958-2015 (=N=Million)

S/No	Year	Total federally collected revenue	Oil Revenue	Non-Oil Revenue	Percentage contribution of	
					Oil	Non-oil
1	1958	154.6	0.1	154.5	0.1	99.9
2	1959	177.7	1.8	175.9	1	99
3	1960	223.8	2.5	221.3	1	99
4	1961	229	17.1	211.9	7.5	92.5
5	1962	231.6	16.9	214.7	7.3	92.7
6	1963	249.2	10.1	239.1	4	96
7	1964	299.2	16.1	283.1	5.4	94.6
8	1965	321.9	29.2	292.7	9.1	90.9
9	1966	339.2	45	294.2	13.3	86.7
10	1967	300.2	41.9	258.3	14	86
11	1968	300	29.6	270.4	9.9	90.1
12	1969	435.9	75.4	360.5	17.3	82.7
13	1970	634	166.6	467.4	26.3	73.7
14	1971	1168.8	510.1	658.7	43.6	56.4
15	1972	1405.1	764.3	640.8	54.4	45.6
16	1973	1695.3	1016	679.3	59.9	40.1
17	1974	4537.4	3724	813.4	82.1	17.9
18	1975	5514.7	4271.5	1243.2	77.5	22.5
19	1976	6765.9	5365.2	1400.7	79.3	20.7
20	1977	8042.4	6080.6	1961.8	75.6	24.4
21	1978	7371.04	4555.8	2815.2	61.8	38.2
22	1979	10912.4	8880.82	2031.6	81.4	18.6
23	1980	15233.5	12353.3	2880.2	81.1	18.9
24	1981	13290.5	8564.4	4726.1	64.4	35.6
25	1982	11433.7	7814.9	3618.8	68.3	31.7

26	1983	10508.7	7253	3255.7	69	32
27	1984	11253.3	8269.2	2984.1	73.5	26.5
28	1985	15050.4	10923.7	4126.7	72.6	27.4
29	1986	12595.8	8107.3	4488.5	64.4	35.6
30	1987	25380.6	19027	6353.6	75	25
31	1988	27596.7	19831.7	7765	71.9	28.1
32	1989	53870.39	39130.5	14739.9	72.6	27.4
33	1990	98102.4	71887.1	26215.3	73.3	26.7
34	1991	100991.6	82666.4	18325.2	81.9	18.1
35	1992	190453.2	164078.1	26375.1	86.2	13.8
36	1993	192769.4	162102.4	30667	84.1	15.9
37	1994	201910.8	160192.4	41718.4	79.3	20.7
38	1995	459987.3	324547.6	135439.7	70.6	29.4
39	1996	520190	408783	111407	78.6	21.4
40	1997	582811.1	416811.1	166000	71.5	28.5
41	1998	463608.8	324311.2	139297.6	70	30
42	1999	949187.9	724422.5	224765.4	76.3	23.7
43	2000	1906159.7	1591675.8	314483.9	83.5	16.5
44	2001	2231532.9	1707562.8	523970.1	76.5	23.5
45	2002	1731837.5	1230851.2	500986.3	71.1	28.9
46	2003	2575095.9	2074280.6	500815.3	80.6	19.4
47	2004	3920500	3354800	565700	85.6	14.4
48	2005	5619.4	4762.4	857.0	84.7	15.3
49	2006	6061	5287.6	773.4	87.2	12.8
50	2007	5715.4	4462.9	1252.5	78.1	21.9
51	2008	7866.3	6530.3	1336.0	83.1	16.9
52	2009	4844.6	3191.9	1652.7	65.9	34.1
53	2010	7303.7	5396.1	1907.6	73.9	26.1
54	2011	11116.9	8879	2337.9	82.8	17.2
55	2012	10654.8	8026	2628.8	75.3	24.7
56	2013	9759.6	6809	2950.6	69.8	30.2
57	2014	10068.8	6794	3275	67.5	32.5

Source: Compiled from Central Bank of Nigeria, Statistical Bulletin, Vol. 14 (2003, pp. 196, 202-209); Annual Reports for 2005; 2006 (pp.66-67, 164); 2010 (p.93); 2011 (p.121); 2013 (p.155); 2014 (p.114); Central Bank of Nigeria Quarterly Economic Reports for 2015, first quarter (p. 17), second quarter (p.19), third quarter (p.17); fourth quarter (17) and Osaghae 2011, p.20).

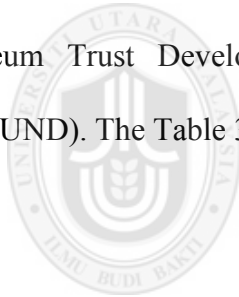
From the Table 3.4, oil contributes 0.1% to federally collected revenue in 1958 and by 1970 it increased to 26.3%. In 1972, oil's contribution was 54.4%, while the non - oil sector contributed 45. 6%. Since the 1970s, oil has supplanted agriculture in its contribution to the foreign exchange earnings of Nigeria. However, from 2011 -2015, oil's contribution to revenue fall from 82.8% in 2011 to 54.3% in 2015. The continuing fluctuation of oil prices in the global market and the attacks by the militia groups in the oil producing states are some of the reasons for the decline in oil sector contribution to the revenue of the Nigerian state.

Oil has played and will continue to play significance role in the Nigerian economy. It contributes to the growth and development of the country by making her one of the leading producers of the product in the African continent. According to Peel (2010), “oil is the spirit and the soul of Nigeria, take away oil earnings, and the country will go prostrate” (p.54).

Similarly, Gboyega, Soreinde, Minh le, and Shukla (2011) acknowledged the significance contribution of oil to the nation's economy in these words:

Nigeria is recognized as a country with the most known reserves of petroleum and gas in Sub-Saharan Africa. Petroleum has long become the most important aspect of the national economy, accounting for more than half of GDP, about 85 percent of government revenues, and over 90 percent of exports (p.7).

By the same token, Ademola, Olasode, Raji, & Adedoyin, (2015) argue that oil plays a critical role in influencing the economic and political destiny of Nigeria. Besides, the revenue accrued from oil are used by government at all levels to execute developmental projects. At the centre, these resources are used to provide social amenities such as electricity, roads, schools, scholarship for students through Petroleum Trust Development Fund (PTDF), Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFUND). The Table 3.5 shows oil production in Nigeria from 1998 to 2016.



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Table 3. 5

Oil Production in Nigeria from 1998-2016 (in 1,000 barrels per day)

S/No	Year	Production
1	1998	2,167
2	1999	2,066
3	2000	2,159
4	2001	2,268
5	2002	2,087
6	2003	2,233
7	2004	2,430
8	2005	2,527
9	2006	2,433
10	2007	2,314
11	2008	2,109
12	2009	2,185
13	2010	2,471
14	2011	2,408
15	2012	2,370
16	2013	2,270
17	2014	2,347
18	2015	2,329
19	2016	2,053

Source: Statista, (2016)

From the Table 3.5 oil production has been rising and falling. From 2010 to 2016, oil production has been consistently declining. For instance, the oil production for 2010 was 2.5million barrels per day, and it dropped to 2.1 million barrels per day in 2016. The reason for the sharp drop in oil production is the incessant militant attacks on oil installations.

Meanwhile, oil has contributed negatively to the socio-political advancement of the nation. At the present, the socio-economic and political crises confronting the nation have been credited to the effects of oil resources.

Thus, to many Nigerians, the discovery of oil resources remains a defining moment in Nigeria's socio-political and economic history. Not only did this remarkable discovery change the nature of Nigeria's economic development and growth, it reset its political development, socio-political cultures and the political dynamics in the country (Omeje, 2006). According to Obi (2004) oil resources sustained a "legacy of three decades of military (mis) rule" (p.43). For Ross (1999), oil has hindered democracy in the nation.

The battle for political power has been connected to the access it provides to oil resource opportunities. Oil contributes to various military coups, political and civil violent conflicts in the country such as the 1966-1970 Nigerian civil war left terrible experience to the nation's advancement (Nwobodo, 2012).

The examination of the evolution of Nigerian state has thrown up quite many issues prominent among which are the artificial nature of the Nigerian state in which the various ethnic nationalities were forced to cohabit in a country without their consent; lack of unity or national integration among the various nationalities which can be attributed to the colonial policies of divide and rule. Moreover, the identity politics in which the various leaders at the helm of affairs in the regions and later states discriminated against the minorities in their different regions or states.

More so, the recurring ethnic minorities struggle, particularly the Niger Conflict which dates to the colonial era and has persisted because of lack of commitment among the leadership to address the conflict. The impact of all this is that it creates suspicion among the various nationalities not only among the major ethnic groups but also among the minorities. For example, the minority ethnic group blamed the major ethnic group for their present predicament. Policies or programmes of government as regard Niger Delta conflict are viewed with suspicion. There is this feeling that it is only when one of our own is there that our problem can be solved. But the Goodluck Jonathan Presidency, an Ijaw man has proved this assertion wrong.

Today, the Niger Delta conflict just likes during the colonial period remains on the front burner of the Nigerian politics and the immediate past administration did its best to find a lasting solution to the problem, but the root or fundamental problems of the conflict are yet to be addressed and the present administration (Muhammadu Buhari) inherited the problems and is on course in trying to address the problem. But it appears the right chord has not been hit because since the present administration came on board, there has been a resurgence of militancy activities in the region. A new group called the Niger Delta Avengers has taken upon itself to wage a limited war against the Nigerian state by destroying oil infrastructure facilities which have led to a decline in oil production and revenue for the government.

3.7 Summary

This chapter has examined among others, the evolution of Nigerian state and how the nature of its formation impacted on the Niger Delta conflict. In analysing the formation of the Nigerian state, its history was categorised into three phases namely pre-colonial,

colonial and post-colonial. The chapter also discussed the evolution and agitation of the Niger Delta conflict and the different phases of the conflict. The discovery of oil and subsequent emergence of oil as the live-wire of Nigerian economy led to a new phase of struggle in the region.

The chapter also revealed how peaceful demonstration by the people for improvement in the condition of their environment and means of livelihood became violence because of high-handedness of the ruling elite at the centre.

The chapter submits that the current violence in the region which came into existence in the early life of this present administration was due to an anti-corruption war and revocation of contracts given to some ex- warlords.

The role of the elites of Niger extraction in the conflict is the focus of the next chapter and among issues to be examined are the emergence of both national and regional elites and how they have fuelled and sustained the conflict.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE ROLES OF ELITE IN THE NIGER DELTA CONFLICT

4.1 Introduction

This chapter essentially examines the political role played by the elite in the Niger Delta conflict. It addresses the research question that focuses on the contributions of the elite to political-cum electoral violence in the region. It discusses among others, the emergence and the composition of elite, meaning of political violence, impacts and cases of political violence.

4.2 The Emergence and Composition of Nigerian Elite

Prior to the British colonisation of what is today known as Nigeria, the elite were traditional rulers such as King Dosunmu of Lagos, Sultan Attahiru of Sokoto, the Ooni of Ife, Alaafin of Oyo, Oba of Benin and many other prominent traditional rulers. Consequently, the colonisation of Nigeria led to the spread of Western education and the emergence of elite that had acquired western education and challenged the continued occupation of the country by the British. These new set of elite included the likes of Herbert Macaulay often regarded as the father of Nigerian nationalism, Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe who later became the Eastern Region Premier, Governor-General of Nigeria and the first ceremonial President of Nigeria;

Chief Obafemi Awolowo, the first premier of Western Region and the opposition leader the Federal House of Representative; Chief Ernest Ik oli, Chief Bode Thomas, Dr. Michael Okpara, Kashim Ibrahim, Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, Ahmadu Bello, Aminu Kano, Melford Okilo and many others (Bassey, 2009; Bariledum & Vurasi,2013). These elite were united in their struggle against their common enemy, the British and as soon as independence was won, the unity collapsed and each leading elite from the regions wanted to achieve powers using his ethnic group.

Amundsen (2012) has identified three characteristics in elite formation in Nigeria and these are establishment through the fusion of elite (domination of the military); consolidation through power diversification (conversion of political power into economic power) and aggrandizement through economic extraction.

The Nigerian ruling elite was formed through the fusion of elite. This involved the coming together of different segments of the elites such as traditional, religious, top civil servants, nationalists of the independence era and the military. The fusion of elite in Nigeria was different from other climes because Nigerian elites were dominated by the military (Campbell, 2011). For instance, between 1999 and 2007, the first -three positions in the country were occupied by military personnel. The president, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo was an ex- General in the Army, the Vice-President, Alhaji Atiku Abubakar was an ex-paramilitary officer and the president of the Senate, David Mark was an ex-General in the army. In the present dispensation, the President is an ex-military ruler, the Defence Minister also ex-military officer, the Minister of Interior was the former Chief of Army Staff and many others.

The military has also dominated the economy sector, many of the blue-chip companies are chaired by these former military top brasses. However, Julius (2014) argues that since the restoration of democratic rule in 1999, the nature and character of Nigerian political elite have changed. This transformation from military to civil has prevented the dominance of the military segment of the elite in the management of the state. The reason for this is that the military sub-elite relies on other segments of the elite group to assist in moving the country towards a new global order, but could not prevent the dominance of this group especially the managerial sub-elite in the management of state affairs.

The second is elite consolidation that involves the conversion of political power into economic power through the appropriation of economic advantage derived from one's position. Nigeria elite differ from other countries because of the domination of the elite cadre by the military and the tendency to use political power to acquire economic power and not the opposite. The top brass of the military, politicians and the top echelon of the civil service established private companies or firms because they are well placed to benefit from government contracts and subsidies.

The third characteristic which is the economic extraction which is based on the rentier nature of the economy. The elite use oil rent as an incentive to control state machinery and also to retain control of the state apparatus (through coercion and patronage). Oil wealth is distributed based on clientelist political judgements (Amundsen, 2012).

Similarly, Kifordu (2011) has recognised five types of elite namely: economic, military, political elites, socio-cultural, and traditional institutional elite. The military sub elite is categorised as being at the topmost of the political elite hierarchy. There is no doubt that the political elite occupy a prime of place among the different segments of the Nigerian elite because of its role as initiator and executors of policies at all tiers of government (Kifordu, 2011). It is the group that integrates all other elites into its fold with consequence for power arrangement at the centre (Tenuche, 2011; Isumonah, 2012).

As the foregoing analysis has shown, elite are vital elements of the socio-political life of the nation and in every state, the stability of the country and the regime depend on the way in which the elite are organised and relates with other sectors. These are distinguishing features of an efficient elite group. These qualities are not only essential for national development but are also an ingredient necessary for tackling conflict in a society.

Thus, the failure and the success of the country's development, political stability, and resolution of conflict depends on elite competence in bringing together political influence so that it responds to functional demand on the system. In fact, the quality of a country's elite and the image they project to the outside world constitutes an essential source of power.

Meanwhile, Nigerian elite are few in numbers, but the role they played far outweigh their numbers. In Nigeria, the commanding positions at all levels of governments are controlled by the elite. The same goes for the economy which is not under the direct control of the foreign business concerns. The elite played a major role in decisions making in government and also exercise influence on the value orientation of the people (Attah, 2013). In a like manner, Adeolu, (2010) argues that the elite played significant roles in the development of a country through pursuing of developmental programmes.

However, it is rather sad that Nigeria and Niger Delta inclusive have not been fortunate to have leaders who are leaders in the real sense of the word. This is because Nigerian elite tow ethnic path with the absence of a comprehensible policy of governance, recruitment of leaders and economy ((Bariledum & Vurasi, 2013). This has resulted in the emergence of leaders who are not national in outlook but pursue an ethnic agenda.

In Nigeria, elite mobilise their kinsmen to make various agitation on the state for the distribution of oil wealth and appointments as representatives of their ethnic groups. Instead of uniting to transform the country economically through cake baking rather than distributing, the elite organise their nationalities to threaten the national security of the nation (Bariledum & Vurasi, 2013).

Ojukwu and Shopeju (2010) argue that the elite are the social agents via which the ordinary people learn about ethnicity, religion, and class. Moreover, the ruling elites in Nigeria since the attainment of independence have been greedy and non-nationalistic.

This has led to underdevelopment and political violence in the country. Thus, average Nigerian elite does not care about the improvements or making lives better for Nigerians but only interested in his pocket and how he can better the lots of his immediate family (Azeez & Ibukunoluwa, 2015).

4.2.1 Emergence of Niger Delta Regional Elite

Prior to the colonial occupation of the Niger Delta region and the earlier part of the colonial era, the traditional rulers made up the ruling class and wielded powers in the region. During this period, there was nothing called the Niger Delta, rather the region then was self-autonomous units or village states and kingdoms made up of people with different cultures and tradition and was prosperous in trans-Atlantic trade (Davidson, 1985; Mochizuki, 2004). Notable traditional rulers of that period were King William Dappa Pepple of Bonny, Jaja of Opobo, Nana of Itsekiri and many others. These traditional rulers were later deposed by the British because of their opposition to British domination and exclusion of the locals in the lucrative palm oil trade (Falola & Heaton, 2008). The traditional rulers formed the nucleus of ruling elites during the colonial era as they were used to administer their areas by the British through the Native Authority System (Fatile, Majekodunmi & Adejuwon, 2013).

The emergent educated elites who in the precolonial period would have been categorised as commoners because they were not from the royal families (Afigbo, 1985) together with traditional elites led the agitation for independence from Britain and emancipation from what Naanen (1995) calls the internal colonialism.

By this, he meant the way and manner the majority ethnic groups have used their positions to corner the resources of the region through the de-emphasis of derivation as a principle of revenue allocation in the country. In a like manner, Isumonah (2015) notes that the misfortune that has befallen derivation principle stress the relationship between the control of the political process and the establishment of criteria for revenue allocation.

According to Osaghae (1995), the imbalances in power distribution and demands for a fair deal by the oil-bearing communities served as an impetus for the emergence of the elites. Similarly, Nwozor (2014) identifies marginalisation as one factor that encouraged its emergence and it was this fear of perpetual domination by the majority ethnic groups that propelled the elites to demand a separate region. Meanwhile, the emergence of this new class of elites led to the gradual whittling down of the powers and prestige of the traditional rulers and the ascendancy of the educated elite due to British colonisation and this has continued in the post-colonial era (Idonije, 2008; Ejitu & Chinyere, 2016).

It is important to note that the first generation of the political elites of the region such as Chief Harold Dappa-Biriye, Chief Amachree, Dr Isaac John Fiberesima, Chief Dennis Osadebe, Jereton Marierie, and James Otobo were altruistic and more passionate about the development of the region as they sacrificed their times, lives and wealth for the welfare of their people and instrumental to the creation of Mid-Western region in 1963 (Natufe, 1999; Npigi, 2017).

Others, such as Melford Okilo and Samuel Ogbemudia were appreciated for their infrastructural developments of their respective states in the region (Thisday, March 12, 2017).

However, the present crops of elites, especially the political elites from the region fit into what Sklar, Onwudiwe and Kew (2006) described as “self -interested and power seekers” (p. 105). These elites are not altruistic and passionate about the development of the region as their forerunners and this is amply shown by the pillage of the treasury and violence that have characterised the body politic in the region.

In fact the extent of corruption and governance failure in the region is worrisome as compared to those at the centre (Enweremadu, 2008; Saka, 2011a). The elites that make up the legislative arm of government at the centre have been very dutiful of their oversight roles in ministerial, extra-ministerial agencies, parastatals and government departments. The presidency is also under the searchlight of the elites at the centre that constitute a member of the national assembly. The opposite is the case in the Niger Delta, where the elites that perform the same functions like those at the centre cannot discharge their constitutional responsibility because of the domineering position of their respective state Chief executives. For instance, the impeachment of the former Governor of Bayelsa state who jumped bail in the United Kingdom by the State House of Assembly was influenced by the central government under the leadership of Chief Olusegun Obasanjo (The Punch, November 23, 2005).

At the regional level, transparency and accountability, two key features of good governance are lacking among the elites at this level as compared with their national counterpart at the centre. The elites at the regional level do not deem it fit to explain the financial position of the state to the people or give details of their budgetary allocation and the performance of the budget. There has been a systematic looting of the state treasury by the regional elites through money laundering, allocation of a huge sum of money to non- social sector and more importantly encouragement of militia groups who are a thorn in the flesh of the people (Enweremadu, 2008; Suleiman. 2013a).

At the centre, available information exists as to the activities of the government and in order to make information accessible to the public, a law was enacted to make information freely available to the public. This law is known as the Freedom of Information Act 2011 (Freedom of Information Act, 2011). The FOI states that denial of such information by an individual or institution attracts a conviction and a fine of 500, 000 naira. Also, in terms of management of resources, the elites at the centre have fared better, unlike their counterpart in the region who have looted the treasure as the examples of Ibori, Alamiyeseigha and Igbinedion have shown (Osaghae, 2015).

Moreover, unlike in the Niger Delta, where the elites denied the indigenes participation in governance, the elites at the centre allowed the citizen to participate in governance. One of such avenue is through the transparency of government by providing information on government activities.

Since 2004, the Federal Government of Nigeria through the Federal Ministry of Finance has improved transparency in the art of governance by publishing the amount share to all tiers of government from the federation account. The political elites from the Niger Delta especially those holding elective offices did not support this development. As Okonjo-Iweala, former Nigerian Federal Minister of Finance, in both Obasanjo and Jonathan administrations rightly noted that: “Putting information in the hands of the people didn’t make me popular at all with the state governors. Some of them felt I was deliberately after them.

Even today, some of them are still sore” (Songwe, Francis, Rossiasco, O’Neill & Chase, 2008, p. 3). Similarly, Mrs. Nenadi Usman erstwhile Minister of State for Finance and the later substantive minister for Finance alleged that governors in Nigeria engage in the illegal transfer of foreign exchange bought from their state allocations from the federation account abroad (Shilgba, 2008). The arrest of the former Governor of Bayelsa State and his Delta State counterpart have proved right the assertion made by the minister.

The political assassination of formidable opponents for elective office is more pronounced in the region than at the centre. The regional elites fraternisation with the militant groups which they played a role in its formation and financing are some of the distinguish features that differentiate the regional elite from the elites at the centre. Put differently, the battles for political office in the region is so intense and fierce because of the control of the oil wealth of the region, as compared with the centre.

4.3 Political Violence in the Niger Delta of Nigeria

Political violence is a politically motivated violence committed in and outside the state. It is an encompassing term that includes other forms of violence such as terrorism, revolution, riots, coup and electoral violence. It is a violence perpetrated by both the state and non-state actors. Anifowose (2011) defines political violence as:

the use or threat of physical act carried out by an individual or individuals within a political system against another individual or individuals and /or property with the intent to cause injury or death to the persons and /or damage or destruction to property; whose objective, choice of targets or victims, surrounding circumstances, implementation and effects have political significance, that is, tend to modify the behaviour of others in the existing arrangement of power structure that has some consequences for the political system (p.4).

The definition is comprehensive as it includes the different forms of political violence such as assassination, riots, electoral violence, etc. However, the definition fails to take into account the role of states in political violence, as states also do engage in political violence against their people.

Thus, political violence is politically driven violence inflicted by both state and non-state actors against individual (s) and it involves threat or assassination, damage to property, destruction of electoral materials, among others. For the purpose of this study, political violence is use in its broad sense to include political assassination, electoral violence and oil related violence. This is because the oil related violence has a political undertone.

4.3.1 Reasons for Political Violence

A cursory look at the literature suggests a number of reasons for electoral violence. Igbuzor (2009) has attributed the causes of electoral violence to abuse of political power, alienation, marginalisation and exclusion. For Maslow, (1954), it is poverty and unemployment. Galtung (1969) has ascribed it to the ineffectiveness of the security forces and the culture of impunity, corruption, poor governance and proliferation of arms and ammunitions.

Similarly, others have attributed it to lack of security, partisanship of traditional rulers, abused of office by elected officials, zero-sum nature of our politics, lucrative nature of political office, poor handling of election petitions, lack of faith in the judiciary, lack of compliance with electoral law and enforcement of enabling laws; the partisanship of the police and other security operatives, etc. (Ugiagbe, 2010).

Jega (cited in Okeke, 2015) has credited electoral violence to the do-or-die attitude of politicians to politics, inflammatory and hate speeches issued by politicians and unwillingness to accept electoral outcomes, the use of political thugs to achieve political victory, ignorance and low civic education, monetisation of the electoral process by politicians and lack of internal democracy in political parties.

From the first research question, the role of the elite in the political-cum electoral violence in the Niger Delta region, several issues have been identified and they include elite support for violence, unemployment, underdevelopment and juicy nature of Nigerian politics. These issues are examined below

4.3.1. 1 Elite Support for Violence

This section of the study analyses how elite encourage or support violence in the region. The political and non-political elite of the region played an important role in the escalation of the conflict in the region through their support for the armed militia groups by hiring, arming, providing financial support to armed groups and hate speeches or incitement. These points are discuss below.

4.3.1.1.1 Sponsorship and Arming of Militia Groups

The elite promoted or supported violence in the region through the sponsorship of the armed groups by providing financial and logistics support to them. For instance, Prince Tonye Princewill was a backer of militant group in Rivers State. Also, the Ijaw Nation Elders under the leadership of Chief Edwin Clark while on a courtesy visit to the late Nigerian leader Umaru Musa Yar'Adua alleged that key officials of the Rivers State government were cultists and that they recruited and financed the activities of over 103 cult gangs in the state (HRW, 2007a).

In other words, elite support for violence had been identified as one of the main factors responsible for political and electoral violence in the region and the country in general. The elite of the Niger Delta extraction were believed to be the brain behind the electoral violence that has engulfed the region. Some of the militant groups that are sponsored by the elites include the Niger Delta Vigilantes Service led by Ateke Tom, Niger Delta People Volunteer Force led by Asari Dokubo and many others.

Most of those who responded to question on the role of the elite in the political violence in the region indicated that the elite promoted or supported violence in the region through the above-mentioned mode (sponsoring and arming) of cults and militia groups. One of the interviewee 007 Youth leaders commented that *“most of the violence you find around especially in the Niger Delta can be traced to political contest...when they want to contest for political position, they will use the boys and buy them guns and distribute to them.”* (Interview at Diobu, Port-Harcourt, Rivers State, 1/6/16).

Another interviewee 010 an Academic divulged that:

... a kind of political value is attached to violence in the Niger Delta. Violence has a political value attached to it. So, from this perspective, we see how the elite promotes violence in the Niger Delta, using youth either as cult groups or as youth organisations. Whenever elections are approaching, we see these politicians equipping and arming a certain group of people as personal security, bodyguards and as agents of violence (Interview at Tombia, Port Harcourt, Rivers State, 2/6/16).

These responses highlighted the primacy accorded violence in the region. The political gladiators did not believe in one man one- vote. They believed in using violence to achieve their political objectives. That was winning elections with or without the support of the people.

Likewise, interviewee 012 an Academic reiterated that:

The elites, because they were desperate to control the machinery of government, used all kinds of methods. They sponsored and armed social movements which they used during the election to intimidate voters. These movements, especially the youth association and militia groups were sponsored by some of the governors in the region. For instance, Felix Tuddolor and Asari Dokubo were sponsored by the then Rivers State Governor Sir Peter Odili for the plum position of the Ijaw Youth Council. Asari was also used by the governor to rig the 2003 elections in the state. Successive administrations in the state have used these boys to disrupt the public peace. Generally, the situation is the same in all the Niger Delta states be it Bayelsa, Delta, Akwa- Ibom and others (Interview at Mariri in Tarauni, LGA, Kano State, 16/7/16).

By the same token, interviewee 005 Lawyer/Politician expressed the view that the elite sponsored electoral violence. In his words:

They sponsor it; they finance it; they recruit the boys; they are the one who lead the boys. It is after, they have come into power that the boys become jobless and the arms that they have equipped them with, they now turned them to criminal uses. Those are the things these people gave to them to find their way into political offices and when they get there they abandoned some of these boys (Interview at Warri, Delta State, 30/5/16).

This statement reiterates the point earlier mentioned that the elite promote violence through equipping and sponsoring of armed militias. As it shows the elite directly or indirectly contributed to the violence in the region through their failure to retrieve the weapons given to the boys and the abandonment of these boys after they had used them to rig elections.

As one interviewee 011, an Academic said the elite were the beneficiary of electoral violence and they financed those they used to perpetrate it. In his words:

Regarding the roles of elite, who are the beneficiary of the electoral violence? It is the politicians. Why do they need electoral violence? Because they don't want the people to have a say on how leaders are chosen as well as how governmental affair is being run. Because if people have a say in the way we choose our leaders, a lot of people that are occupying positions would have no right to occupy the positions. They are the ones that benefit from election not being free and fair and so they played a huge role. You see somebody perpetrating election- related violence doesn't have money to feed his family, but he has access to guns of N100, 000 where did it get it from? How does he get the ammunition? How does he move around on election day? When you know as a normal person I can't move around on election day because of the strong military presence. But he moves around on election day and when he is arrested, how does he gets released immediately? These are questions that point to the fact that there are people that support this system to work because they are the beneficiary of it. The question is who stands to gain? (Interview at Tombia, Port Harcourt, Rivers state, 3/6/16)

The interviewees' responses above brought to the fore the salient roles of the elite in the region's violence, how they have contributed and prevented the perpetrators of the violence being prosecuted. The above responses are supported by published interviews in which some of the stakeholders in the conflict stressed the part they played in the Niger Delta conflict. For instance, Ateke Tom, leader of the Niger Delta Vigilante Group and one of the most dreaded militant in the Niger Delta, described how he was used to rigging election for the then ruling party People Democratic Party, self-styled largest party in the Africa continent which controlled the government at the centre and in the Niger Delta region. He and his group were used by the elite to cause violence during the election cycles (before, during and after). In other words, they are used by the political class to rig elections.

In Ateke's words:

Of course, everyone knows that I worked for the PDP in the first and second coming of the party in Rivers State. There is no one who does not know that I was used to get votes for the party . . . When the election was tough for the party and the areas which I conquered for them were many. I conquered many Kalabari towns, Ogu-bolo, Okrika, Nkoro, Opobo and all those places. They know; the government knows . . . In fact, since I started working with them (government), I have not had peace; it is one problem after the other (cited in Okonofua, 2013, p. 6).

The confession above by one of the militant leader in the region shows how the ruling class has used the armed group to achieve their selfish political ends. This shows that the political office holders in the region did not receive the mandate of the people and this has been the tradition in the region since the commencement of the Fourth Republic in 1999.

Corroborating this Annkio Briggs, an activist in a secondary interview maintained that “there have never been elections in the Niger Delta from 1999 to date.” (Briggs, 2016). Besides, they also armed the groups. The extant literature has shown that the ruling elite apart from providing the funds which these various groups used in purchasing the arms and ammunition, they also in some cases purchased the arms which they distributed to the “boys” for electioneering campaign and the harassment of voters and opponents.

Reiterating, a militant in a secondary interview said that:

Let me tell you, for many years we fought someone else's war. They gave us the guns and the bombs. They mark the targets and tell us when to attack . . . They write the messages that we send to the press to threaten or explain an attack. It is their war that we were fighting . . . All those years; we fought their war thinking that we were fighting for ourselves and our children (cited in Okonofua, 2013, p.6).

Validating this claim Best and von Kemedi (2005) argue that some traditional rulers supplied weapons to youth groups to protect them from their rivals or opponents. Similarly, Duquet (2011) contends that the compensation policy of the transnational oil companies in which the traditional rulers were given a huge sum of money have resulted in more violence in the region. As a result of this policy, traditional stool became lucrative and there was fierce competition for chieftaincy stool. Rivals to the chieftaincy position hired youth group and provided them with SALW in order to secure the stool. Politicians also recruited and provided militia group with intoxicants, weapon, and immunity from arrest and prosecution by the law enforcement agencies (WAC, Global Service, 2003; Nsirimovu, 2005).

4.3.1.1.2 Hate Speeches

Another way by which the elite have promoted violence in the Niger Delta is through hate speech or incitement of the people against one another. In the build-up to the 2016 re-run National Assembly and State House of Assembly elections in Rivers State the immediate past governor of the state, Rotimi Amaechi now Minister of Transport, and the incumbent governor, Nyesom Wike took caution to the winds by making provocative statements that encouraged their support for violence in the state.

For instance, Wike said that “All those who plan to swap result sheets, May their souls rest in peace. Anybody who thinks Amaechi will give them result sheets to swap should be ready to swap their dead bodies.” Rotimi Amaechi replied that: “Wike is so desperate that he can sell his mother! On the day of the re-run, I am ready for Wike, they should come out with their guns, and we are ready for them” (Bulwark Intelligence, 2016).

Majority of the interviewees in the study noted that the elite have encouraged violence through their careless statements. According to an interviewee 001, a Traditional Ruler, “*Our leaders through their words and deeds have contributed to violence in this region. They made inflammatory statements that set one ethnic group against another*” (Interview at Taylor creek, Yenagoa, Bayelsa State, 1/05/16).

Another interviewee 002, Youth commented that

I don't know how to classify our elected officials. Are they rulers or leaders? If they are leaders, they won't be inciting the people against themselves. If a majority of the people is killed through their unguarded statements, who will they govern? I think our leaders need to promote unity, instead of using their hate speeches to promote discord among the people (Interview at Ekeki, Yenagoa, Bayelsa, State, 3/5/16).

One interviewee 003, Youth alluded to the need for maturity on the part of the political elite in relation to politics being practiced in the region. He stated that:

We are not there yet, our leaders have to show maturity in politics and respect the wishes of their people. We have reached a point in our development that our politics should be issues-based and not character assassination. The elite via vulgar language and provocative statements have polluted our political environment, and this has fuelled violence among our people. But we can't blame our leaders from this part of the country when the number one citizen that supposed to be the father of all said that he would not treat everybody equally because some section of the country did not vote for him massively (Interview at Azikoro, Yenagoa, Bayelsa, State, 3/5/16).

This finding on elites support for violence is corroborated by the extant literature (HRW, 2007a; Jespersen, 2017). Human Right Watch (2007a), contends that most Nigerian politicians got into political office through violent means. The group contended that “in place of democratic competition, the struggle for political office have often been waged violently in the streets by gangs of thugs recruited by politicians to help them seize control of power”. (HRW, 2007a, p. 2). The narrative is not different in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria where the stakes of politics are higher compared to the rest of the country because of the struggle for the control of oil wealth. For instance, Soboma and his Outlaws gang were hired by PDP to rig the 2007 elections in Rivers state. He and other cult groups were paid between N5 million and N10 million (\$38,500 to \$77,000) to rig the elections (HRW, 2007a).

Similarly, Asari Dokubo was reported to have confessed that the Movement for the Emancipation of Niger Delta was created to fight for the liberation of the people of the region, but along the line, it was used by the elite to intimidate their political opponents. Moreover, he confessed that during Odili's administration, the boys were paid one hundred million naira monthly to pacify them and that the government was aware of the various activities of the groups and intervened when there was a crisis among them. Furthermore, he also confessed to having received three million naira as compensation from the administration when he was arrested by the police and taken to Area 10, Police CIB headquarter (Emmanuel, 2014).

By the same token, Chief Fred Barivule Kpakol erstwhile chairman of the Gokana Local Government Council in Ogoni, Rivers State was the financier of a cult group called the Gberesaakoo Boys. The group was responsible for numerous electoral violence in the area and its members were on the local government payroll (CEHRD, 2006).

In a like manner, Magnus Abe was the financier of a cult group called Seresibra and this group was used to perpetrate electoral violence in Gokana LGA of Rivers state (Naagbantun, 2006). Also Sylva, established a security outfit called famutangbe (an Izon word meaning hit and throw away) which he used to terrorise his opponents by destroying their billboards. The security outfit also caused untold hardship to the people of the state which led to cultism, violence and mass murder (Alaibe, 2011).

The views expressed by the interviewees and the corroboration of these views by the extant literature affirmed the point that the elite played a critical role in the political cum electoral violence that has ravaged the region since the restoration of democratic order in 1999 and the reason for this is because of the control of the oil wealth of the region. The states in the region received 13% derivation and statutory allocation from the federation account, which make them the region's allocation from the centre to be the highest compared to other regions or states in the federation. So, the battle for who control these resources among the elite of the region is warlike in which every contestant for the coveted office of all tiers of government in the region see it as a matter of life and death or do-or-die affair.

These findings resonate in resource curse theory, which offers an explanation as to the rationale for fierce battle for positions in resource endowed states. The resource curse through honey pot thesis stipulates that oil is the source of a power struggle among the elite. The struggle for the control of oil rent makes politics in the Niger Delta to be characterised by violence and the theory also accounts for the neo-patrimonial nature of politics in the region. This is supported by a militant, who in a published interview noted that:

Let no one be deceived, it is all about oil. If there is a separation between political power and oil, a lot of Niger Delta politicians will not contest elections and there will be no militancy. Militancy is the child of greedy and corrupt politicians who will stop at nothing to make money for themselves, their families, and their friends (cited in Okonofua, 2013, p.7).

4.3.1.1 3 Underdevelopment

The underdevelopment nature of the Niger Delta has been a contributing factor to electoral violence in the region. The Niger Delta region is rich in oil and gas and other natural resources but remains the least developed part of Nigeria (Obi, 2010). According to Nyiayaana, (2011), the region suffers from socio-economic backwardness. It lacks social amenities such as schools, hospitals, electricity, roads and other social amenities that make life meaningful.

Responding to the role of the elite in the underdevelopment of the region and also why underdevelopment is responsible for violence in the region an interview 003 Youth stated that:

Agreed, we have been short-changed by the failure of the majority ethnic groups to develop the region, what have they done as leaders of this region in their own little way to lift our people from poverty and develop this region flowing with milk and honey? I am sure, your guess is as good as mine and they have done nothing. Instead, some of them who are in the corridor of power mismanaged the scarce resources meant for the human and physical development of the region. They pocketed or diverted resources to private use and they continue to blame our adversaries for the underdevelopment of the region (Interview at Azikoro, Yenagoa, Bayelsa, State, 3/5/16).

The statement above highlighted corruption among the ruling elite of the region as a contributing factor to the underdevelopment of the region.

Similarly, interviewee 009 Traditional Chief/ Civil Society Organisation member remarked that:

We don't have many companies around here; we don't have many people who are entrepreneurship- minded. The game over here is a game of power and people have a wrong mindset or notion that when you are in power or government you can make a lot of money that will take care of your family and maybe your community. So, that is wrong mindset and is common here in the Niger Delta, they need to have power, they need to control resources and you don't know that you can control your resource and can have power, if you, set-up big companies. If four-five big people can come together to set-up something like what the Dangote's had, Dantata, and Femi Otedola had. But here, the big people you hear about are the former senators, former commissioners for this, and former governors for this. So, it is, unfortunately, what people see is beyond what they see. Everybody wants to be S.A- Special Assistant this and it becomes a do-or-die affairs. Here, you know, politics is like a do-or -die affairs (Interview at Tombia, Port Harcourt, Rivers state, 2/6/16).

The above response indicated that most of the states in the region are poor despite the abundance of natural resources located in the region. More so, there are no efforts made by the economic elite to transform the civil service states to create employment for the teeming youth of the region. The powers that be in the states are only interested in how to better their pockets. Furthermore, the orientation of the people is also to get into office in the future and milked the state treasury.

By the same token, interviewee 001 Traditional Ruler said that:

The state of development of the region is also a factor, especially in Bayelsa where virtually there are no companies except oil multinational. The nature of this company is capital intensive and not labour intensive. They employ less labour and besides, they claimed our people have no expertise in that field and so they were not employed while people from the majority ethnic groups were given jobs meant for our people. Apart from these oil companies, there are no visible companies, you can see around this area. The banks that are operating here employ less number of staff. I must confess, we are the architect of our own problems. We have indigenes from this area who instead of coming home to establish companies that will create employment for our people, they locate their business in Lagos and other big cities (Interview at Taylor Creek, Yenagoa, Bayelsa state, 1/5/16).

This reaffirmed the earlier point made that the elite of the region were also responsible for the underdevelopment of the region. The business elite from the region failed to invest in the state and instead, they invested outside the region in places such as Lagos, Ogun and other big cities in the country. It also highlighted why the existing transnational oil companies operating in the region could not employ many indigenes of the region and this was attributed to the nature of the technology used.

An interviewee 004 Civil Servant/ Civil Liberty Organisation member, suggested the establishment of industries and regular supply of electricity so that the artisans and other unemployed people would be engaged. In his words:

Let's us see to it that industries are created and stable power supply is guaranteed so that those who are involved in violence because of lack of employment can be properly engaged and our artisans can also have something to do" (Interview at Bayelsa Secretariat, Yenagoa, Bayelsa State, 4/5/16).

Similarly, interviewee 006 Retired Military Officer, suggested that all hands must be on deck in ensuring that the region is developed. He maintained that:

The central government working in collaboration with state and local government in the region should see to the development of the region by providing social amenities and also creates an enabling environment for private sector participation in the development of the region (Interview at Warri, Delta state, 31/5/16).

The interviewee suggested the collaboration and cooperation among the tiers of government in the provision of critical infrastructure, creating an enabling environment and employment for the army of youth to curb the menace of violence in the region. This finding from the study is consistent with the literature (Ogonor, 2003; Ross, 2003; UNDP, 2006; Obi, 2010; Ibaba, 2012; 2011; Watts & Ibaba, 2011; Nyiayaana, 2011; Okoli, 2013). These numerous studies have posited that the inhabitants of the oil-bearing communities suffered from a lack of social amenities, poverty and government neglect which, when sum-up points to the underdevelopment of the region. This finding is supported by the resource curse thesis which associated resource endowment with myriad of social problems such as underdevelopment and poverty.

According to UNDP (2006)

...the Niger Delta is a region suffering from administrative neglect, crumbling social infrastructure and services, high unemployment, social deprivation, abject poverty, filth and squalor, and endemic conflict. Enormous possibilities for industrial development abound in terms of the abundance of raw materials in the region, but these remain unrealized. Beyond vast oil and gas deposits, the delta is blessed with good agricultural land, extensive forests, excellent fisheries, and a large labour force (UNDP, 2006:25).

The inference to be drawn from the responses of the interviewees in this study and the literature is that the region has the potential of being one of the most developed sections of the country but the failure of the elite to show commitment and pursue with vigour developmental programmes that will transform the region from its present state of underdevelopment to one of development is lacking. During the researcher fieldwork, the researcher observed that basic social amenities were virtually absent. For instance, some of the schools in all the states visited in the region were in dilapidated conditions and erratic power supply in a region that boasts of gas.

In fact, Bayelsa seems to be worst in terms of infrastructure among the four states that are the focus of this study. It is a civil service state where the majority of the people were employed by the state government. The other visible industry in the states is the service industry and this sector can only accommodate few people and this explains why most of the people are unemployed. The elite who are supposed to design policies and programmes that will transform the state seem to be overwhelmed by the problem and lack the political will to tackle the problem headlong.

4.3.1.1.4 Unemployment

There is no doubt that the underdevelopment of the region partly accounted for unemployment and unemployment is responsible for electoral violence in the region. The argument is that most of the youths being used to perpetrate electoral violence do so because they were unemployed.

The traditional occupations of the people of the region are farming and fishing and due to oil exploration activities of the transnational oil companies, which resulted in environmental degradation, many of them lost their jobs and migrated to the urban centres looking for jobs that were unavailable. And to keep body and souls together, they became a ready-made tool used by the political class during elections to harass, intimidate and killed political opponents.

The failure of the elite of the region to provide employment for the army of youth in the region created an avenue for militia leaders to recruit this idle youth and placed them at the disposal of the elite as a tool or agent of violence in the region. The elite of the region have no blueprints put in place to transform the region from its current least developed region in Nigeria to one of the most developed regions in the country. There was embargo on employment in states visited by the researcher in the course of his fieldwork and from the researcher observation, no commitment on the part of the stakeholders to develop the state either through creating an enabling environment for private sector participation in the setting up of industries which will provide jobs for the teeming youth of unemployed graduates and non-graduates.

The Table 4.1 and Figure 4.1 show the rate of unemployment in the region and while Figure 4.1 is the pictorial representation of the Table 4.1. As the Table 4.1 shows the rate of unemployment in the region has been risen and fallen. The core Niger Delta states namely Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Delta and Rivers that produced 80% of the oil and received substantial part of the proceeds from the federation account have not fared better than their counterpart in the zone.

Table 4. 1

Unemployment Rates in States in the Niger Delta, 2002-2011

Year		2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
S/N	State										
1	Abia	14.8	11.4	9.7	7.9	13.5	25.1	11.9	14.5	22.8	11.2
2	Akwa Ibom	12.3	14.4	14.4	14.4	15.3	18.0	11.1	34.1	27.7	18.4
3	Bayelsa	3.5	7.1	14.0	20.9	16.0	21.9	67.4	41.5	27.4	23.9
4	Cross-River	7.9	12.0	11.5	11.1	16.9	32.8	18.9	14.3	27.9	18.2
5	Delta	14.9	17.1	10.8	4.5	13.8	22.9	11.5	18.4	27.9	18.2
6	Edo	4.8	3.1	6.5	9.9	8.6	14.8	15.6	12.2	27.9	35.2
7	Imo	19.9	22.1	19.3	16.5	21.5	28.3	17.4	20.8	28.1	26.1
8	Ondo	16.8	7.3	6.8	6.2	6.7	6.7	6.3	14.9	28.0	12.5
9	Rivers	6.6	15.3	11.2	7.0	25.0	66.4	12.1	27.9	27.8	22.5

Source: Compiled by the Researcher from Aiyedogbon & Oshwofasa (2012) p. 273 and National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) (2012), p.396

For instance, Akwa Ibom, the leading oil producing states in the region and also revenue has 18.4 unemployment rate in 2011 compared to Abia, Cross-River, Delta and Ondo with 11.2, 18.2, 18.2 and 12.5 respectively. Bayelsa State another leading oil producing state in the region has the third highest unemployment rates in the region with 23.9 and the first and second positions were occupied by Edo and Imo respectively.

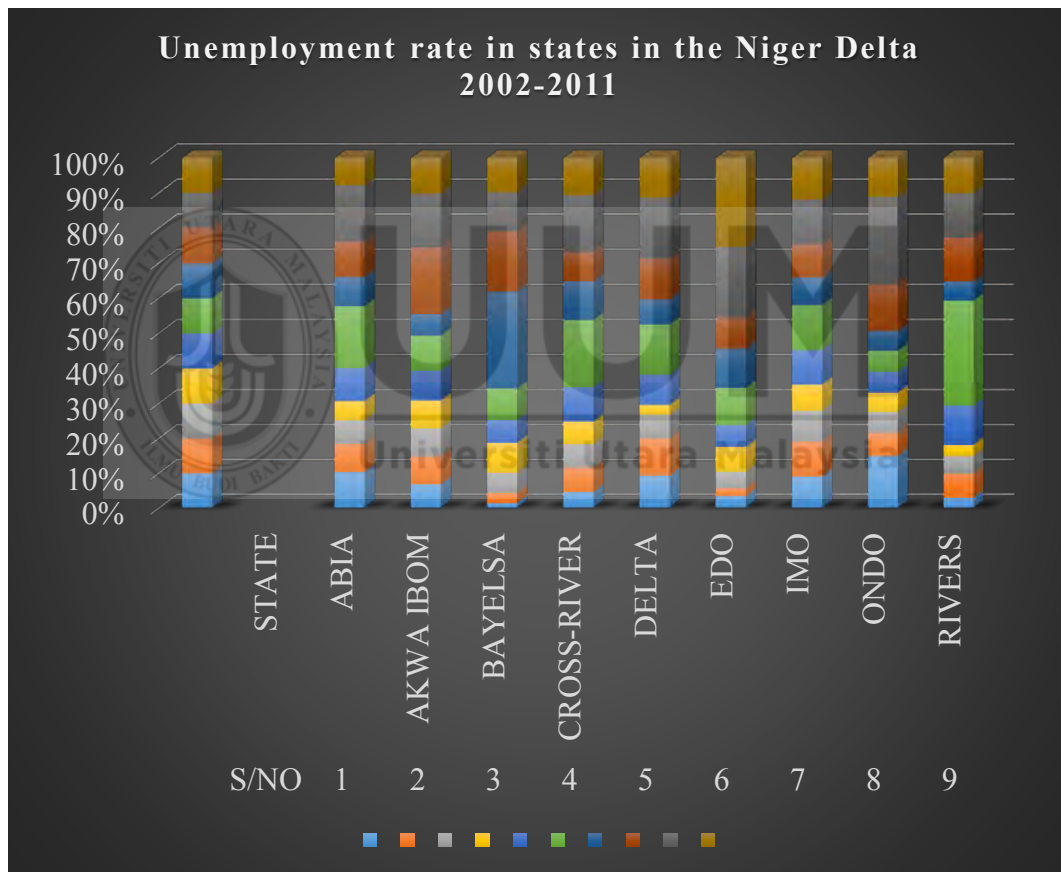


Figure 4. 1 Unemployment rate in states in the Niger Delta

The question to ask is why these leading oil producing states has not fared better than their counterparts in the zone. The reason is simply corruption and mismanagement of resources meant for the development of the region.

This issue is extensively analysed in chapter five of this study. Commenting on the use of the unemployed youth as thugs for the perpetuation of violence, an interviewee 006, a retired Military Officer stated that *“the bulk of the youths in the region are unemployed and they become tools politicians use to achieve their goals of winning elections.”* (Interview at Warri, Delta State, 31/05/16). While another interviewee 003 Youth suggested the provision of employment for the army of youths from the region and warned of the consequences of failure to provide employment for the teeming youth. In his words: *“They should create jobs so that the youth can be fully engaged. As the saying goes that an idle man is a devil’s workshop. When the youths are not engaged, they can become an agent of violence”* (Interview at Yenagoa, Bayelsa state, 3/5/16).

The view expressed above that unemployment is a cause of electoral violence found support in the existing literature (Laasko, 2007; Agbonifo, 2009; Ugiagbe, 2010; Akpan, 2011; Frimpong, 2012; IPI, 2012; Drumond, 2015). Drumond (2015) argues that the existence of an army of unemployed youth increase the likelihood of electoral violence and this is because that they can easily be co-opted if the enterprise increases their access to power and resources. Similarly, the Foundation for Partnership Initiatives in the Niger Delta (PIND) (2011) in its report observed that:

Despite vast oil resources, the Delta region is characterised by extremely high poverty levels. 70 percent of youth in the region live below the poverty line. The youth (15-24 years) unemployment rate is 40 percent, far exceeding the national average youth unemployment rate of 14 percent. Youth un and under-employment has ultimately become both a driver of conflict and a formidable obstacle for peace and regional development (PIND, 2011, p.3).

By the same token, the National Bureau of Statistics (cited in Ibaba, 2011, p.33) in its 2010 reports listed three of the four states which are the focus of this study as states with highest unemployment rates. Akwa Ibom had 34.1 percent, Bayelsa 38.4 percent and Rivers state 27.9 percent, while the national average was 19.7 percent.

This support from the literature underscores the important contribution of unemployment to political-cum electoral violence in the region which some of the respondents interviewed attributed to the embezzlement of funds which could have been used for the development of the state by the elite of the region.

4.4.1.1.5 Nature of Politics

The nature of the political office, which is closely linked with nature of politics in Nigeria (Niger Delta inclusive) is such that it is juicy or attractive. It is this attractive nature of political office in the region that also accounted for electoral violence in the region. Political office is an avenue to get rich quick and not to serve the people. It is because of this that the politics is zero-sum in nature. That is the winner gets everything and the loser gets nothing.

The winner wins at the expense of the loser. It is because of this that no politician wants to lose an election because of huge investment he/she has incurred and by hook or crook he must triumph over his opponent to recoup his investment. Furthermore, the nature of our politics is patrimonial. This is a situation in which political office holders attach importance to themselves and their offices than the established rules and duties guiding their offices and positions (Emecheta, 2016).

The term neo-patrimonialism was introduced into the political lexicon by Eisenstadt in 1973 and has become popular since the late 1980s. Neopatrimonialism is a combination of patrimonialism and modern state bureaucracy (as cited by Beekers & van Gool, 2012). For Bratton and van de Walle (1997, p.269), neo-patrimonialism refers to an unofficial political system based on the personalised rule and organized through clientelistic networks of patronage, personal loyalty, and coercion. Van de Walle (2007) argues that neopatrimonialism is incompatible with democracy because it ensures political stability of the authoritarian regime and undermines popular political participation. In other words, it weakens democracy.

In his insightful analysis of African politics, Bayart (1993) employs two concepts to define the nature and functioning of African politics. The former he calls politics of the belly (*la politique du ventre*) and the second the rhizome state (*l'état rhizome*). The former means the driving force of politics in the continent, which is materialism. That is to eat, to get hold of material benefits by powers one wields. This is contrary to the idea of politics in other climes, where politicians see themselves as public servants whose duty is to promote the public interest and not private interest. The latter implies the structures of African politics and its complex interaction between the political and private differentiate it from first world countries.

Thus, Bayart (1993) uses the term rhizome state to discern the African state from the Weberian state typical of the advanced capitalist countries. Bayart (1993) notes that the politics of the belly means “the social struggles which make up the quest for hegemony and the production of the State bear the hallmarks of a rush for spoils in which all actors – rich or poor – participate in the world of networks” (p.235).

What the statement portends is that politicians elected to serve the people use their offices to enrich themselves.

Richard Joseph (1983) encapsulates the reality of Nigerian polity when he describes the misuse of the office of the state to enrich oneself as prebendalism. Though prebendalism and neo-patrimonialism differ, they supplement each other. For example, patron-client relationship or clientelism is a relationship in which one benefits from a prebend which is an office of the state. Neo-patrimonial politics is bureaucratic politics. In a neo-patrimonial politics, politics is a business with two modes of exchange, money, and connection.

The states as a pie that everybody wants to bite (Medard, 1982). Thus, as the risks of gaining elective or political position become very high, the political gladiators engage in fierce battle, violence, and intimidation in their pursuit for political position. It is this that accounted for the warfare nature or do-or-die disposition of the political elite in the politics in the region. Commenting on the nature of politics in the Niger Delta, interviewee 007, Youth leader noted that:

The political positions are too juicy, a situation where an ordinary councillor who was lucky to have passed his school certificate examination earned more than a Professor who took many years of scholarship to attain that position. The councillor takes home pay is more than N500, 000 while a Prof earns barely N400, 000 per month (Interview at Diob, Port Harcourt, Rivers state, 2/6/16).

Similarly, interviewee 011, Academic had this to say:

(...) in the Niger Delta, we operate a neo-patrimonial system where whoever has access to a vast patronage network is seen as somebody to go to, somebody of timber and calibre and somebody that should be reckoned with by politicians because he has access to patronage network, that he can use for election violence (Interview at Tombia, Port Harcourt, Rivers state, 3/6/16).

While Interviewee 003 and 007, youth and youth leader respectively suggested that political office should be made less attractive. If it is unattractive not many people will go into politics and that will reduce the fierce battle that marked our body politic and people with genuine interest to serve their people will be encouraged to do so. In the words of the interviewee 007, Youth leader:

The political offices should be made less attractive. If it is made less juicy not many people would go into politics. More so, people with lion heart and vision will be encouraged to venture into an arena that has been tainted with violence (Interview at Yenagoa, Bayelsa state, 3/5/16)

The argument on the attractive nature of the political office is corroborated by Alemika (cited in Onimisi, 2015). He noted that:

The perception of politics and political office as an investment and as an avenue for the acquisition of extraordinary wealth through corruption, which is otherwise not possible through any form of legitimate vocation and enterprise. As a result of this perception and reality, Nigerian politicians turn electioneering and elections into warfare in which violence and ethnic, religious and other forms of primordial sentiments and prejudices are employed (cited in Onimisi, 2015, p. 244).

4.4 Impacts of Political Violence

This segment of the study analyses the impact of violence be it political-cum electoral in the region and these include loss of lives and property, proliferation of militia groups, arms proliferation and polarisation of the region

4.4.1 Loss of lives and Property

The violence in the Niger Delta has risen since 2003 (Odili, 2007; Hazen & Horner, 2007) and evidence can be found in the increased in the activities of militia groups, and politically motivated killings, which will be examined in the following section. The political-cum electoral violence has devastating effects on the rights of Nigerians.

Many have been deprived of their civic rights of taking part in the political process. Thousands of fellow countrymen and women have lost their lives due to the violent nature of political competition in the country and Niger Delta. An interviewee 008/CSO, noted that: *a party stalwart was beheaded and other members of his family were killed in Rivers State* (Interview at Tombia, Port-Harcourt, Rivers State, 1/6/16).

4.4.2 Proliferation of Militia Groups

The tool through which the elite from the Niger Delta perpetrated political violence in the region is armed groups whose members were recruited and financed by them to harass members of the public, protect them from attacks and rig elections for them. For us to appreciate the role these groups played in entrenching violence in the region and how elite support for them have led to their proliferation, it is important to briefly examine the different categorisation of armed groups.

Hazen and Horner (2007) categorised armed group in Nigeria into confraternities and cults, vigilante groups, ethnic militia, and criminal groups. Confraternities and cults shared a similarity in origin but differ in modus operandi. Confraternities operate in campus whereas their affiliated cults operate off-campus.

Vigilante groups are established to fill a security gap due to inability or incompetence of the law enforcement agency to prevent crime and protect life and property. Ethnic militias are youth group founded with the sole purpose of protecting and defending the interests of their ethnic groups (Adejumobi, 2003). They are not aimed at controlling political power but influencing government policies. Criminal gangs are groups of illiterates, poor and unemployed youths who are involved in petty crimes and used as veranda boys by the politicians to rig elections and intimidate voters (Hazen & Horner, 2007).

There seems to be a thin-line that can be drawn among these various categorisations. The ethnic militias, cults, and vigilantes all roll into one. The ethnic militias group started as a vigilantes groups and to solidify their operations and promote oneness among themselves so that no one will betray the other, they constitute themselves into a cult where rituals and oaths taking take place and also fortify themselves through this process against their foes. For example, Ateke Tom's militia group started as a vigilante group and later metamorphosed into militia group "championing the cause of Brass people and later the Niger Delta". It can be argued to some extent that the present confraternities in the Ivory Towers is widely spread in the Niger Delta and this is due to the value attached to violence in the region.

4.4.3 Arms Proliferation

The proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALW) has also contributed to the violence in the region. The term SALW has different definitions but common to all the definitions is the point that it covers a wide spectrum of weapons, ammunition and their spare parts. The number of SALW in West Africa has been estimated to be between seven and ten million (cited in Hazen & Horner, 2007). Nigeria alone accounted for between one and three million of SALW (cited in Hazen & Horner, 2007). The majority of these weapons are in the hands of the civilians population.

For Onuoha (2006), SALW weapons are weapons that can be manipulated by one or two persons. In other words, SALW is weapons produced to military stipulations for use as deadly instruments of war (Thom-otuya, 2009). The weapons are acquired through funds provided by politicians who patronised the armed groups as well as funds made available to the armed group by the oil companies for services (oil infrastructure protection contract) rendered by the group. These weapons are obtained from international weapons merchants, returnees from United Nations (UN) African Union (AU), and ECOWAS peace missions. Moreover, weapons are obtained from local manufacturers and from the law enforcement agencies and members of the armed forces (Malam, 2014). Politicians also distribute SALW to armed groups. For instance, it was reported that a deputy governor in one of the states in the Niger Delta was caught with eleven AK47 rifles in his car (Bebibiafai, 2007).

Consequently, the proliferation of SALW threatened Nigeria's national security through increased in criminal activities in the region such as drug abuse, oil bunkering, hostage taking, and youth restiveness. More so, weapons are in the hands of those that do not supposed to be in possession of such weapon and this has caused the death of many people.

Corroborating the proliferation of arms in the Niger Delta, an Interviewee, 004, Civil Servant/CLO, noted that *“violence is experienced because politicians cannot retrieve guns that they gave those (militants) for their political purpose. Armouries are everywhere in every community”* (Interview at Secretariat, Yenagoa, Bayelsa State, 4/5/2016). Similarly, an interviewee 006, a retired Military officer said that: *“Arms and ammunition are available in every community in the region. It is like beans, yam, and rice, which you buy in the market”* (Interview at Warri, Delta State, 31/5/2016). The quoted statements above indicated that the elite fuel the conflict in the region through the arming and the use of the group for their political objectives.

4.4.4 Polarisation of the Region/Country

The elite because of their do-or-die attitude or winning at all cost syndrome pitched one ethnic group against the other and this has polarised the country and the region into 'we' and 'then' and this has greatly aggravated the political environment of the area.

More so, the failure of the elite to observe internal democracy or the party constitution through zoning arrangement (a process in which political party rotates positions among

various senatorial zones within a state and regions at the national level). Where the rules are disregarded, there are bound to be violent conflict. The 2011 presidential election in Nigeria was a classic example and the candidate of the People Democratic Party, who was then the incumbent president of the country violated the party zoning arrangement in which the office of the president of the Nigeria was rotated between the North and the South (; Ndujihe, 2010; Ajah, 2011)

The South through Chief Olusegun Obasanjo had the first shot and completed eight years and the North could not complete her own because of the death of Umaru Musa Yar'adua. So, the North demanded to be allowed to field a candidate from the North under the party rotation formula to complete the remaining years of the North but the party fielded the sitting president from the south and this not only resulted in the polarisation of the country into North and South, Christian and Muslim but also violence that heralded the announcement of Jonathan as the winner of the 2011 presidential elections. The violence that welcomed the announcement led to the loss of lives and property (ICG, 2011).

In Rivers State, the same scenario played itself out in 2015 where the mainland or upland has been at the helm of affairs in the state since returned of democratic rule in 1999. The riverine areas were demanding their own turn to govern the state. But the dominant party in the state picked a Mainland candidate, and that caused wrangling and polarised the state along the mainland and riverine areas (Oke, 2014).

According to an interviewee (007), a Youth leader stated that:

The elite when they discovered they are losing, they played the ethnic card. Ha! They didn't vote for me because I am from minority area. That's why I lost. They will recruit the idle youths to fight for them (Interview at Diobu, Port-Harcourt, River state, 1/06/16).

The quoted statement above indicated that the elite recourse to ethnic sentiment to mobilise the people to take to violence in order to achieve their selfish ends or goals.

4.5 Reported incidences of Political-cum Electoral violence in the Niger Delta

The politics of intolerance and bitterness that characterised the political contest in the Niger Delta rear its ugly head in several states of the region. Rivers state is the worst hit. The following incidents illustrate the intolerance and bitterness that typified the politics of the region.

Rivers State saw a gory political fight between two foremost political parties in the state, the All Progressive Congress (APC) and Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) over primacy and control of governmental machinery in the state. One of the main casualties of the crisis was Mr Michael Okechuku Chindah, who was hit with a mace by a fellow member of the State House of Assembly, Chidi Liyod, amid a fight on the floor of the House on July 9, 2013. Chindah suffered severe wounds to his head that left him oblivious before being rushed for care in a private hospital in Port Harcourt and later flown to a London hospital for proper medical care (Joab- Peterside, 2015).

The Save Rivers Movement (SRM) organised a Pro Amaechi rally in Port Harcourt and it was disrupted by some hoodlums. Similarly, Senator Magnus Abe was shot by some Ogoni youths who were later arrested and charged to court for illicit ownership of walkie-talkie, dangerous weapons and unlawful assembling (Ebiri, 2014). The bombing of two court buildings in Ahoada and Nigerian Bar Association secretariat located in the court premises (Olaniyi, & Dikewoha, 2014). These were instances of political intolerance that characterised the body politic of Rivers State.

The residents of Rumuigbo and Rumuipirikon in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State woke up to shootings and decimation of property because of a political fight between the PDP and APC over the control the areas. The root cause of the fracas was the denial of then governor of the state to campaign in the stronghold of the rival party and this degenerated into free for all fight in which properties were destroyed (Joab-Peterside, 2015).

In the build-up to the 2015 presidential elections in Rivers state, on January 11, 2015, the APC secretariat in the Okrika local government area was assaulted and on January 25, 2015, gangsters raged the venue of the APC meeting damaging vehicles, attacking individuals and stopping the rally from holding (The Guardian editorial, 2015, p. 16). Thus, in March 2015, the All Progressive Congress (APC) raised an alert claiming assassination of its members and supporters in the state. The announcement expressed that nine of its individuals were executed in two separate occurrences along the D-Line hub and the Eastern Bypass in the Marine Base region of Port Harcourt.

Also, according to APC leader in the state, 35 of his party members were killed in the build-up to 2015 presidential while the PDP leadership alleged 45 of his members were sent to the world beyond (Stakeholder Democracy & Network (SDN, 2015). There were likewise interminable assaults on APC supporters in the Okrika Council Area where the opposition party had been victims of three bomb assaults (Abuh, 2015).

Meanwhile, at Okrika, political thugs attacked gubernatorial candidate of the APC and his supporters. At the last count, 50 defenceless people, among them four policemen and journalists were hurt and a policeman murdered. Okrika is the country home of the then first lady of Nigeria, Dame Patience Jonathan and what makes the Okrika violence unique were its recurrence and the characters represented by the parties in the fight for the soul of the community.

The poor handling of the police on this matter or incidence caught the attention of one of the nation's respected newspapers The Guardian. In its editorial, the paper noted that:

Before this latest spate of violence, providing security for the APC rally by the police had been a matter of concern for its high command as if it were hamstrung to carry out its constitutional duty of protecting lives and property. When the APC had concluded plans to organize a rally for early February, the Rivers State Commissioner of Police, Mr. Dan Bature, had even counselled for a change of date to enable the police provide adequate security (The Guardian editorial, 2015, p.16).

In the Governorship and House of Assembly elections in 2015 in the state, there were incidents of killings, attacks on INEC officials, hijacking of election materials and arsons. For instance, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) Registration Area Centre (RAC) in the Buguma Local Government Area and the house of the state's Commissioner of Women Affairs, Mrs. Joeba West were burnt and in Asari-Toru LGA, seven vehicles conveying electoral materials were reportedly burnt (Hassan, 2015).

Also, there were heavy gunshots in Rumuolumeni and Ozuoba in Obio Akpor local government area of the state. Soldiers were deployed to Buguma in Asari-Toru Local Government area following the assassination of two people by political thugs (Ndujihe and Kumolu, 2015). In Ozuaha community in the Ikwerre Local Government area of the state, thugs opened fire on a team of security personnel who were escorting INEC ad hoc staffs to polling units (Hassan, 2015).

In the build, up to rerun elections on 10 December 2016, in Rivers State, there were cases of violence in the state perpetrated by cultists and militants against the law-abiding people of Omoku, and other contiguous towns in the Ogba/Ndoni/Egbema Local Government Area of the state. The security operatives were also brutalised by these groups. For instance, on 20 November 2016, soldiers of 34 Brigade were ambushed and one of them was killed. Also, on 21 November 2016, Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corps lost four of their men and their weapons carted away. On the day of the re-run elections (10 December 2016), DSP Alkali Mohammed of Mobile Police Unit 48 was beheaded along with his orderly and their weapons and patrol vehicle taken away (Abubakar, 2016).

In Delta state, the state 2011 legislative election into Patani constituency involving Mr. Raymos Guanah (former Commissioner for Lands, Survey, and Urban Development) of the Fresh Party and Basil Ganagana of the People's Democratic Party was soiled by violence. The violence caused the death of Sixtus Ganagana a brother to Basil Ganagana. Also, the transitional chairman of the Patani local government council, Mr. Paul Atie was shot by unknown gunmen. In Ethiopia local government area, in November 2014, the clash between supporters of the Labour Party and Peoples Democratic led to the death of scores of people and properties were destroyed (Aiwerie, 2014).

Akwa Ibom state was also not spared of the ugly incident of politically motivated killing in the region. In 2010, Dr. Akpan Akpanudo was killed because he sought election to the State House of Assembly (Effiong, 2015). In 2011, a gubernatorial candidate for Action Congress of Nigeria used political thugs in the state to wreak havoc particularly in Uyo and Ikot Ekpene. On March 22, 2011, supporters of Action Congress of Nigeria and Peoples Democratic Party fought at Ikot Ekpene and two people lost their lives and many sustained injuries. Consequently, this led to a reprisal one in Uyo, the capital city of the state in which 20 people lost their lives and 800 new cars and tricycles parked at the state secretariat were destroyed. A PDP stalwart in the state, Senator Aloysius Etok school, and properties were destroyed while he escaped being assassinated (Akpan, 2011).

In 2014, Engr. Ukpanah was slain at his home by killers. Mrs. Helen Esuene was attacked on October 5, 2014, while on a campaign tour by political thugs for venturing to campaign in the governor's town.

In 2015 general elections in the state, a former deputy speaker of the State House of Assembly was killed by political thugs led by Chairman of Ukanafun Local Government, Mr. Effiom Abai (Effiong, 2015).

The political situation in Bayelsa state is not different from other states in the region. It is not spared of political violence. For instance, in the run-up to the 2015 general elections in the state, the two dominant political parties in the state, Peoples Democratic Party, and All Progressive Congress engaged in a fierce battle to control the governmental machinery of the state.

The 2015 gubernatorial election in the state was tainted by violence, with accusation and counter-accusation from both parties as the culprit responsible for the violence. A number of people were killed in the violence that ravaged the state. For instance, three persons were killed in the Southern Ijaw Local Government Area of the State, four lost their lives in Nembe and one in Ekeremor. The Southern Ijaw town of Oporoba was attacked by political thugs and scores of people were killed and several others injured. The hoodlum made away with sensitive election materials (O'Neil, Olaniyi, Odiegwu, & Dikewoha, 2015).

At Odioma, the APC gubernatorial candidate was attacked by PDP supporters. It took the timely intervention of the Joint Task Force to ward off the attack and save the gubernatorial candidate and his entourage. Mr Heineken Lokpobiri was attacked by gunmen in his country home at Ekeremor (Eze & Dozie, 2015).

The PDP blamed the APC for the attack in Nembe on a member the State House of Assembly, Princess Ingo Iwowari, who was stripped of all her possessions, including cash (O'Neil, Olaniyi, Odiegwu, & Dikewoha, 2015). The governor, Seriake Dickson accused the Minister of Agriculture of sponsoring the attacks on his party members and supporters in Twon Brass, Teco in Ekeremor town and Oporoma.

The reported cases of political violence discussed above brought to the fore intolerance and a power struggle among the political elite to win elections at all cost without regard for human lives. The political terrain in the region is such that an altruistic politician who wants to serve his people will not venture into because of his or her life. This created an opportunity for those whose motives are to fend for themselves and their immediate families. It is important to note that the control of oil proceeds is the key factor that explains why the elite will go to any length in order to get into political position and not the desire to improve the lots of the people. The elites have not imbibed democratic ideal or political culture whereby political contest is seen as a game that is governed by the rules and the players are expected to abide by the rules. But the elites see the political contest as do-or-die affairs which they must win through unconventional means.

This finding is corroborated by the elite theory. The concentration of power in the hand of the few and the cohesion among them, which enable them to manipulate the mass (militia group) and use them to pursue their own selfish interest such as protection of their political positions, traditional stool and business interests.

Put differently, men by nature like power and by implication, those elites who wield these powers would not like to relinquish their positions because of the attractiveness of the office and the need to control the oil wealth. So, they can go to any length to retain such powers, including assassination of their formidable opponents.

As the finding on political violence in the region has shown, the elites of the Niger Delta extraction created an environment that serves as an impetus for the youth to take to violence to meet their basic needs. Some of the points have already been examined which need not rehearse here. It is important to note that the poor state of governance, disposition of elites to politics, underdevelopment, poverty, and corruption are the motivators that made the youth a handmade tool or vanguard or agent of violence used by the politicians and this drive found expression in the frustration-aggression theory.

4.6 Summary

The chapter has analysed the role of the elite as regard violence in the Niger Delta and examined the emergence and composition of elite in Nigeria. It argues that the Nigerian elites are a conglomeration of different segments of elites such as the military, economic, bureaucratic, traditional and political elite. Specifically, the chapter discusses the role of elites in the electoral violence in the Niger Delta and argued that the battles for who control the oil wealth of the region make the political contest in the region to be prone to violence.

The elites have supported violence in the region through financing, procurement of weapon and its distribution to the armed groups as well as fraternizing with them. The impacts of their roles can be seen in the proliferation of SALW and armed groups in the region who engaged in supremacy battle in order to continue to enjoy the patronage of the ruling elite in the region.

The findings of the study have been corroborated by the combined theories employed to analyse the conflict. The resource control and political restructuring are the focus of the next chapter. The chapter among others analyses the rationale for the demand and the party played by the elites in the agitation.



CHAPTER FIVE

RESOURCE CONTROL AND POLITICAL RESTRUCTURING

5.1 Introduction

This chapter like the preceding one is a continuation of the contribution of the elite to the Niger Delta conflict in the areas of agitation for resource control and political restructuring of Nigeria. It analyses issues such as resource control/ fiscal federalism, revenue allocation and political restructuring of the polity. The chapter sheds more light on these germane issues. What constitutes resource control and the rationale behind it? Moreover, the chapter zeroes on the fiscal federalism/revenue allocation which is a component of resource control. It addresses the research question number two which centres on the rationale for resource control and political restructuring of the polity.

5.2 Resource Control

The term resource control has attracted different interpretations among scholars, politicians, activists and policy analysts. As Ako (2011) rightly noted: “the quest for resource control by the people of Niger Delta lies at the heart of the violence in the region”.(p.42) For Aghalino (2006) resource control has been a recurrent decimal in the history of the Niger Delta of Nigeria and attributed this to the historical importance of the region.

Naanen (2015) defines resource control from four perspectives, politicians, militants, ordinary 'Deltans, and non-Deltans'. For the politicians from Niger Delta region, resource control means personal enjoyment of the benefits of oil at the expense of most people they represent. Whereas, the militants see it as a way of recovering through armed struggle the petroleum resources that has been supposedly taken by the country's power elite through political manipulation and those outside the region view it as refusing other parts of the federation the benefits of federalism by insisting on the control and enjoyment of a natural resource which should be the patrimony of all Nigerians. And to the average Niger Deltans, it means environmental degradation, poverty, and hunger amid plenty. For Ako (2011, p.42), resource control refers to the "desire that the region be left to manage its natural resources, particularly its oil and pay taxes and or royalties to the federal government".

5.2.1 Types of Resource Control

Following Ako (2012, 2011) resource control can be categorised into three absolute resource control, principal resource control and increased derivation and these are discussed below:

5.2.1.1 Absolute Resource Control

It is a resource control in which all the resources of the region are owned and controlled by the people of the region. This kind of resource control is included in the Kaiama Declaration, which is contained in paragraph 5 of the Declaration and its states that "every region should control its resources 100 per cent of which it will allocate funds for running the central government" (cited in Ako, 2011, p. 42).

Similarly, Roberts and Oladeji (2005) defined resource control as the total takeover of the resources situated in the oil bearing states by the people of the state. For Ifedayo (cited in Atoyebi, Lawal, Adekunjo, & Ibrahim, 2013) resource control entails the access of communities and state governments to natural resources situated within their frontiers and the liberty to develop and utilize these resources without allusion from the central government.

5.2.1.2 Principal Resource Control

This is a type of control in which the oil-bearing communities play a key role or participate actively in exploration, exploitation, marketing and sales of the products (Douglas, 2001; Henryik, 2009; Sagay, 2011). For instance, Douglas (2001) sees resource control as a “compelling desire to regain ownership, control, use and management of resources for the primary benefit of the first owner (the communities and people) on whose land the resources originate.” (cited in Ako, 2011, p.42)

For Sagay (2011), resource control means “a direct and decisive role in the exploration for, the exploitation and disposal of, including sales of the harvested resources.” He identified three components of resource control as

The power and right of a Community or State to raise funds by way of tax on persons, matters, services and materials within its territory. The exclusive right to the ownership and control of resources, both natural and created within its territory. The right to customs duties on goods destined for its territory and excise duties on goods manufactured in its territory (Sagay, 2001).

The seventeen states chief executives (governors) of the Southern part of Nigeria in their communique at the end of their summit in Benin, Edo state, define resource control “as the practice of true federalism and natural law in which the federating units express their rights to primarily control the natural resources within their borders and make agreed contribution towards the maintenance of common services of the government at the centre.” (cited Dafinone, 2001, p. 1) Adesopo and Asaju (2004), define resource control as the right of the Niger Delta to take possession and manage the revenue accruing from oil and other natural resources in accordance with the tenets of true federalism.

Equally, Henryik (2009) defines resource control as the control and management of resources by the state or local government where the resources are found, under the guidance of the central government and then pay agreed percentage to the central government.

5.2.1.3 Increased Revenue

Resource control from the perspective of increased revenue involves a rise in the present derivation percentage from 13% to 25% as demanded by the elite of the region in the 2005 National Constitutional Reform Conference. Atoyebi et al (2013) see resource control as the way and manner the government revenue is distributed among the different tiers of government namely the federal, state and local governments. Ya’u (2001) defines resource control as “the substantive powers for the community to collect monetary and other benefits accruing from the exploitation and use of resources in its domain and deploy same to its developmental purposes.” (p.46)

In the light of the above definitions, resource control entails ownership, control, management of a natural resource by a community and payment of agreed percentage of the proceeds of the natural resources by the owners (community/state) to the central government for the overall running of its assigned duties by the constitution.

In response to the question, what is resource control? Majority of the interviewees defined it from the principal resource control perspective and expressed the views that resource control meant the control and management of the resources by the oil-bearing communities and the payment of a certain percentage of the revenue from the resources to the central government.

Commenting on this issue, one of the interviewees 005, Lawyer/ Politician noted that:

... If we are to operate the federal system of government properly so called, the states should be allowed to manage whatever resources that are derived from within their own geographical territories (Interview in Warri, Delta State, 30/05/16).

Another interviewee 011, Academic said that:

We have people saying the land belongs to us. It is our land and why should we have access to the land and not have access to the tables and dining chairs. In a nutshell, I think the struggle for resource control is more of a campaign for equitable distribution of wealth, not just equality, you can't just say you are distributing something across the board (Interview at Tombia, Port-Harcourt, Rivers State, 3/6/16).

One of the interviewees commented that the owners of the resource should receive a greater percentage from the proceeds of the resources and should also own and managed the resources as well as pay taxes to the centre.

In the words of the interviewee 007, a Youth leader

Resource Control entails that the owners of the oil wealth should have a greater percentage of it. They should own and issue licences to prospective oil companies and the region will pay taxes to the central government as it is done in other places (Interview at Diobu, Port-Harcourt, Rivers State, 1/6/16).

Interviewee's 007, Youth Leader definition of resource control falls into both principal and increased revenue categorisation of resource control. The different conceptualisation or interpretations of resource control have led to a misunderstanding of the concept and the demands of the region. Is it total control and management of resources by the oil-producing communities or states? Is it increased in oil allocation formula? There seems to be no agreements among the elite of the region on this issue. While some section of the elite are demanding absolute resource control. Others are calling for an upward review of the current revenue allocation formula.

5.2.2 Rationale for Resource Control

Several reasons have been advanced for agitation for resource control and they include among others, environmental degradation, lack of infrastructure, poverty, and unemployment, poor corporate social responsibility and domination by the major ethnic groups.

Ako (2011) attributes the demand for resource control to perceive political and economic marginalisation of the people of the region by the majority ethnic group leaders at the helms of affairs in Nigeria.

Omoweh (cited in Dibua, 2005), contends that the denial by succeeding administrations in the country to increase the level of participation of the oil-bearing communities over their natural resources as well as the environmental and social impacts of oil exploration necessitated the need for resource control. Corroborating this position Baba (2014), argues that government neglect of environmental management in the Niger Delta accounted for the demand for resource control and violence in the country. For Otitigbe and Otitigbe (2015), the demand for resource control is to encourage the practice of fiscal federalism as the most effective means of liberating Nigerians from the result of authoritarianism and misrule. It is important at this juncture to examine some of the reasons advanced in the extant literature for resource control.

5.2.2.1 Environmental Degradation

Environmental degradation as highlighted above is one of the reasons advanced for the demand for resource control. The environment of the Niger Delta has been debased due to oil spillage, gas flaring and other activities such as oil exploration and exploitation by the transnational oil companies. The inhabitants of the Niger Delta are concerned about the environmental degradation of their region because it is their source of living. They depend on the environment and rivers for subsistence, socio-cultural survival, food and shelter. Thus, a conflict of interest exists between the indigenes of the region and the Nigerian state in relation to environment (Egbe, 2012).

Consequently, the people have no access to land where they can farm, they can fish because the rivers have been polluted and the fishes destroyed in the process. This created frustration and anger among the people and they not only demanded for the control of their resources, but also employed violence means to show their displeasure (Duru, 2005; Aaron, 2006; Abidde, 2009; Amnesty International, 2009; Babatunde, 2010; Akhakpe, 2012; Oshwofasa, Anuta & Aiyedogbon, 2012; Aworawo, 2013; Ebegbulem, Ekpe, & Adejumo, 2013; Akinbami, & Abiona, 2014; Akpan, 2014).

Duru (2005) notes that:

...several years of exploration and hazards of spillage and gas flaring which accompany it have degraded their environment and left the communities desolate. Farming and fishing, the major occupations of these mostly riverine minorities have been decimated (cited in Nwogwugwu & Kupoluyi, 2015, p.23).

The above view is in line with those expressed by most of those interviewed. In response to a question about the reasons for resource control, an interviewee 005, Legal Practitioner/ Politician said that:

If you go to the areas where oil is drilled, you will be shocked at the extent of neglect. You will be shocked at the sub-human level of existence that obtained in some of these areas. It is sub-human that is just the truth. And for one to think that the resource you are harvesting from this place or at the backyard of this region is what is sustaining the nation and for the people whose environments have been degraded, the people who have suffered so much in terms of ecological degradation and others, they have nothing to show for it. It's painful! (Interview at Warri, Delta State, 30/5/16).

Likewise, interviewee 007, Youth leader, affirmed that:

The problem has to do with the environmental degradation of the place. If you go to the place now, no good source of water. Before now, the people depend on water from streams, rain, and all others. Because of the activities of oil companies, you cannot drink those waters. So, all those things are having negative effects on their health. The environment of the place has been so destroyed that aquatic life is no more in that place. Because the primary occupation of the people of the Niger Delta is fishing, but as we are speaking now, you can't even go there that you want to carry out fishing because the chemical they use in the exploration and all those things have destroyed the fishes there and no fish is there. So, the people cannot go there and say they want to go and fish (Interview at Diobu, Port-Harcourt, Rivers State, 01/6/16).

Re-echoing the views expressed by previous interviewees, an interviewee 011, Academic, noted that:

There is a community in Delta state called Beji community, just adjoining that community is NNPC Warri refinery. When it rains in that community, everything there, if you put your cloth outside, turns black and when you breathe in the air, you know that you are breathing in something that is injurious to your health. In some other instances, we have a situation where pipelines bearing oil for MNOC and jointly owned by the FG, leaked and caused oil spills that destroy the whole eco-system- destroy water, destroy the land; you cannot farm on the land, you cannot drink water (Interview at Tombia, Port-Harcourt, Rivers State, 3/6/16).

Validating the impacts of oil exploration on the environment as the reason for the demand for resource control, a prominent traditional ruler in Ethiope Local Government Area, Rear Admiral Mike Onah (Rtd) in a secondary interview noted that “Oil production has destroyed the oil communities eco-system. It has adversely affected their livelihood. It has destroyed their farmlands, fish, etc.” (Onah, 2016).

The quoted statements buttressed the importance of environmental factor in the agitation for resource control in the region. As the responses have shown, the oil exploration activities of the multi-national oil companies have a devastating effect on the health, occupation and sources of water for drinking. For instance, an interviewee 007, a Youth leader, using Olobiri where oil was first struck in commercial quantity in 1956, as a point of reference noted that the town lacked portable water and the former sources of water for the people such as streams, rain and well had been contaminated by the oil exploration activities of the multi-national oil companies.

Moreover, the oil exploration activities of the TNOC have also affected the traditional occupation of the people such as fishing and farming. The researcher during his visit to Taylor Creeks had first-hand knowledge of the devastating effect of oil spillage. The researcher together with his host, the traditional rulers and other prominent chiefs in the town visited the scene of the oil spillage where an expanse of land was destroyed by oil spillage. Farming activities cannot take place on the land again because the soil fertility has been destroyed. The failure of the government to take a decisive step on the reckless destruction of the environment of the region by the transnational oil companies served as an impetus for the oil-bearing communities to demand for the control and management of their resources to put an end to the TNOC destruction of their environment and also to be able to use the resources for the betterment of their communities.

The issue of who should be held responsible for environmental pollution of the region has been a subject of controversy. The international oil companies attributed the oil spills to sabotage. These are spills caused by militia groups attacks on oil infrastructure for economic gains while the oil -bearing communities blamed the multi-national oil companies for the spillage. They maintained that equipment failure and production processes caused oil spillages and gas flaring (Ibaba, 2011). But the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation data shows the opposite. The Table 5.1 shows the oil spill incidences and how it occurs.



Table 5. 1

Oil Spill Incidences 2006-2015

S/No	Year	Vandalisation	Rupture	Total	%	
					Vandalisation	Rupture
1	2006	3,674	9	3,683	99.75	0.25
2	2007	3,244	20	3,264	99.39	0.61
3	2008	2,285	33	2,318	98.56	1.44
4	2009	1,453	27	1,480	98.18	1.82
5	2010	836	22	858	97.44	2.56
6	2011	2,768	19	2,787	99.32	0.68
7	2012	2,230	26	2,256	98.85	1.15
8	2013	3,505	65	3570	98.18	1.82
9	2014	3,700	32	3,732	99.14	0.86
10	2015	2,783	49	2,832	98.27	1.73
TOTAL		26,478	302	26,780	98.71	1.29

Source: Compiled and calculated by the researcher from NNPC 2015 Annual Statistical Bulletin pp.33

In contrast to the dominant explanation that environmental degradation of the region was caused mostly by the recklessness of the multi-national oil companies by operating below international standard, non-replacement of old pipes, etc. The table 5.1 above shows that the oil spillages which the respondents and literature attributed mostly to the activities of the oil companies are mostly caused by sabotage.

As the table 5.1 above shows, in total incidences of 26, 780 that spanned 10 years, 26, 478 (98.71%) of them were caused by sabotage while 302 (1.29%) were caused by rupture. Nevertheless, the multi-national oil companies should be held responsible for the pollution of the region.

5.2.2.2 Lack of Social Amenities or Infrastructural facilities

Another reason adduced for resource control is lack of infrastructural facilities in the oil -bearing communities. The argument is that successive administrations in the country have neglected the region where bulk of resources of the nation is derived from. The oil-bearing communities lack basic amenities like road, hospitals, electricity, schools.

The inhabitants of the region accused the central government of using their resources to develop other regions. Duru (cited in Nwogwugwu & Kupoluyi, 2015) has attributed the reasons for resource control to lack of social amenities in the region. In his words the “territories have continuously lacked basic infrastructure and amenities like electricity, roads, schools, hospitals, portable water (cited in Nwogwugwu & Kupoluyi, 2015, p.23).

Similarly, Egbe (2012) argues that the paucity in social amenities and harsh socio-economic conditions have fuelled alienation among the people of the region and accounted for the agitation for resource control.

Most of the interviewees were of the views that the region lacked infrastructure or social amenities. They argued that where some of these facilities exist, they were inadequate and not functioning or working.

An interviewee 002, a Youth divulged that:

Our regions have been neglected by the central government over the years. There are no social amenities provided by the government and where they exist, they are not enough (Interview in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State, 03/5/16).

In the same vein, an interviewee 006, retired Military Officer noted that:

I travelled to a place in Benin areas through river to commission a project... And what I saw along the river bank was nothing to write home about. Some of the villages... have no accessible roads. The government didn't reach them in any way. If you look at what is happening in Abuja today and see the type of development that has taken place, you would marvel that Abuja of yesterday has developed this way (Interview in Warri, Delta State, 31/5/16).

Corroborating the views expressed by the interviewees, Joseph Evah in a published interview averred that:

Our people in the Niger Delta live in abject neglect. Our angry youth who are now involved in this renewed militancy want Niger-Delta region to be developed-they want the oil-rich region to look like Dubai, New York, Paris and host of other beautiful cities across the world. Although as elders, we have been advising them to shun violence and embrace dialogue in channelling their grievances to the appropriate authorities. Most of these youth have been to Lagos, Abuja, Kano and other cities, and having realised that most of the development you have in these places were carried out with the proceeds from sale of crude oil from the Niger- Delta, they become angry that the region which produce this wealth has been neglected (Evah, 2016).

The finding from this study's interviews and supported by published interview on lack of social amenities or infrastructure in the region are consistent with the existing literature. Studies by Babatunde (2010), Emmanuel, Olayiwola, and Babatunde (2009) and Wali (2008) all pointed towards that direction and called on government to enhance the living condition of the populace of the region through provision of social amenities, poverty alleviation and above all good governance.

The findings on causes for agitation for resource control are corroborated by frustration-aggression theory. The complaint of the people of the Niger Delta region over environmental degradation, lack of social amenities and the disarticulation of the local economy are well captured by the theory. The theory enables us to understand that when people yearning is not met, there is the tendency that this may cause frustration and aggressive behaviour (violence) by the people. Niger Deltans were short-changed by both the Nigerian state (neglect of the region) and the multi-national oil companies (environmental impact of oil exploration on the ecosystem) from

enjoying the oil wealth accounted for the frustration and aggressive behaviour of the people towards both the Nigerian state and the multi-national oil companies by attacking oil infrastructure and kidnapping of oil workers.

On the contrary, minority of those interviewed argued that the protest for resource control by the elite of the region was a political publicity stunt which was essentially aimed at gaining the support of the people to make up for their lack of developmental initiatives or programme on how to move the region forward.

Responding to a question on elite' agitation for resource control an interviewee 010, an Academic, stated that:

...it is used as a political gimmick to gain support from their constituent. If you look at the two major proponents of resource control Alamiyeseigha and Ibori. They were the first civilian governors elected in 1999 and they were involved in corruption in their states. They were loved and adored by the people of the region and awarded titles, the President General of Izon nation given to Alamiyeseigha and apostle of resource control to Ibori because of their dogged fight for the resource control. But as we can see, it turned out they pursued the demand to enrich themselves and not the people they claimed they were fighting for. Besides, they lack the requisite knowledge and managerial skills needed to take their states to the next level (Interview at Tombia, Port-Harcourt, Rivers State, 2/6/16).

This finding corroborates the position of Ako (2011) who argues that the regional elite of the region have used resource control as a weapon to legitimise their leadership and facilitate access to political power and increased oil revenue. The political class or elite pursue vigorously the issue of resource control, even when they know it is not achievable or how to go about it to bring about the much-needed development to the region.

The finding is validated by the elite theory and it assumes that elites are inevitable and desirable in a society. The elites make or mar a society by their actions or deeds and as the finding has shown the elites have used the call for resource control to enhance their position among their people.

Similarly, Ikelegbe (2011) contends that the failure of the elite to generate much needed development in terms of infrastructure, employment and improvement in the living standard of the people heightened their anger and pushed them not only to agitate for resource ownership but also violence.

Although, the campaign has not led to the abrogation of obnoxious decree and act such as the Decree 51 of 1969 and Land Use Act of 1978 which vested ownership of oil resources at the central government. Besides, the people of the region are still excluded in the participation in the oil sector of the economy. But the agitation has brought to the front burner the need to tackle the problem facing the region and to restructure the polity.

On the positive note, the resource control protest by the elite of the region has led to unity among the different classes of elite in the region in their quest for an increase of the 13 percent derivation formula, establishment of the Niger Delta Development Commission which is mandated to cater for the socio-economic development of the region. The agitation has also led to improvement in the corporate social responsibility by the transnational oil companies. For example, the Shell Petroleum Development Company is spearheading efforts to fight all forms of pollutions in the region while

Chevron and SPDC are encouraging agriculture in the region (Ako, 2011; Ikelegbe, 2011).

5.3 Federalism and Federal Practice in Nigeria

The term federalism has no generally accepted definitions, and this is due to several varieties of political arrangements to which the term has been used (Elazar, 1976). In the same vein, Smith, (1995) sees the difficulty in defining the term federalism from the angle that it has been subjected to different meanings, applied to different situational contexts and identifying its defining features can be as controversial as evaluating them. In a like manner, Awa (1976) posits that early writers on federalism interchangeably used such terms as federal, confederacy, federation and confederation but that these terms are not the same in their contemporary usage.

Notwithstanding the problems over its definition, nearly every students of federalism accepts that it is a political arrangement in which there is constitutional division of powers between the central government and the component units, each having autonomous power on certain matters on which it is not subordinate to the other (Wheare, 1967). Similarly, Friendrich (1968) defines federalism as a process whereby the central and regional governments are limited to their spheres and within those spheres should be independent of the other. By the same token, Hicks (1978, p. 4) sees “federalism as a polity operating a constitution which works at two levels of government as a nation and as a collection of related but self -standing units.”

From the foregoing definitions, federalism is a political system in which there is constitutional division of governmental powers between the federal government and

the component units in a manner that each is independent of the other in their constitutionally assigned powers or areas of jurisdiction. In Nigerian federation, powers are shared between the centre and the component units. The constitution assigned to the central government items such as defence, currency, external affairs, mining, etc. These items are under the exclusive list. While both levels of government can legislate under concurrent list and items under this list include: agriculture, education, health.

The constitution stipulates that in the event of the conflict between the federal law and state over items under the concurrent list, the federal law supersedes or prevail over the state law. The residual list is exclusively for the state and an example of item under this list is local government.

5.3. 1 Nigerian Federalism and its Defects

This section of the study analyses the responses of the participants in the study to the defect of Nigerian federalism. Nigeria is the oldest federal state on the African continent and the fifth largest federation in the world after United States, Russia, India and Brazil. Nigeria introduced two key novelties in federalist thought and practice and they are federal character and three -tier federation (Sklar, 2004).

Federal character is a constitutional requirement which stipulates that in the composition of government of the federation or state the various states in the federation must be represented and in the case of the state, the various segment of the state must be represented at the state as well as at the local government (Adeosun, 2011; Ugoh & Ukpere, 2012; Kendhammer, 2014). This principle applies to admission into tertiary

institution in the country, employment, appointment, registration of political parties and location of industries. Nevertheless, the practice of federalism in Nigeria has been a subject of disputes among Nigerians particularly those from the southern part of the country who were demanding its restructuring.

In response to the current practice of Nigerian federalism which necessitated the calls for its reform, the majority of the participants noted that it concentrated too much power at the centre and suggested returning to the practice of federalism of the First Republic when the federating units had greater autonomy both political and financial autonomy which enable them to develop their regions. An interviewee 005, Lawyer/ Politician noted that:

Well, we are supposed to be in a federation, but the type of federalism, we are practicing as far as I know does not find any expression in any of the federation we are conversant with. What we have here in this country by my own understanding is like a unitary system of government. It is because we spent so many years under the military regimes and if you have an army- the national army there is a command structure that can never be wished away. The head of state is the most senior officer in the army. If the HOS gives a command, the military governor say Delta state, who is a colonel as the governor and at the federal level, you have a general; he would not say no, he must comply and carry out the directive of his C-in-C (commander-in- chief). In my own opinion, this is what accounts for the type of federalism that we have (Interview at Warri, Delta State, 30/5/16).

Likewise, an interviewee 003, Youth remarked that:

The current federal structure is suffocating, is too centralised and the component units are merely pawns on a chess board of the federal government who manipulates them the way it wishes. Let's take issue of local government creation and tenure during Obasanjo's regime. Many states created new local governments, but the federal government did not recognise them, and allocations were not given to those states that created these local governments until

they reversed back to the status quo except Lagos that refused to back down and was denied allocation throughout Obasanjo's reign. But Lagos could do that because she has a good internally generated revenue (IGR) (Interview Yenagoa, Bayelsa State, 3/5/16).

The two statements above buttress the point that Nigeria is only federal in name and not in practice because it failed to adhere to the principle and practice of federal system where the federating units are autonomous both financially and administratively in their areas of jurisdiction.

Other interviewees noted with nostalgia the practice of federalism in the First Republic and suggested the return to the practice of that era. As an interviewee 006, a Military Officer (Retired) said:

We should return to the good old days when regional governments controlled substantial amount of resources and with good leadership they were able to make a giant stride in their various regions and uplift the socio-economic condition of their people. I am a living witness to this because my community was under the then Western Regional Government headed by Chief Obafemi Awolowo and I enjoyed free education programme introduced by his administration (Interview at Warri, Delta State, 31/05/16).

Another interviewee 003, Youth supported the federal system of government operated during the First Republic. “ ... *I am in total support of the practice of federalism of that era when the regions had autonomy and also resources which they used to advance the course of their people*” (Interview in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State, 3/5/16).

The finding shows that Nigerian federalism was defective because of many decades of military rule in the country. The military command structure has affected the operation

of federal practice in Nigeria and this has continued under the present democratic dispensation. Put differently, the Nigeria brand of federalism concentrated powers at the centre, thereby rendering the federating units powerless. The central government controls and manages the resources of the country and dole out little to the federating units which are insufficient for them to discharge their constitutional assigned responsibilities.

This finding supports the positions of Ibaba (2005), Orobator, Ifowodo and Edosa (2005), Osaghae, Ikelegbe, Olarinmoye and Okhonmina, (2007), Omotosho (2010), Ebegbulem (2011), Ibekwe and Ewoh (2012), Abegunde (2013), Ajayi (2013), Aworawo (2013), Awotayo, Sakiru, Ilelah, and Olutokunbo (2013), Esikot and Akpan (2013), Ikunga and Wilson (2013) and Aaron (2015). These scholars and several others have pointed out the deficiencies in the Nigeria federal system and this has led to calls for its reforms and conflict in the region.

A renowned Nigerian Political Scientist, Elaigwu (cited in Nwaorgu, 2013) confirming the impact of military rule on the operation of federalism in Nigeria commented that:

In the military hierarchy of authority, the Head of the Federal Military Government appoints all state governors who are responsible to him. This neglects the traditional principle of federalism and fits into Apter's model of mobilization with hierarchical chain of command and minimum accountability to the people (Nwaorgu, 2013, pp.120-121).

Other scholars liken the practice of Nigerian federalism to a lion chasing an antelope and squeezing out life from it (the lion in this case refer to the federal government while the antelope refer to the states) (Okeke & Innocent, 2013). Also, commenting

on the defective nature of Nigerian federalism, International Crisis Group (2006, p.2), in its report noted that “Nigeria’s federal system and politics are deeply flawed, contributing to rising violence that threatens to destabilize one of Africa’s leading countries.” Awotayo, Sakiru, Ilelah, and Olutokunbo, (2013) stated that:

The Federal Government power is too sprawling that it legislates on an issue that should ordinarily be on the residual list. It ventured into what it does not have business to do. The federal government having amassed virtually all power to it makes it have one axe to grind with the state governments (p.104).

Similarly, Aaron (2015) identifies the pathologies of the current federal system in the country as concentration of powers at the centre, unhealthy economic dependence by states on the federal government that supervises the distribution of resources produced from oil belt region of the country.



Nigeria's federalism has become over centralised with power residing at the central government. For instance, the exclusive list contains sixty-eight items (six more than the 1979 Constitution) which includes citizenship, defence, policing, external affairs, immigration, mining, nuclear energy and regulation of political parties, among others (Constitution, 1999).

The findings on the displeasure expressed by the elites of the region with the current federal system are corroborated by the elite and resource curse theories. The resource curse theory argues that agitation for a fair share of the resources always come from the region where the natural resources are situated and the inevitability and desirability of the elite’s theory assumptions enables to comprehend the spearheading role played

by the elites in the call for resource control. Therefore, the two theories complement each other in the understanding of the agitation by the people where the resources are located and the actions or behaviour of the elites in terms of resource governance. That is, how the resources are shared among the component units of the states are critical in understanding the conflict in the Niger Delta.

5.3.2 Fiscal Federalism

Fiscal federalism refers to allocation of taxation and expenditure powers among levels of government in a federation. Ozon-Eson (2005) defines fiscal federalism as the division of public sector functions and finances among different levels of government. It is one of the cardinal principles of federal system and also source of conflict between government at the centre and the component units. A discussion on fiscal federalism cannot be divorced from the analysis of revenue allocation.

The Table 5.2 shows the allocation of duties assigned to the three tiers of government, federal, state and local governments.

Table 5. 2

Distribution of Expenditure responsibilities among Federal, State and Local Governments

Level of government	Expenditure responsibilities
Federal Only	Defence
	Foreign Affairs
	International trade including export marking
	Currency, banking, borrowing, exchange control
	Use of water resources
	Shipping, federal trunk roads
	Elections

	Aviation, railways, postal service
	Police and other security services
	Regulation of labour, interstate commerce, telecommunications, immigration
	Mines and minerals, nuclear energy, citizenship and naturalisation rights
	Social security, insurance, national statistical system (census, births, death, etc.).
	Guidelines and basis for minimum education
	Business registration
	Price control
Federal-State (Shared)	Health, Social welfare
	Education (post-primary/technology)
	Culture
	Antiquities
	Monuments, archives
	Statistics, stamp duties
	Commerce, industry
	Electricity (generation, transmission, distribution)
	Research surveys
State only	Residual power, i.e. subject neither assigned to federal nor local government level
Local government	Economic planning and development
	Health services
	Land use
	Control and regulation of advertisements, pets, small business
	Markets, public conveniences
	Social welfare, sewage and refuse disposal, registration of births, deaths and marriages
	Primary, adult and vocational education
	Development of agriculture and natural resources.

Source: Nigerian Constitution 1999

The Table 5.2 shows the constitutional assigned duties to the various levels of government. As the table reveals more responsibilities are assigned to the central government than the two levels of government and this is why the Nigerian federation is centralised. Some of the responsibilities of the general government include defence, foreign affairs, currency, police, and mines. The federal and states shared responsibilities in areas such as health, education, culture, commerce, electricity, etc.

Duties that are not assigned to either federal or state are referred to as residual and they belong to the states. Example is local government, the elections into local government councils are the duty of the states. The Table 5.3 also shows the responsibilities of local governments and these include: land use, public convenience, health services, and market. A cursory evaluation of these responsibilities clearly favoured the central government and the clamour by the states is that some of these responsibilities should be given to the states.

The Table 5.3 below also shows taxes jurisdiction allotted to different levels of government.

Table 5. 3

Nigeria's Federal State and Local Government Tax Jurisdiction and Assignment

Tax	Legal Jurisdiction	Collection	Retention
Import duties	Federal	Federal	Federation Account
Excise duties	Federal	Federal	Federation Account

Export duties	Federal	Federal	Federation Account
Mining rents & royalty	Federal	Federal	Federation Account
Petroleum profit tax	Federal	Federal	Federation Account
Capital gain tax	Federal	Federal	Federation Account
Personal Income tax (other than listed in 8)	Federal	State	State
Personal Income tax: armed & police forces, external affairs officers, non-residents, residents of the federal capital territory	Federal	Federal	Federal
Value added tax (Sales tax before 1994)	Federal	Federal/State	Federal/State
Company tax	Federal	Federal	Federation Account
Stamp duties	Federal	State	State
Gift tax	Federal	state	state
Property tax and ratings	State	State/Local	State/Local
Licenses and fees	Local	Local	Local
Motor park dues	Local	Local	Local
Motor vehicle	State	Local	Local
Capital transfer tax	Federal	State	State
Pools betting and other betting taxes	State	State	State
Entertainment tax	State	State	State
Land registration and survey fees	State	State	State
Market and trading license and fees	State	Local	Local

Source: Salami, A (2011), pp.29-30.

The Table 5.3 above shows that federal government controls bulk of the taxes. This federal domination of the taxes has attracted demands by states for re-adjustment. As the Table 5.3, has shown, there have been no fundamental changes in the tax types since attainment of independence in 1960.

This implies that the tax types have remained virtually the same while change had occurred in the right to the income. For example, prior to 1959, regional governments had rights to 100 percent mining rights and royalties but with production and exportation of oil in 1958, and based on Raisman Commission suggestions, in 1959, this was distributed as follows: mineral producing region (50%), Federal (20%) and Distributable Pool Account, DPA, (30%). Moreover, sales tax to which states until now had 100 per cent right was replaced by value added tax (VAT) in 1994 (Salami, 2011).

5.3. 3.1 Revenue Allocation

Revenue allocation is the sharing of revenue accruing to the government of a federation between or among different tiers of government. Salami (2011) defines revenue allocation as the re-distribution of fiscal capacity between the various levels of government or the disposition of fiscal responsibilities between tiers of government. Similarly, Mai-Lafia (2010), Akeem (2011) and Ikeji, (2011) define revenue allocation as the allotment of generally collected revenue among various levels of government in the federation to reflect the structure of fiscal federalism.

Revenue allocation is a thorny issue in a federation because of the dispute over the appropriate formula and basis of allocation among the component units. Ugoh, Ukpere and Ashiwhobel (2012) contend that in most federating states, the constituent units always have disputes with the general government over financial issue and this issue bordered on securing enough resources to discharge its constitutional assigned functions.

In Nigeria, this issue has polarised the country. There are groups who opposed the present percentage allocated to oil producing states because it affected the amount of resources they received from the federation account and therefore they demanded its abolition. The opponents are from the northern part of the country and they attributed the underdevelopment of the region to present revenue allocation formula.

For instance, one of the scion of the north, erstwhile governor of Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) and now the Emir of Kano, Sanusi Lamido Sanusi (Mohammad Sanusi II), asserted that the low financial allocation to the north was responsible for the underdevelopment of the region and the activities of Boko Haram (cited in Adegami, 2013).

Similarly, the immediate past governor of Niger state Dr Babangida Aliyu attributed the state of development of the region (North) to poor allocation of revenue receipt from the federation account and called for the abolition of 13 per cent derivation and more allocation to the region (cited in Adegami, 2013). Another Northern scion, Dr Junaid Mohammed argued that the current revenue allocation cannot promote peace because of its lop-sidedness. In his words “look at the revenue allocation formula and tell me how this revenue allocation formula can ever allow peace and stability in any

country, not just in Nigeria, which already they say is an artificial creation” (Mohammed, 2012).

The South-South geo-political responded to the call for the scrapping of 13 per cent derivation and increase in revenue allocation to the north. A Niger Delta campaigner, Alhaji Mujahid Dokubo-Asari, asserts that:

...very soon, we in the Niger Delta shall commence what we call operation occupy Niger Delta resources; once that starts, we shall lead a protest to the president with a warning that no dime of our oil money should henceforth, be sent to the north which has all these years, criminally manipulated the Nigerian state to the extent of claiming more population than the south, a situation that has resulted in the parasitic accumulation of our resources to their desolate local government areas which are mere structural entities without human beings (cited in Adegbamì, 2013, p.142).

Similarly, reacting to northern call for abolition of the 13% derivation to the oil producing states in the Niger Delta, a renowned Nigeria constitutional lawyer, who incidentally is from the Niger Delta region, Professor Itse Sagay remarked that:

I have been following the debate like others; unfortunately, those who speak on behalf of the Niger Delta on the issue have failed to hit the nail on the head. They should be bold enough to ask their northern colleagues, where the nation’s revenue comes from- instead of caressing the issue rather cautiously. The northern part of this country does not contribute anything to the national purse. If the area that produces the resources has just a token of 13 percent, the remaining 87 percent is gift to the entire nation, particularly the North that has nothing to show for its existence. The South-East and South-West brings minor but the South-South contributes 91 percent. The posture of the northern governors is the height of ingratitude and insult on the people of the oil-producing areas because they would have been bankrupt if not for the revenue that has been accruing to them from the proceeds of oil and gas. You will observe that because of the long stay of the north in power at the centre, they manipulated the process and cornered these blocs to the

disadvantage of the south; today, you have all juicy oil blocs in the hands of the north (cited in Adegbami, 2013, p. 143).

In his own response to the issue, Dr Fredrick Fasehun, founder of Odu'a People Congress, stated that:

At that time, we had the groundnut pyramid; we had cocoa pyramid, palm oil, and those who owned the commodities enjoyed 50 per cent derivation. Why have we changed that figure? At some point, the figure went as low as three per cent. That was not fair. That is why some of us started agitating for a national conference to reorder and restructure the country, to make it a truly federal state, where there will also be fiscal federalism (cited in Adegbami, 2013, p.143).

The above comments by various personalities from the North and South of the country gave credence to the contentious nature of revenue allocation and its polarisation of the country along north and south divides. It also acts as an impetus for the Niger Delta elite to demand for the reform of the system.

5.3.3.1.1 Principles of Revenue Allocation

Several principles are being used in the disbursement of revenue among the federating units in Nigeria and some of these principles are briefly discussed below.

- i. **Need:** The development of a state is influenced by the resources it can generate. The state requires financial and other resources to maintain existing facilities and develop new ones. Therefore, a state with more needs should be allocated more resources than others.
- ii. **Even Development:** In any federation, there is disparity in terms of development among the component units. The principle ensures that growth

and development are spread among the federating units by sacrificing efficiency in the form of reduced overall growth.

- iii. Independent Revenue: It states that each tier of government should be able to raise and keep some of its revenue for its own use. In Nigeria, most of the states rely on statutory allocation from the federation account and their internally generated revenues (IGRs) are very poor. This accounted for why some of the states are not viable.
- iv. Equality of State: states are not equally endowed. Some are blessed with numerous natural and human resources, but others are not. Some are developed and others are developing. Therefore, the principle stipulates that revenue should be shared equally.
- v. Absorptive Capacity: It states that funds should be given to those states that can judiciously make use of them.
- vi. Population: This principle states that state with more population should attract more resources irrespective of their contribution to the general purse.
- vii. Derivation: It stipulates that state from which bulk of the revenue is derived from should receive more revenue than other states that contribute less to the general purse (FGN, 1999; Edevbie, 2000).

The Table 5.4 summarises the various Fiscal Commissions set up in the country to find appropriate formula for the sharing of revenue between the central government and the federating units since 1946 and their recommendations.

Table 5. 4

Revenue Allocation Commissions and their Recommendations

Commission	Recommended criteria	Other Basic Features of Recommendations
Phillipson, 1946	i) derivation. ii) even progress	Balance after meeting central Government's budgetary need allocated to regions
Hicks-Philipson, 1951	i) derivation. ii) fiscal autonomy iii) Needs, and iv) National interest	Proportion of specified duties and taxes allocated to regions on the basis of derivation, special grant capitalization, education and police
Chick, 1951	i) Derivation ii) fiscal autonomy	Bulk of revenues from import duties and excise to the regions on the basis of consumption and derivation
Raisman, 1958	i) derivation ii) Fiscal autonomy. iii) Balance development iv) Need	Proportion of specified revenues distributed on the basis of derivation. creation of distributable pool account (DPA) with fixed regional proportional shares: North 40%, west 31%, east 24%, and Southern Cameroun 5%.
Binns, 1964	Same as above plus financial comparability	Composition of DPA relative share slightly altered, North 42%, East 30%, West 20% and Mid-West 8%
Dina 1968	i) Even development ii) Derivation iii) Need iv) minimum responsibility	Special grant account introduced, recommended the establishment of planning and fiscal commission. Recommendation rejected.

of government

Decree No. 13 of 1970	i) population 50% ii) Equality of states 50%	Export duties states reduced from 100% to 60%.
Decree No. 9 of 1971	Same as above	Transferred rents and royalties of offshore petroleum mines from the states to the federal government.
Decree No. 6 of 1975	Same as above	Onshore mining rents and royalties to states reduced from 45% to 20%. Remaining 80% to the DPA. Import duties on motor spirit and tobacco to be paid 100% into the DPA. 50 Of excise duties to be retained by the federal Government, 100% to DPA.
Decree No. 15 of 1976	Same as above	Regional proportion share of DPA split among the 12 new states, 6 Northern states receive 7% each, East and Western states share in accordance with relative population
Aboyade, 1977	i) Equality of access 25%. ii) National minimum standard 22% Absorption Capacity 20% iv) Independent revenue 18%	Replaced DPA with federation account. Fixed proportional share of this account between the federal 57%, states 30%, Local Government joint account created.

v) Fiscal efficiency
15%

Okigbo	Same as above	It suggested 53 % to federal government, 30% and 10% to state and local government respectively and 7% as special fund to be distributed among Federal Capital Territory, mineral producing areas, derivation revenue equalisation and ecological problems.
1981 Act	Same as above	Federation account to be shared: federal Government 55%, State Government 30.5%, Local Government 10%, special fund 4.5%
Decree No. 49 of 1989	Same as above	Federation account to be shared: federal Government 55%, State Government 32.5%, Local Government 10%, special fund 2.5%
Danjuma Commission 1988	Same as above	Equality of states 40%. Population 30%. Social development effort 10%. Tax effort 10%. Land mass%.
Decree No. 49 of 1989	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Equality of states 40%. ii) Population 30% iii) Internal revenue effort 10% iv) Land mass 10% 	Federation account to be shared: federal Government 47%, State Government 10%, Local Government 15%, special fund 8%

v) Social Development
factor 10%

Decree No. 3 of January 1992	Same as above	Federation account to be shared: federal Government 48.5%, State Government 24%, Local Government 20%, special fund 7.5%
2009	Same as above	Federation account to be shared: federal Government 48.5%, State Government 24%, Local Government 20%, special fund 7%

Source: Akujuru, (2015), p. 24

Table 5. 5

Federal-State Shares of Proceeds from Distributable Pool Account/Federation

Year	Producing state (Region).	Distribution Pool/ Federation
	Percent (%)	Account Percent (%)
1960-69	50	50
1969-71	45	55
1971-75	45 (minus offshore)	55(plus offshore)
1975-79	20 (minus offshore)	80(plus offshore)
1979-81	-	100
1982-92	1.5	98.5
1992-99	3	97
1999-date	13	87

Source: Akujuru (2015), p.26

A cursory examination of table 5.5 above shows that derivation has been the basis of allocation of revenue when it was first recommended in 1946 but it was removed in the 70s as one of the principles of distribution of revenue. The Table 5.5 above sheds more light on the percentage allocated to derivation and how this has been declining over the years. As Table 5.5 above shows that from 1960-1969, the regions received 50% of revenue on products got from the regions. That is 50% derivation. This declined to 20% excluding offshore by 1979. Between 1979 and 1981, there was nothing in form derivation for the oil-producing states. However, in 1992, 1.5% was set-aside as derivation for the oil-bearing states, this was increased to 3% between 1992 and 1999 and from 1999 to date 13%.

It is important to note that the present revenue allocation among the tiers of government which is stated below is a fallout of the Supreme Court nullification of the proposed revenue allocation recommended by the Revenue Mobilisation, Allocation and Fiscal Commission (RMAFC). During the Obasanjo's presidency, the RMAFC submitted to the National Assembly a revenue sharing formula of 41.3% to the Federal Government, 31% to the States and 16% to the Local Governments. The Commission further suggested 11.7% as Special Funds. The Special Funds soon became a subject of litigation and the Supreme Court of Nigeria nullified it.

In nullifying the Fund, the Supreme Court pointed out that under the present legislation on revenue allocation, it is illegal to make provision for Special Funds in drawing up a revenue allocation formula. The judgment of the Supreme Court created a vacuum and consequently, the president put into effect an Executive Order that brought in a

distinct revenue allocation of 56 percent to the Federal Government, 24.72 % to the States and 20.60% to the Local Governments (Akuruju, 2015; Suberu, 2004). The states opposed the large allocation to the Federal Government, making the latter to cut its figure to the current revenue allocation in operation today which is stated below:

- Federal Government 52.68 percent
- State Government 26.72 percent
- Local Government 20.60 per cent (Akuruju, 2015).

5.3.2.2.1 Spearheading the Basis and Review of Revenue Allocation Formula

An examination of revenue allocation issue in Nigeria shows that no acceptable formula was agreed upon by both the centre and the component units and this accounted for instability in the fiscal system. The elite from the Niger Delta were upset by the failure of successive administrations in the country to attach more weight to derivation or upward review of the derivation principle. At the 2005 constitutional conference they demanded an upward review of the derivation to 25%, in the first instance, which was expected to be increased to 50% after five years and eventually 100% at some time in the future (Odubajo, 2011).

The elite from Northern part of the country vehemently opposed the demands by the elite from the Niger Delta. The elite from the north felt that much has been conceded to the region and as a result the delegates from the region (Niger Delta) staged a walkout of the conference. However, the 2005 conference recommended increase in derivation to 17% in the interim pending the outcome of expert commission.

Similarly, the 2014 conference recommended that government should set-up a technical committee to determine the appropriate percentage on derivation and other issues such as special intervention funds and issues of reconstruction and rehabilitation of areas ravaged by insurgency (The Premium Times, 2014). As at the time the report was submitted to the Jonathan administration, the country was already preparing for 2015 General Election and electioneering campaign was on and the issue of implementation of the report became a campaign issue. In other words, the implementation of the 2014 National Dialogue was politicised.

Thus, the recommendations of the conference were not implemented. The present administration which succeeded the Jonathan administration after the defeat of the latter in the 2015 General Election remarked that the report of the conference has been confined to the archives. In the words of President Buhari:

I advised against the issue of National Conference. You would recall that ASUU was on strike then for almost nine months. The teachers in the tertiary institutions were on strike for more than a year, yet that government had about N9billion to organise that meeting (National Conference) and some (members) were complaining that they hadn't even been paid. I never liked the priority of that government on that particular issue, because it meant that what the National Assembly could have handled was handed to the Conference, while the more important job of keeping our children in schools was abandoned. That is why I haven't even bothered to read it or ask for a briefing on it and I want it to go into the so-called archives (Umoru & Nwabughio, 2016).

Responding to the role the elite played in the struggle for the increased in the revenue allocation formula. The majority of those that took part in this study gave kudos to their elite for being in the vanguard for spearheading the upward review of the revenue

allocation and insisting that derivation should be the basis of allocation. An interview 002, a Youth divulged that:

We must thank our leaders, notably Attah, Ibori, Alamiyeseigha and others who stood their ground at the risk of their lives to insist that the powers that be at that time must implement the 13% derivation principle and at any available opportunity they had, vigorously sensitize the people on the need to demand for equity in the allocation of revenue (Interview in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State, 3/5/16).

Likewise, another interview 003, Youth stated that:

The leaders from this region deserved our praise. They have done wonderfully well in some areas and have performed woefully in others. They have shown commitment to the struggle by working together as one to fight for what belongs to us all and take the federal government to task on the need to address the myriads of problems confronting the region and also find an amicable solution to the inequity in revenue distribution to the Niger Delta region. However, they still have a lot to do if we are to achieve our goal of self-determination (Interview in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State, 3/5/16).

The statements above highlighted the positive contributions of the elite of the region to efforts to attract more funds for the development of the region and the unity of purpose displayed by the elite despite their differences in ethnic, religious and political affiliations. They were able to unite and speak with one voice and champion the problem of the region.

In response to another question on current revenue allocation formula and principle, all those interviewed for this study agreed that there was need for the present revenue allocation to be reviewed so that more resources would be allocated to the states. They accused the major ethnic groups of changing the rule of the game when oil became the mainstay of the Nigerian economy whereas when agricultural products such as cocoa,

groundnut and cotton, rubber and palm oil were the livewire of the nation's economy derivation was applied.

Commenting on this, one of the interviewee 005 Lawyer/ Politician noted that:

The oil producing communities bear the brunt of oil exploration activities and the compensation given to them is a paltry 13 % per cent derivation. That's unjust! When groundnut and cotton were produced in the North, cocoa and rubber in the West, palm oil and kernel in the East, the region of origin enjoyed a substantial return on these products. For example, 50 per cent was the derivation but when oil became the major foreign exchange earner, this principle was downplayed. It was reduced to zero per cent, later one per cent, later three and now 13 per cent. And even the 13 per cent has not trickled down to the oil-bearing communities (Interview at Warri, Delta State, 30/5/16).

Another interviewee 003 Youth disclosed that:

You see, the 13 per cent derivation allocated to the oil producing states is not commensurate with what the nation is benefiting from the region. Prior to oil being the major exchange earner for this country, the derivation for those regions producing the major cash crops at that time was 50 per cent. But today, it is 13 per cent and our people have been calling for an upward review, so that we can have more resources for the development of our region (Interview in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State, 3/5/16).

The above quotes brought to the fore the effect of oil activities on the oil-bearing communities, the meagre compensation paid by the transnational oil companies to the oil producing communities and the inequity in the distribution of proceeds of oil derived from the region. The statement also revealed the inconsistency in government policy as regards the principle of derivation and the inability of government to ensure that the 13 % derivation was used to develop the oil producing areas.

This finding resonates in the works of scholars such as Mbanefoh and Egwaikhide (1998), Obi (1998), Ibodje, (2008), Ehwarieme (2011), Ibaba (2011), Roberts (2013) and many others.

According to Mbanefoh and Egwaikhide (1998), at independence, derivation was 50 percent but commencing from 1970, it was gradually reduced and by 1984, the derivation share of revenue allocation was 1.5 percent. This was a manoeuvre to transfer development funds out of the region.

Similarly, Roberts (2013), contended that derivation was the basis of disbursement of revenue in the mid-70s but with the ascendancy of oil the intellectuals of the majority ethnic groups considered it as disproportionately favouring the minority oil producing states and hence de-emphasising its use in allocation of revenue. The Aboyade Technical Committee and Okigbo Commission both in their reports opposed the continued use of derivation in revenue allocation. This injustice prompted the elite of the region particularly the governors of the region to demand for the control of their resources and restructuring of the country (Roberts, 2013).

5.4 Political Restructuring

This segment of the study examines the agitation for political restructuring of the polity and this stems from the defective federal structure and the manipulation of the system by the dominant majority ethnic groups. This and many other issues are discussed in the following sections:

5.4.1 Centralisation of Power and Hegemony by Majority Ethnic Groups

The dominant narrative on political restructuring in Nigeria is that the country is poorly structured. That is, there is concentration of powers at the centre to the detriment of the component units.

The structural defects in the Nigerian federal system has been attributed to long years of military rule which was dominated by the majority ethnic group particularly the north (see Table 5. 6) which used its position to advance the interest of the group and denied the rest of the federation especially the region that produced the golden eggs the fruit of its labour in terms of resources for its development. The table 5.6 below shows the list of the Nigerian past and present leaders, their states, geo-political zones and the duration in office.

Table 5.6

Nigerian Past and Present Leaders Since 1960

S/No	Leader	Nature of Regime	State of Origin	Geo-Political Zone	Tenure
1	Tafawa Balewa	Civilian	Bauchi	North-East	1960-1966
2	J.T.U. Aguiyi Ironsi	Military	Abia	South-East	1966
3	Yakubu Gowon	Military	Plateau	North-Central	1966-1975
4	Murtala Mohammed	Military	Kano	North-West	1975-1976

5	Olusegun Obasanjo	Military	Ogun	South-West	1976-1979
6	Shehu Shagari	Civilian	Sokoto	North-West	1979-1983
7	Muhammadu Buhari	Military	Katsina	North-West	1984-1985
8	Ibrahim Babangida	Military	Niger	North Central	- 1984-1993
9	Ernest Shonekan (Interim)	Civilian	Ogun	South West	- 1993
10	Sani Abacha	Military	Kano	North-West	1993-1998
11	Abdulsalam Abubakar	Military	Niger	North- Central	1998-1999
12	Olusegun Obasanjo	Civilian	Ogun	South-West	1999-2007
13	Umaru Yar'adua	Civilian	Katsina	North-West	2007-2010
14	Goodluck Jonathan	Civilian	Bayelsa	South- South	2010-2015
15	Muhammadu Buhari	Civilian	Katsina	North-West	2015-to date

Source: Compiled by the Author

The table 5.6 above shows that majority of those who have piloted the ship of Nigeria's nation were from the Northern part of the country and the other parts of the country especially the minorities from the Niger Delta who before 2010-2015 had no one from the region were dissatisfied with the northern hegemony.

The objection of the elite from the region as the analysis in the preceding sections and subsections have shown which we need not repeat here is that derivation which was a major pillar in revenue allocation of resource in the 1950s- late 60s had been downplayed in revenue allocation and because of this, the region has less resource for its development. They also objected to their continue marginalisation in national politics. Thus, the current federal system is defective as it concentrates too much power and resources at the centre.

Most of the interviewees called for the restructuring of the polity. That is, devolution of powers from the centre to the component units. They argued that the central government should devolve some of its current powers in the exclusive list to the component units. Besides, there were those who supported the return to the federal practice and structure of the First Republic and others who wanted the practice of federalism of that era. One of the interviewee 005 Lawyer/ Politician disclosed that:

As it is now, the component units cannot discharge their responsibility, they have to go cap-in-hand to the central government for bail out in order to pay salaries of their workers. If you can recall, the federal government has bailed out these states on two separate occasions. This cannot continue, something drastic, need to be done. Thus, the need for restructuring. The central government should devolve some of its power to the constituent units. I am not in support of self-determination as being canvassed by some groups in the region. What I am in support is the type of federalism we operated in the first republic where the component units enjoyed enormous autonomy (Interview at Warri, Delta State, 30/5/16).

The quoted response shows the need for financial autonomy for the component units of the Nigerian federation including the Niger Delta region, which is spearheading the

protest for the reform of the federation. As the above quotation has shown the constituent units are in financial difficulties or problems which necessitated them appealing to the central government to assist them in order to pay their staff.

This non-viability of the state because of centralisation of resources led to the renewal agitation to the return of the practice of federalism of the First Republic in Nigeria. An Interviewee 002, Youth said that:

I think we are long overdue for that; the present federal set-up is not the best for the development of our country. It makes some component units to be lazy and feed on the rest of others who are productive. All the states in Nigeria are endowed with one resources or the other, just as we in this region are blessed with oil and gas, in other states of the federation, there are places where oil has been discovered like Lagos, Kogi, Chad Basin, and others have solid minerals which have not been explored. I think we should be allowed to take control of our resources and manage them for the betterment of our people and pay taxes to the government. That is what I call an economic component of the restructuring. The political aspect of this restructuring is that the present states of the federation should be restructured into about twenty states based on ethnic nationalities and similarity in culture by so doing the new states or region or whatever you call them can have a new lease of life and be able to discharge their responsibilities to their people (Interview in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State, 3/05/16).

The quote above highlighted the demerits of the current political system or structure which makes it imperative to change or restructure it and also a clarion call to other states of the federation to exploit their abundant resources found in their domains. In addition, a new federation or political arrangement that would be based on ethnic nationalities was advocated. This contrasts with present territorial federation.

Similarly, interviewee 003, Youth maintained that:

I won't support the idea of going back to the region. Though I am in total support of the practice of federalism of that era when the regions had autonomy and also resources which they used to advance the course of their people. The present political restructuring should tend towards that type of federalism (Interview in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State, 3/5/16).

The above statement reaffirmed the views expressed by previous participants on the restructuring of the polity in line with the practice of federalism of the First Republic but differed on the structure of the federation.

In the same vein, Chief Edwin Clark in a published interview advocated for fiscal federalism for the federating units as part of the restructuring of the polity. In his words:

Restructuring is not a new issue, it has been around for a long time, even at the conference in Britain in the 50s. What is restructuring? We are asking for fiscal federalism, where a region takes 50 percent of what it produces while the remaining 50 percent will be shared with the federal. This was what happened with the cocoa money that came to Obafemi Awolowo in abundance as he took half of it, same with the money from the groundnut pyramid which came to Ahmadu Bello, who took half of it. We can't have a country where there is so much discrimination, so much imbalance, so much irregularity. What we are saying is that let's have a federation like the American system. America has 50 states today, we have 36 and all states may not be equal like we have in Nigeria (Clark, 2016).

The comment further established the demands of the people of the region for equitable revenue sharing and a political arrangement like the older federation that would grant the federating units financial autonomy. This is reiterated in Joseph Evah's statement stated below:

What the people of Niger Delta are fighting is our system which allow oppression of the people. We need to review our current

federal structure. We need to practice true federalism. Unless we are deceiving ourselves, the present federalism which we are operating is seriously flawed (Evah, 2016).

Supporting the views expressed by the interviewees and secondary interviews, Arowosegbe (2006) maintains that the clamour for restructuring was to reduce the excessive over bearing powers of the central government through the merger of existing states into bigger ones. Similarly, the Pro-National Conference (PRONACO) cited in Odoshimokhe (2013) recommended that power should be devolved to units to prevent over centralisation of power at the centre. Besides, the country should be reconstituted into 18 nationality based regions. The federating units should be based on unique identities and cultural contiguity and be vested with the power to create state, provinces and local governments.

Thom-otuya (2013) called for proper delineation of powers between the centre and the federating units. The central government powers should be limited to defence, currency, foreign affairs, etc. Akinyemi (2001) advocated for the return to the golden era of Nigerian federalism which he termed period of competitive federalism. This was when each region had its own constitution, its own coat-of-arms, and its agent-general in London.

In addition, each region allowed its local government authorities to have its own local police force. Furthermore, the regions controlled the revenue derived from their resources and surrendered only a percentage to the federal government. While Osisu

(2015) called for the merger of the present thirty-six states into six regions with autonomy granted to them and a federation of two tiers (federal and region) as against the present three tiers of government namely federal, state and local governments.

5.5 Summary

This chapter has analysed the meaning of resource control and from the analysis, there are different meaning of the term. There are three types of resource control namely: absolute, principal and increased revenue allocation and some of the reasons for the clamour for resource control are among others, environmental degradation, lack of social amenities, inequity in the distribution of proceeds from the oil wealth, lack of participation in oil and gas sector.

This demand for resource control has led to improvement in MNOC corporate social responsibility, more attention is now given to the region through the various intervention agencies set-up by the federal government. Nevertheless, the demands have been a publicity stunt by the elite aimed at gaining support from the people of region and to cover up for their lack of initiatives and policies that could transform the region from her present state of underdevelopment to one of the most developed part of Nigeria.

The issue of political restructuring of the polity is also examined and a recurring decimal in the discussion is the defective nature of the current federal set-up which has necessitated the call for its reform. The argument is that the current federal system is centralized and the need for non-centralised federal structure where the component

units will be financially autonomous to discharge their constitutionally assigned responsibilities. These demands have been supported by all the theories used for the study.

The rationale behind the agitation for resource control and political restructuring have been supported by the frustration-aggression theory while resource curse theory makes us to understand that the inhabitant of a place where resources are located would always demand for a better deal. The elite theory assumptions about the inevitability and desirability of the elite in a society and because the decisions or action they take make or mar society, their role in the Niger Delta imbroglio cannot be overlooked and this has been clearly demonstrated in the study.

As the curtain draws on this chapter, the next chapter examines resource management by the elites, which is one of the controversial issues as opinions are divided as to the level of transparency and accountability in the management of resources by the Niger Delta Elites.

CHAPTER SIX

ELITE AND THE MANAGEMENT OF OIL-WEALTH

6.1 Introduction

This chapter is a follow-up to the previous ones and examines the role of the elite in the economy sphere. It addresses research question number four which states that: how transparent and accountable are the elite of Niger Delta in the management of oil proceeds of the region? Thus, the chapter centres on elite management or mismanagement of the resources of the country and that of the Niger Delta. In other words, this chapter examines thoroughly how the proceeds from oil wealth and other revenues accrue to both the country and the region have been managed by the elite both at the centre and the region where the 'black gold' is located but emphasis will be more on the regional elite from the Niger Delta region. It is important to note that this chapter will focus essentially on corruption. Though, there are different types of corruption such as petty, grand, systemic, bureaucratic and political. The chapter focuses on political corruption by the elites at both centre and the region. To examine this, the researcher will look at what the situation is at the centre and zeroes on the region. As earlier pointed out, attention will be more on the regional elite. The next section examines the corruption among the elites at the centre.

6.2 Elite and Corruption in the Nigeria

Scholars have defined political corruption in various way. Khan (1996, p. 12) defines political corruption as a “behaviour that deviates from the formal rules of conduct governing the actions of someone in a position of public authority because of private-regarding motives such as wealth, power, or status.” Similarly, political corruption refers to the “use of public power to advance the private again while subverting political process or while damaging, subverting or eroding what is distinct to the political sphere” (Navot, 2015, p. 2).

Political corruption also refers to any conduct that departs from a recognised rule with regards to public trust and it entails the theft of public confidence by both elected and non-elected officer holders (Mohammed, 2013). Therefore, political corruption may be defined as the abuse of office by public servants both elected and nominated for private gain. It entails misappropriation, diversion of funds, mismanagement and embezzlement of public funds.

Tijani (2008) argues that whatever Nigeria has or has not become, it is due primarily to the deeds and or misdeeds of its leaders. This implies that the poor state of development of the country and other myriads of problems confronting the country can be laid squarely at the door step of the leaders. In other words, deficit in leadership in terms of commitment, selflessness and political will to take the bull by the horn are lacking in Nigerian leaders and that have been responsible for the situation in which the country finds itself. Achebe (1983), corroborates this assertion by saying that Nigeria major problem is leadership. Therefore, the Niger Delta region also faced leadership problem.

Hence, the elite of Niger Delta extraction are responsible for the problem confronting the region because of their misplaced priority or their failure to prioritise the needs of their people but instead they compounded the problems of the region through corrupt practices such as misappropriation of fund, which deprived the region the needed resources for its development (Ogbeidi, 2012; Suleiman, 2013). But before examining the issue of corruption at the micro level, it is important to look at it from the macro level.

Nigeria has consistently been rated as one of the most corrupt nation by the Transparency International (see table 6.1 for details). As the table below shows for three consecutive years, Nigeria occupies 136th position (2014-2016) scoring 27, 26 and 28 in 2014, 2015 and 2016 respectively and thus making her one of the most corrupt nation in the world.

This is not a cheering news for Nigeria at all, as it makes the nation a laughing stock in the comity of nations. Despite the negative prominent position occupies by Nigeria on the Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index (CPI) over the years, it is difficult to obtain information showing the actual level of corruption in the country. But what is certain is that corruption has dealt a great blow to both Nigeria and the oil belt region of the country.

Table 6. 1

Nigeria's Corruption Perception Index 2005-2016

S/No	Year	Score	Rank	Number of Country
1	2005	1.9	152	158
2	2006	2.2	142	163
3	2007	2.2	147	179
4	2008	2.7	121	180
5	2009	2.5	130	180
6	2010	2.4	134	178
7	2011	2.4	143	183
8	2012	31	139	176
9	2013	30	144	177
10	2014	27	136	175
11	2015	26	136	168
12	2016	28	136	176

Source: Adopted from Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index Reports 2005-2016¹

It poses a threat to the development of Niger Delta and the country at large; it has robbed the country and the Niger Delta region huge sums of money (Babalola, 2014). The Nigerian novelist Chinua Achebe (1983) of blessed memory, noted that as much as 60% of the country's wealth was eaten by corruption and this was enough to "paralyse Nigeria in every sinew and every limb" (Achebe, 1983, p.43). Corruption has also increased the cost of administration in the country and thereby making

¹ The 2005- 2011 reports of the ranking of countries were based on 10 points and countries with less than 5 points were considered to have serious corruption problem. From 2012 to date, it is based on 100 points ranking and below 50 points indicate serious corruption problem.

governance to be expensive and this is the true positions of all levels of governments in the country. The analysis that follows shows how the country and the region of our study find themselves in their present predicaments.

6.2.1 Misuse of Oil Revenue or Income

Primitive accumulation of capital by the country's elite has been responsible for the state of development of the country and the genesis of this dates to colonial times, when the warrant chiefs appointed by the British colonial administrators used their position to collect illegal tax and gifts from the people. After independence in 1960, corruption became endemic, because of longing for power by the political elite (Alabi, 2010). In the last sixty years, Nigeria generated over US\$600 as revenue from oil and yet all critical infrastructure are in state of decay (Obi, 2010).

Resources have been diverted, misappropriated, embezzled and in most cases outright stolen. According to Economic and Financial Crime Commission, the Nigerian elite have mismanaged US\$400 billion in oil revenue in the last forty-five years (cited in Iyare, 2008). Similarly, the Telegraph of London maintained that the looting amounted to a sum equivalent to 300 years of British aid to African continent (cited in Iyare, 2008).

By the same token, former czar of Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC), Nuhu Ribadu, contended that the amount is six times the funds used for the rebuilding of Europe at the end of the Second World War under the Marshal Plan. The implication is that money that would have been used for provision of social amenities were stolen by the elite.

As an American billionaire named Soroa noted:

Resources belong to the people but are run by leaders who don't put the people's welfare ahead of their own, thereby giving rise to resource curse. It is a problem of many countries that are rich in natural resources (The Guardian, 2008, p.4).

6.2.2 Major Cases of Corruption in Nigeria: An Overview

This sub-section of the study analyses regime by regime account of corruption and the personalities involved and the means through which it was perpetrated. Since 1960 when the country became independence, successive administrations whether civilian or military had cases of corruption to contend with. Prior to independence notable politicians like Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe and Chief Obafemi Awolowo were indicted by the commissions set-up to consider their activities in their respective regions (Akude, 2007).

The Justice Sutton Commission blamed Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe for investing state funds in the African Continental Bank in which he was a shareholder and because of this he transferred all his rights in the bank to the Eastern Regional Government. Likewise, Justice Coker Commission charged Chief Obafemi Awolowo for diverting public funds to the tune of €7,200.00 pounds from the Western regional government coffers to his private firm, the National Investment and Property Corporation. The Western Regional Government subsequently took over all the belongings of the firm (Akude, 2007).

One of the reasons for the collapse of the First Republic was corruption and the succeeding administrations were also not free of corruptions. Indeed, the Gowon

administration was toppled because of corruption that characterised his administration. Of the twelve governors that served in his administration ten of them were found guilty of enriching themselves (Osaghae, 2011).

The Second Republic administration of Alhaji Shehu Shagari was dubbed the most corrupt regime in Nigeria (ICG, 2006). It lacked accountability and was marred by cases of kick-back or bribery (a form of corruption in which public official receives gratification from prospective client). Majority of the governors in the Second Republic were jailed by the Special Military Tribunal established by the Buhari administration to try corrupt public official. Majority of these governors were sentenced to between twenty-five and hundred years imprisonment (Ganiyu, Rasak & Taiwo, 2014; Ogege, 2014).

The military government of Olusegun Obasanjo left N2.8 billion Naira in foreign reserve and additional N40.5 billion was brought forth by the Shagari administration, but by the time the military toppled his government in 1983, Nigeria was indebted to the tune of N10.21 billion (Akude, 2007). Corruption was one of the reasons adduced for his overthrow.

The Babangida's administration institutionalised corruption in the country. The governors that served under Gowon and dismissed by late General Murtala Mohammed regime for corruption were reinstated to their ranks and their properties returned to them. The administration could not account for US\$12.4 billion oil windfall (Agbibo & Maiangwa, 2012; Apter, 2005; Ojukwu & Shopeju, 2010). Similarly,

Maduagwu (cited in Ijewereme, 2015) highlighted cases of corruption that marked the Babangida administration to include:

- The US\$2 billion Gulf war windfall in 1991
- The 30% of oil revenue diverted to frivolous uses throughout his administration
- The huge extra budgetary spending. For instance, in 1989 N15.3 billion was spent; in 1990 N23.4; in 1991- N35 billion, 1992- N44.2 billion and in 1993 (August) N59 billion.
- The sum of US\$ 200 million from Aluminium Smelter project was embezzled.
- The wastage of N400 million on his wife pet programme called Better Life for Rural Women project.
- The massive corruption at the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC). For example, US\$101 million for the purchase of strategic storage facilities

From the foregoing cases highlighted above and several others, the Babangida's administration institutionalised corruption in Nigeria (Naswem, 2015; Abati, 2008). In the words of Abati (2008) "his administration not only institutionalised corruption, it is certainly one of the legacies it passed on to future administrations."

General Sani Abacha was one of the most corrupt leaders in Nigeria. He was said to have been involved in direct withdrawal of funds from the Central Banks and other ministries (Adebayo, 2013). According to Guest (cited in Agbiboa & Maiangwa, 2012, p.118), "He used to send trucks round to the central bank with orders that they be filled with banknotes." After his demise, it was reported that he stole over US\$6 billion and his family returned US\$ 700 million looted funds to the Federal Government of

Nigeria (Adebajo, 2008). The Table 6.2 below shows detail magnitude of looting during Abacha's administration.

Table 6. 2

Looting of the Nigerian Treasury under the Abacha's Regime 1993

Bank	Account Name			Balance (CR)
Barclays (London)	Bank	Plc	Levy Account	-
Barclays (London)	Bank	Plc	Ship Acquisition and Ship Building Fund	US\$5,648,410,55
Barclays (London)	Bank	Plc	Rent Account	B£, 1, 447,14255
Barclays (London)	Bank	Plc	London Office Current Account	B£, 288,946,14
Union (London)	Bank	Plc	Levy Account	US\$17,271,783,47
Midland (London)	Bank	Plc	Call Deposit Account	B£ 166,949,31
Midland (London)	Bank	Plc	Fixed Deposit Account	B£ 435,657,47
First Bank Plc (London)			Levy Account	DM 360,500,17
FSB Int. Bank			Levy Account Non-checking	US\$1,396,688,28
UBA Plc (New York)			Private Account	US\$2,367,123,03
FSB Int. Bank			Income Account	US\$7,342,818,60
UBA Plc (New York)			Levy Account	US\$14,888,714,54

Source: Adopted from Ojukwu and Shopeju (2010, p. 20)

An evaluation of corrupt practices under the Abacha administration showed that the administration had perpetrated corruption through kickbacks received from

prospective oil companies, siphoning of funds meant for the repair of refineries, among others.

The General Abdulsalam Abubakar that succeeded Abacha was not saint. Put differently, the administration was also characterised by corrupt practices. The Christopher Kolade Panel set-up by the Obasanjo's administration to review licenses, contract and appointments made under the Abdulsalam regime found out that 4,072 contracts cost Nigeria N635.62 billion as against the N88 billion budgeted for them in the 1998 budget. Also, the Kolade revealed the depletion of the foreign reserve from US\$7.6 billion as at 1998 to US\$ 3.8 billion by May 1999 (Ijewereme, 2015). The Abdulsalam's administration was monumental in terms of corruption as the statistics above have shown.

The Obasanjo's administration that succeeded the Abdulsalam regime was also marred by corruption. According to Human Right Watch (2007), Nigeria lost an average of US\$4 billion to US\$8 billion every year to corruption under the eight years of Obasanjo's presidency. For example, during the administration of former president Olusegun Obasanjo (1999-2007), the federal government received a total sum of N7.4 trillion for the eight years he was in charge and nothing on the ground to show how these massive amounts of resources was expended.

The administration spent N1.9 trillion on power sector and yet electricity remained epileptic. Nigerians have not enjoyed stable electricity. Indeed, there was nothing to

show for this huge investment on power sector as well as other sector to which huge amount of money was invested. (cited in Iyare, 2008).

Alhaji Umaru Yar'Adua succeeded Obasanjo and under him (Yar'Adua) the fight against corruption died down with the change of leadership of the Economic and Financial Crime Commission. The body language of the late president showed he was not keen in the fight against corruption and the replacement of then Chairman of the EFCC and the attempt by the administration to remove the power of prosecution from the two anti-graft agencies by putting them under the office of the Attorney General of the Federation (AGF) were all indication that the fight against corruption died down during the administration. The removal of power of prosecution from these agencies (ICPC and EFCC) means that they had to seek approval of the AGF before prosecuting any public officers (Faboyede, Mukoro, Oyewo & Akande, 2015; Enweremadu, 2010).

After Yar'Adua passed away, Jonathan took over and was later elected the president in 2011. The Jonathan's administration was characterised by massive corruption in the polity. For instance, in the oil sector, an investigation conducted by the National Assembly as part of its oversight function showed that fuel subsidies rose from N346.7 billion in 2008 to N1.7 trillion in 2011. Also, the former Governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria, blew the whistle that the Ministry of Petroleum Resources and the Nigerian National Oil Corporation (NNPC) did not remit into the coffer of government a sum of US\$20 billion being crude oil earning (Owen & Usman, 2015).

Besides, the US\$2.2 billion fund meant for the purchase of arms for Nigerian soldiers to fight insurgency in the North-East was shared among party stalwarts (Egbedi, 2015).

The amount is sufficient to fund the 2016 budgets of Yobe, Ekiti, Edo, Sokoto, Ebonyi and Kebbi (Jimoh, 2016).

In line with the presidential directive that the names of those involved in the looting of the treasury under the administration of Jonathan be published. Alhaji Lai Mohammed, the Honourable Minister of Information released an interim report showing how much cash has been retrieved from the corrupt public officials. The total cash sum of N78, 325,354,631,095.43, US\$185, 119,584.61; £3,508,355.46; and £11, 250 were retrieved from the corrupt officials between May 29, 2015 and May 25, 2016. Also, recovered under item forfeiture to the government were cash and assets and these are: N126, 563,481,095.43; US\$9,090,243,920.15; £2,484,447.55 and £303,399.17. Expected cash to be returned to the country from different countries abroad totalled: US\$321,316,726.1; £6,900,000 and £11,826.11 (Jimoh, 2016).

In a response to the issue of corruption or mismanagement of resources accrued to the nation an Interviewees 008 a Member of a Civil Society Organisation noted that: “That’s the same problem in Nigeria, everybody fending for himself and that of his family. That’s why you would see people embezzling billions of dollars for children yet unborn while others don’t even have a dollar.” (Interview at Tombia, Port-Harcourt, Rivers State, 1/6/16).

Another Interviewee 009 a Chief/CSO remarked that: “When at the federal, it starts doing what we called padding of budget and trying to put in money that is not supposed

to be there, people from the grassroots see this, it gives a wrong orientation.” (Interview at Tombia, Port-Harcourt, Rivers State, 2/6/16).

The quotes above show the endemic nature of corruption in Nigeria and this cut across all levels of government and strata of Nigerian society. It exemplifies the greedy nature of elite who cornered state resources for their immediate family and those yet unborn. The budget padding which was alluded to mean the inclusion of items not in the original estimates approved by the Federal Executive Council for the consideration and approval by the National Assembly. The following section examines cases of corruption in the Niger Delta.

6.2.3 Regional Elite and Corruption in the Niger Delta

This sub-section of the study discusses cases of corruption committed by the ruling elite of the Niger Delta extraction and the mode through which it was perpetrated. The issue of how the elite of the Niger Delta have managed or mismanaged the resources of the region has attracted heated debate among scholars, public policy analysts and members of the public.

It is imperative at this juncture to examine what the situation like in the Niger Delta region and particularly in those states that are the focus of this study. As the saying goes “as the he goat eats yam, the younger ones follow its footstep” (Ojukwu & Shopeju, 2010, p.22).

6.2.3.1 Reasons for Corruption

This segment analyses factors responsible for corruption in the region and identified among others, weak institutions, cultural and greediness as reasons for corruption among the elite in the region.

6.2.3.1.1 Weak Institution

One of the reasons for corruption in the region and the country at large is weak institution. Corruption thrives when legal and political institutions are weak. In Nigeria (Niger Delta inclusive), there are so many inducements in the public realm that leave public servants with wide unobstructed powers to create opportunities for excessive enrichment or use the unrestricted powers at their disposal to manoeuvre the system (Moyosore, 2015; Jacob, 2013). The allocation of large portion of the budget to general administration and security vote by ruling elite of the Niger Delta are modes through which corruption have been committed

6.2.3.1.2 Societal Factors

Furthermore, societal or cultural factor encourages corruption. The traditional culture has adopted the concept of “big man” characterised by flamboyances wealth and several clients. The term “big man” means a person with many dependants to look after, own properties including fleet of cars and all of other things commensurate with his position.

This accounts for why public official engaged in corruption (Moyosore, 2015; Jacob, 2013). The recognition accorded known corrupt public officials by traditional rulers

and religious institutions by award of traditional titles and deacons by religious groups and the celebration of corrupt ex-convicts by the society are indication of societal encouragement of corruption. For instance, when James Ibori, erstwhile governor of Delta State was released from prison after completion of his sentence, he was celebrated by his people (Oni, Akinkuotu, Akinloye, Eniola, Okpare & Udoh, 2016).

6.2.3.1.3 Greediness

Greediness is another reason for corruption. It is greediness that makes the ruling elite of region to embezzle funds meant for the development of the region. This has been demonstrated by the likes of Ibori, Igbinedion and Alamiyeseigha, who enriched themselves through public funds (Mike, 2015; Enweremadu, 2009).

Commenting on the greediness of the elite of Niger Delta extraction, an interviewee 010, Academic stated that “*what is meant for everybody was siphoned by few people and this is responsible for the spate of violence in the region (Interview at Tombia, Port-Harcourt, Rivers State, 2/6/16)*”. The statement clearly showed that the oil wealth which would have been used for the development of all was cornered by few influential in the society.

6.2.1.2 Transparency and Accountability

Transparency and accountability are vital to promotion of good governance in any society. Similarly, Cheema (2005) asserts that transparency and accountability are essential to governance as they protect transparent management of country’s resources. Transparency entails the need for public servants to be ready to provide necessary

information to members of the public who needed such information and for government to be up and doing in providing necessary information to public about government policies and decisions. Put differently, transparency means the process by which both elected and non-elected public servants ensure that the public have access to information concerning government activities. While accountability requires a public servant to be responsible and responsive to the aspiration of the people.

The importance of accountability in government, business cannot be over emphasized. It ensures that public servants, both elected and appointed as well as civil servants are answerable to the people for their actions or deeds. The lack of transparency and accountability in the management of funds of the region accounted for all forms of corruptions in the region.

The two Tables below 6.3 and 6.4 show statutory allocations to the states in the Niger Delta. For instance, table 6.3 shows the amount of monies that South- South geo-political zone which is the economy power house of Nigeria because of its oil and gas received from the federation account.

Table 6. 3

Gross Total Allocation to Geo-political Zones in Nigeria, May 2015-June 2016

S/ No	Geo-political zone	Component states	Amount Received	% share of revenue
1	North-East	Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Taraba and Gombe	N235,156,427,803.36	13.02%

2	North-West	Jigawa, Kano, Kaduna, Katsina, Kebbi, Sokoto and Zamfara.	N321,736,802,931.23	17.81%
3	North-Central	Benue, Kog, Kwara, Nassarawa, Niger and Plateau	N235,656,837,808.96	13.04%
4	South-East	Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo	N194,806,421,319.68	10.78%
5	South-West	Ekiti, Lagos, Oyo, Ondo, Ogun and Osun	N323,640,887,606.67	17.91%
6	South-South	Akwa-Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross-River, Delta, Edo and Rivers	N495,706,518,048.64	27.44%
TOTAL			N1,806,703,895,518.54	100

Source: Compiled and calculated by the researcher from FAAC monthly allocation to States for the year May 2015-June 2016.

As the table shows, the amount allocated to the South-South geopolitical zone constituted 27.44% of the total amount of N1, 806,703,895,518.54. While the South West and North-West came second and third with 17.91% and 17.81% respectively.

The question to ask is has the ruling elite been able to use these resources efficiently and effectively in the improvement of the lives of the people of the region and the answer to this question is no, going by the responses of those that took part in this study and the observation made by researcher during the fieldwork to sites of the study in the region.

The failure of the elite to use these resources (statutory allocation in table 6.3 and 6.4) in an effective and efficient manner is a typical case of resource curse thesis which states that countries with abundance natural resources have slower growth compared with those without abundance natural resource and are also associated with vices such as corruption, instability and so on (Auty, 1993; Blattman & Miguel, 2010; Collier & Hoeffler, 2004; Cotet & Tsui, 2013; Humphreys, 2005; Le Billion, 2001; Lei & Michaels, 2013; Miguel and Satyanath, 2011; Sach & Warner, 1995, 1997, 2001; De Soysa, 2000, 2002; Ross, 2004, 2006; Wegenast, 2013).

The notion of resource curse is closely linked to poor resource management and one of the mechanisms through which resource curse occurs is relevant to this study. Roll (2011) contends that there are three mechanisms through which the resource curse supposedly works and these are Dutch Disease, expansive spending and rentier state mechanisms.

As earlier indicated, the second mechanism is apt to this section of the study. Since the introduction of 13 per cent derivation principle in 2000, there has been a massive inflow of resources in the form of transfer from the central government to the Niger Delta states (see tables 6.3 and 6.4). But this proceeds from oil wealth was not well utilised by the elite.

Table 6. 4

Total Gross Revenue from Federation for the Year 2007-2016

YEAR		2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	TOTAL
S/N	STATE											
1	Akwa Ibom	N132.2 53 billion	N223.1 22 billion	N179.8 77 Billion	N201.40 8. billion	N252. 908 billion.	N271. 573 billion	N303.3 77 billion.	N240.5 6 billion	N161.0 50 billion	N85.54 9 billion	N2,048.6 67 trillion
2	Bayels a	N86.48 2 billion	N154.3 37 billion	N88.43 7 billion	N125.83 0 billion	N198.7 29 billion	N176.4 44 billion	N195.0 17 billion	N164.6 10 billion	N103.6 16 billion	N54.29 9 billion	N1,347.8 01 trillion
3	Delta	N88.27 0 billion	N139.8 40 billion	N148.8 15 billion	N163.40 2 billion	N229.3 38 billion	N188.3 92 billion	N232.2 7 4 billion	N189.9 13 billion	N123.8 38 billion	N70.15 0 billion	N1,504.2 32 trillion
4	Rivers	N199.0 12 billion	N338.9 66 billion	N196.3 82 billion	N179.68 8 billion	N263.1 33 billion	N194.7 41 billion	N255.2 63 billion	N183.7 66 billion	N117.0 37 billion	N62.04 7 billion	N1,992.0 35 trillion

Source: Compiled and calculated by the researcher from Federation Account Allocation Committee (FAAC) monthly revenue allocation for the year 2007- 2016. <http://www.finance.gov.ng> .

In response to the question on transparency and accountability of the elite in the management of the resources. The participants were divided on this. Some were of the views that the elite of the region should not be singled out for this as the issue of transparency and accountability in the management of resources were not peculiar to Niger Delta alone. Others agreed that the elite were not transparent and accountable in the management of the resources of the region. Below are the responses of some of those who expressed the view that the elite of the Niger Delta extraction should not be singled out as the only one who mismanaged the resources of their region. An Interviewee 001 a Traditional ruler noted that:

The central, state and local governments are all guilty of this offence. For instance, under the Obasanjo billions of naira was sunk into the power sector but nothing tangible on the ground to show for the investment made in the sector (Interview at Taylor Creeks, Yenagoa, Bayelsa State, 1/05/16).

In a like manner, an interviewee 003, a Youth divulged that:

The issue of resource mismanagement is not peculiar to this region alone and so we must not see elite from other regions as saint. I think, it is a Nigeria problem. If Nigerian leaders, both past and present have utilised our resources very well, we should have been among the top fifteen in the world today (Interview at Yenagoa, Bayelsa State, 3/05/16).

Another Interviewee 012 Academic, speaking in a high tone that showed he was emotional noted that:

I think the issue of transparency and accountability in the management of the resources is not unique to the Niger Delta alone. People have always asked what elite from this part of the region do with the resource that accrue to the region from the federation account. We should also ask them what they have done with their own. It is an insult, for them to ask us that kind of question (Interview at Mariri, Tarauni, Kano, 16/7/16).

This assertion was reaffirmed by Chief Edwin Clark, a prominent indigene from the region. He queried why the rest of the country should tell them to hold their leaders accountable for the rent that the region has received since the birth of this present democratic dispensation in 1999. He asserted that:

Why this question of saying that the south-south are corrupt? They use the money; they don't use the money. Let's me say this; if the south-south governors are receiving eight billion or seven billion naira, nobody outside the south-south has the right to ask them to account for what they spent the money for. Similarly, the man who is receiving one billion in Yobe or wherever he is, we've not asked him to account for the money he collected from our own area. (Clark, 2016).

On the other hand, other interviewees in this study believed that the elite of the Niger Delta extraction have case to answers in the way they have expended the resources of the region. The quotes below buttress this view point. As one Interviewee 003, a Youth said: The elite of this area have not done well in the way and manner they handle the resource of the region. They are not transparent in the way they handle issues relating to resources.

For instance, in this state (Bayelsa) we don't have access to state financial statement detailing how resources are raised and expended (Interview at Yenagoa, Bayelsa State, 3/05/16)

Another Interviewee 002, a Youth was of the view that the elites were not transparent and accountable in the management of the resources of the region. In his words:

When you ... hear the amount the states receive as a statutory allocation from the federation account, you begin to ask yourself what they have done with the money. Go around the city of Yenagoa and see things for yourself. There are no amenities provided by the various governments who are assigned by the constitution to provide certain services to their people in their areas of jurisdiction and they all receive huge amount of money monthly from the centre. It is very sad that if we at the state and local government levels cannot justify the 13 % derivation and statutory allocation given to us by way of using it to uplift the living condition of our people, then we have no moral right to accuse the centre of wrong doings. We must tell us ourselves the plain truth, our leaders at various tiers of government are unaccountable and transparent in the management of resources accruing to the states. We need to make our leaders be accountable to us (Interview in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State, 03/5/16).

Also, commenting on the lack of transparency and accountability in the management of the resources of the region, an Interviewee 004 a Senior Civil Servant/ CLO in the state revealed that:

When leaderships do not account for the money that they are getting from the national or both national, there is no accountability; there is no proper transparency; they are only on speech making and a kind of window dressing. Then what do you expect? We are doing accountability; the accountability cannot be verified by an independent body (Interview at Secretariat, Yenagoa, Bayelsa State, 4/5/16).

The statements above are clear indication that the elite of the region have not utilised the resources that have accrued to the region for its development. They lamented that the various levels of government in the region have failed to perform and admonished the people of the region not to blame others for their woes but their leaders. Concurring with the position that the elite of the Niger Delta lacked transparency and accountability, the current Minister of State in the Ministry of Petroleum Dr Kachikwu noted that:

...the amount of money that has been out into the Niger Delta over the last 10 years, in papers it is over US\$40 billion. These have come from NDDC; it has come from derivation; it has come from oil companies' investments. Over US\$40 billion, but as I go to the creek, I see no single infrastructure that you can point to, to say this is the result for these investments. So, what it means is that we must begin to do some soul searching ourselves: where did all this money go to? (Ofikhenua, 2016)

The finding from this study is consistent with extant literature. As Table 6.4 above has shown, a considerable sum of money has been received by the four states that are the focus of this study from the federation account and this money has not been properly accounted for or utilised for the development of the region. Akwa Ibom tops the pack with a total gross revenue of N2.048 trillion, closely followed by Rivers with N1.992 trillion, Delta allocated N1.504 trillion and Bayelsa N1.347 trillion between 2007 and 2016.

With this cash flow, one would have thought that the elite would use them wisely to improve the welfare of their people but that was not the case. Corroborating this view point, Joseph Amberkederim of the South-South Elements Progressives Union in an interview with, Daily Independent newspaper asserted that:

The amount of money that has accrued to the South-South governors in the past nine years is enough, more than enough to transform the Niger Delta... If monies are being used judiciously and religiously, the monies that have come to the governors of the South-South today, we would not have the problems we are having in the Niger Delta. Do you know what one billion naira can do in a community? What are these people asking for anyway? Roads, water, electricity, school buildings and furniture for these schools...The corruption among the governors in the South-South is enormous, the stealing is enormous... (cited in Ogundiya, 2011, p.78).

Similarly, Enweremadu (2008) noted that:

These officials have, despite substantial inflow of resources to their region, failed to pursue policies and programmes that would improve the lives of their people. They chose to misappropriate and divert whatever funds are available, to their own personal pockets instead. Governor Alamiyeseigha, who is believed to have diverted close to 1 billion dollars in office, has furthermore filtered away most of the \$2.5 billion he collected as Bayelsa state's share of Nigeria's oil rents on white- elephant projects (p.11).

The above quotes further confirmed our earlier finding that the region has received huge amount of money from the general purse which the leaders have mismanaged or embezzled instead of using it for the provision of social amenities for the people. This finding corroborates the views of Ibaba, Ukaga, and Ukiwo (2012), who argued that the elite lack transparency, openness and accountability in the resource use and management.

This finding is supported by resource curse theory which attributes the over-reliance of government on oil rents rather than taxation from the people for the running of state affairs. The states in the Niger Delta region relied on the statutory grant and 13% derivation allocation from the centre rather than taxation from the indigents. This ensures that the elites have enough resources which they can use anyhow they wish without being queried by the people. Put differently, the elites are not dutiful bound to account for their actions to the people because the people are not the sources of the resources used to run the state affairs. Also, the poor governance in the region exemplified by poor service delivery, corruption, and rising debt profile are all supported by resource curse theory.

6.2.1.2.1 Underdevelopment

As it has been analysed in the preceding section above that the elite have not been prudent in the management of the resources of the region and this has contributed to the violence in the region because money meant for development of the region has been diverted for private purpose and this has further resulted in the underdevelopment of the region.

It has been noted that in oil wealth states, oil never leaves a place the way it finds it. Oil not only shapes the contours of the economy, society, polity but also the environment of the country in which the resource is situated (Watts, 2008).

Several studies have attributed the state of development of the Niger Delta to oil exploration activities of the multinational oil companies (Ibeanu, 2005; Watts, 2008). According to Ibeanu (2005), the discovery and subsequent exploitation of oil has created three paradoxes namely: the paradox of plenty which means the tendency of oil wealth to create poverty; the paradox of security which entails the tendency for national security to undermine the security of the individual or nationals of oil resource nation like Nigeria and lastly, the paradox of development which refers to the supposed development efforts of oil resource nation such as Nigeria to generate underdevelopment. It is disheartening to note that despite the region's contribution of major share to the national purse, the region wallops in poverty, squalor and penury.

Onuoha (2010) argues that there is high prevalence of poverty in the region with over 70 percent of the rural dwellers living at subsistence level. Also, 73 percent of the people lack access to potable water; 94 percent of the people lack access to telephones and primary school enrolment rate below 40 per cent (Ibeanu, 2006). Obi (2010) argues that the Niger Delta is the least developed region in Nigeria.

However, this study found that part of the reasons for the state of underdevelopment of the region is the mismanagement of funds and lack of commitment on the part of the ruling elite to development of the region. The budgetary allocations to social sectors which are key to the advancement of the state is a pointer to this fact.

In 2008-2011, Akwa Ibom allocated N244 billion to general administration which was higher than housing, health and education. A sum of N18 billion was allotted to security votes. While Bayelsa state earmarked N69 billion for general administration, which ranked next to works and transport, but higher than health, education, housing, agriculture, rural development and water supply (Niger Delta Citizens and Budget Platform, 2010; 2013).

There was not much difference in other Niger Delta states. For instance, in Delta state, in 2009-2010, the total sum earmarked for general administration was N39.7 billion, while in the year under review, allocation to both health and education were N15.9 billion and N23.9 respectively (Niger Delta Citizens and Budget Platform, 2010; 2013; 2014).

In River State, for instance, in 2010-2013, the total amount earmarked for health and agriculture was N49.2 and N181.6 billion respectively. While the general administration in the same period attracted N26.2 billion. The total amount assigned to security votes for four years (2008, 2009, 2010 and 2013) was N41.5 billion (Niger Delta Citizens and Budget Platform, 2010; 2013; 2014).

As the sector allocation of the above states have shown the critical social sector, education health and rural development attracted little or low allocation. States are build based on its human resources and any serious leader would attach important to this sector. Unfortunately, this critical sector has not been given serious attention it deserves.

The schools in most of the states visited by the researcher were in dilapidated conditions, inadequate teachers, schools environment not conducive for learning. Commenting on the contribution of the elite to the underdevelopment of the region. An interviewee 010, an Academic stated that the elite are culpable for the state of underdevelopment of the region. In his words:

They played a prominent role in the underdevelopment of the region. Firstly, when contracts are awarded to tarred road or electrify community, they abandoned the projects. Well, but in many cases, they tried to do the project but using inferior materials. They do it half way; they don't complete the project (Interview at Tombia, Port-Harcourt, Rivers State, 2/6/16).

The remark above highlighted how the elite contributed to the underdevelopment of the region through the phenomenon of abandon projects that are found all over the states in the region and reason for the state of those already executed projects. The researcher can testify to this as cases of abandoned and collapsed projects dotted the towns and cities visited by the researcher in the course of fieldwork.

There is no doubt that the region lacks basic amenities such as electricity, roads, schools, potable water, etc. In most of the communities visited by the researcher in the region, there is virtually lack of government presence in the communities. For instance, at Taylor Creeks visited by this researcher and several other communities in Rivers and Delta as well as other riverine areas in the region, there is no visible government presence. That is lack of provision of social amenities by the states and local governments in the region. The oil-bearing communities are indeed neglected by all tiers of government.

The researcher was told by a community leader in one of communities that a culvert project that was embarked upon by Shell, which was uncompleted resulted in the death of a promising member of the community who was running home to inform his parent of his performance in an examination and fell into this uncompleted project which led to its untimely death.

The submission by Babalola (2014) that successive leaders from the area are responsible for the underdevelopment of the region further confirm the findings of this study that the elite cannot be exonerated from the happening in the region because of their failure to wisely use the resources of the region. As Babalola (2014) rightly notes:

The abundance of oil rents seems to make corruption almost inevitable in Nigeria, particularly in the Niger Delta region where politicians have converted the region's share of national revenue into their main source of wealth. With corruption firmly entrenched in public life, oil wealth becomes incapable of transforming the area. This translates to mean that successive leadership in the Niger Delta region is more culpable in the underdevelopment of the region. Nigerian political elite can hardly survive in an environment where corrupt practices are forbidden (p. 126).

In a like manner, former Nigerian President, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, noted that “not much impact has been made on the lives and living standards of most ordinary people of the Niger Delta.” (Peel, 2010, p.19) He blamed the local elite of the region for their failure to bring development to the region. The images below capture deplorable state of infrastructure in the region.



Figure 6. 1 Pupils of Annang Primary School, Ukpom-Abak, Akwa Ibom State.
Source: Ufot (2017).

As the Figure 6.1 shows the pupils learning in an uncondusive environment. There are no desk and chairs and the classroom and the surrounding environment are unclean. This a leading oil earning states in the country.



Figure 6. 2 Kolokuma/Opokuma and Mbiama sections of the East-West road in Bayelsa State

Source: Osahon, (2017).

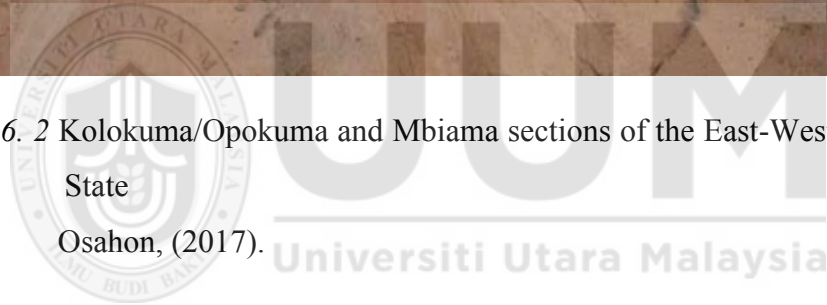




Figure 6. 3 Deplorable Enerhen Junction Road in Warri, Delta State

Source: Omonigho, (2017).



Figure 6. 4 Classrooms Girls Model School, Enwreni, Delta State.

Source: Urhobo Today (2017).



Figure 6. 5 A Dilapidated school in Rivers State

Source: Talsma, (2016)

As the figures above show the state of infrastructure in the region is in a deplorable condition and many have wondered what the political elites in the region have been doing with the resources accrued to the states that they could not address these problems. As some analysts have pointed out that corruption amongst elites accounts for this state of affairs (Babalola, 2014).

6.2.1.1.2 Poverty

Another effect of lack of transparency and accountability in the management of fund is the pervasive poverty confronting the people of the region. Poverty can be described as not being able to meet one's necessity of life such as food, clothing and shelter. According to World Bank poverty means pronounced deprivation in well-being (WDR, 2001).

Ali-Akpajiak and Pyke (2003) see poverty as a pestilence troubling people all over the world and is one of the indicator of underdevelopment. By the same token, Aigbokhan (2000) describes poverty as the inability to achieve a certain minimal standard of living.

The situation in the Niger Delta oil bearing communities fit the above definition or description of poverty. Poverty also motivates people to engage in violence because of their economic needs. Extreme poverty and unemployment make the youth to be potential recruiters by both militia organisation and the politicians who patronised them (Abdu, Cochran, Genet, Ihejirika, Olorunmola & Shyne 2014).

As Abdu et.al (2014) rightly noted that poverty is a grievance when added with inequality as evidenced in the Niger Delta when the poor knows that the oil wealth is enriching their leaders while they (poor) are not benefiting from the oil wealth.

The unemployed youths are vulnerable to join cult groups or being used by the politicians to perpetuate violence. According to one of the respondents in this study, the political class failed to make prudent use of the national cake thereby created underdevelopment, unemployment and poverty and these are the monster of violence

Though oil exploration activities of the TNOC also contributed to this but the regional elite represented by the various states chief executives have not come up with a blue- print that could transform their various states into economic hub of Nigeria. It appears that the measures or steps taken by successive leaders or elite further impoverished the people. The states in the region are well blessed with abundant natural resources apart from oil and gases which remain untapped or not explored for the development of the region.

There is abundance of rubber in the state and none of the political leaders as well as the captain of industries that are indigenes or from the region deemed it fit to establish agro-allied industries that will utilise rubber or palm oil that are abundant in the region and thereby create employment and save foreign exchange which would have been used in the importation of these products.

Moreover, if most of the youths are gainfully employed, poverty and crimes will reduce and many positive things will fall in place. But that is not the priority of the elite as the example of Delta shows. In Delta state under, the immediate past administration of Uduaghan, he pursued policy that lacked encouragement of investors, for instance, the business environment was hostile, tax policy was unfriendly, the state lacked infrastructural amenities and more importantly security problem which the administration could not address. Accordingly, many oil companies relocated to friendly states outside the region.

The Delta State beyond Oil which is a policy aimed at diversifying the economy of the state was a project existing on paper only and it turned out to be another avenue of siphoning the resources of the state (Gbemre, 2015). According to Gbemre (2015), the sixteen years of democratic rule in the state was “a dynasty of corruption of the highest order and impunity, electoral fraud of unimaginable proportions and self-perpetuating government of a ruling cabal of the PDP”

6.2.1.3 Forms of Political Corruption among Selected Ruling Elite in the Niger Delta

The section examines the phenomenon of corruption among some selected ruling elite of the region and modes through which is perpetrated. The analysis is done on state-by-state basis.

6.2.1.3.1 Akwa Ibom

Akwa Ibom is one of the states in the Niger Delta and is the leading oil producing states in the region. It was created in 1987 as one of the two states created by the then military administration of General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida. Since the return to civil rule in 1999, the state has been ruled by three governors namely Obong Victor Attah, Godswill Akpabio and Udom Gabriel Emmanuel. The searchlight will be beamed on Godswill Akpabio’s administration and the reason for this is that, he was the only former chief executive of the state being investigated by the anti-graft agencies (Premium Times, August 5, 2016).

Godswill Akpabio governed Akwa-Ibom for eight years from 2007-2015 and the total revenue accumulations to the state totalling over three trillion Naira (Awak, 2015). He was alleged to have squandered the resources that accrued to the state (National Infinity, August 6, 2015). An examination of the corrupt practices of the administration centred on misappropriation of fund, white elephant projects, and security vote.

(a) Misappropriation of Funds

This implies out-right stealing of public funds in a person's custody. This is one of the channels through which corruption has been committed by the immediate administration of the Godswill Akpabio. The erstwhile governor of the state was accused of embezzling state fund amounting to over N108 billion (Breaking News International, August 8, 2016).

Misappropriation as indicated is an avenue through which resources was siphoned. For instance, in 2011, his administration allocated N195 million naira to purchase buses to transport children home. The same project attracted the sum of N200 million in both the 2011 and 2012 budgets respectively. Unfortunately, not a bus was purchased (National Infinity, August 6, 2015). Also, in 2010 and 2011, N2.5 billion and N2.0 billion respectively were allocated for the construction of Science Park in Uyo the state capital but nothing at the proposed site (National Infinity, August 6, 2015). In 2012, over N100 billion was earmarked in the budget for the establishment of industry in the 31 Local Governments that make up of the state and no industry built in any of the local of the local governments (Awak, 2015).

In a respond to the utilisation of the resources of the region, an interview 001, a Traditional ruler, maintained that the situation in the region was that of “misappropriation and misplaced priority. There are cases where the elite from the Niger Delta states have pocketed the resources of the region.”(Interview at Taylor Creeks, 1/5/16).

Similarly another interviewee 007, a Youth leader noted that “*They are using it to do other things that are not relevant. They use it to buy houses in London, United States, Dubai. They went to Dubai to celebrate wedding, birthday and others.*”(Interview at Diobu, 1/6/16).

The above comments indicated corrupt practices among the ruling elite of the region. It showed that the state resources have been misused by the elite on frivolous things that were beneficial and personal to them.

An elite from the state who headed federal government parastatals set-up for the development of the region was also involved in the mismanagement of the funds. For example, Ambassador Sam Edem unlawfully spent N800 million belonging to the NDDC on sorcery. The said money was given to a sorcerer named Mathew Sonoma to secure his service to getting favourable contracts from the immediate past governor of Akwa-Ibom state, Godswill Akpabio and also to make some sacrifices in order for him to retain his position as NDDC boss (Nnochiri, 2012).

Confirming the corrupt practices by public servants from the state manning federal agencies. An interviewee 001, Traditional said that *“even my brothers who headed some of the parastatals of the federal government established for developing this region are not left out in these social vices called corruption.”* (Interview at Taylor Creek, Bayelsa State, 1/5/16).

The quoted statement above indicated that corruptions are also rife among federal establishment officials who diverted resources for private use as the Sam Edem example has shown.

(b) Projects

The white elephants projects are gigantic projects that attract huge budgetary allocation but have little impact on the lives of the people. The Akpabio’s administration was noted for such projects and these projects were uncompleted and the money budgeted for them had gone down the drain. For instance, Akwa Ibom invested in a multibillion electronic library project described as the first of its kind in Sub-Saharan Africa when the workers in the state were owed several months salaries and unemployment was at alarming rate in the state.

The library remained non-functional after its commission and others like Tropicana Entertainment Centre and Specialist Hospital were uncompleted. Commenting on corruption among the elite in the region, an interviewee, 001, a Traditional ruler averred that:

They (elite) stole the resources meant for the development of the state. For instance, the immediate past governor of one of the states in the region embarked on elephant projects that are not beneficial to the common man on the street. The stadium and acclaimed world class hospital are not meant for the poor and when the governor had an accident, he didn't go to the hospital (Interview at Creek Taylor, Bayelsa State, 1/5/16).

The statement above stressed huge investment made by the governor on projects that were not valuable to the mass of the people and lack of confidence in the professional competence and medical facilities in the country. As the respondent indicated, the governor had to travel abroad for medical treatment. This is an indictment on the governor for not patronising the hospital.

(c) Security Vote

Security vote is a concept that has gained notoriety in Nigerian governance system. It means “funds unconstitutionally appropriated by government at all levels in Nigeria for the purpose of enhancing national security.” (Kumolu, 2013). It has also been defined as “misappropriation and stealing of public funds under the guise of enhancing state security.” (Egbo, Nwakoby, Onwumere & Uche, 2010, p. 1).

From the foregoing definitions, security vote entails fund set aside by the president, governors and local government chairmen for the objective of improving security at different levels of government. Security vote has been abused by different heads at the various levels of government. It has become a conduit-pipe through which resources are siphoned by elected officials and also to perpetuate themselves in office (Egbo, Nwakoby, Onwumere & Uche, 2012).

During his administration, the sum of N1.8 billion was set aside monthly for security vote and it was not used for the improvement of the security of the state. Instead, the fund was employed to intimidate his political opponents (Erahbor, 2010). For example, under him the state witnessed an unprecedented high-profile kidnappings and unresolved assassinations. Majority of the victims were critics of the former governor (Udo, 2015). This shows that the essence of setting aside certain percentage of the budget as security has not been accomplished.

6.2.1.3.2 Bayelsa State

Bayelsa State is also one of the oil producing states in the region and was created on October 1, 1996, by General Sani Abacha. Indeed, Olobiri where oil was first discovered in commercial quantity in 1956 is located in the state. Unfortunately, it is the least developed states in the region and since the present civilian democratic dispensation, the state has been ruled by six governors out of which three were in acting capacity and three substantive and the substantive ones were: Diepreye Alamieyeseigha, Goodluck

Jonathan., Timipre Sylva and Seriake Dickson. This section of the study analyses mismanagement of the state resources by past and present administration.

(a) Misappropriation of Funds

Alamieyeseigha was the first civilian governor of Bayelsa and he administered the state from 1999 - 2005. He was notorious for embezzling the resources of the state. According to Odiegwu (2012), he mismanaged N660.45 billion of the state resources which he used to acquire properties in and outside Nigeria. For instances, Chelsea hotel in Abuja, Nigeria houses in London, California and South Africa and an oil refinery in Ecuador.

It is important to note that some of these properties have been seized and some handed over to Bayelsa state government (Atonko, 2016). In 2005, he was detained in London for money laundering and at the time of his apprehension, the Metropolitan police found £1million pound in cash in his London house.

Tamipre Sylva who ruled the state between 2007 and 2011 and also contested for the same position in 2015, looted the State's treasury amounted to N627 million (US\$4.18 million) and used it to acquire properties in Abuja (Thisday, 2012).

One of the way through which misappropriation of funds have been committed was siphoned of funds meant for projects. For instance, the construction of three Senatorial Model Secondary Schools, resource were earmarked for this same project for three different years.

In 2010, N2.0 billion was budgeted for the project; in 2011, N1.4 billion and in 2012, N2 billion. In the three zones where the schools were to be located, it was only in Yenagoa that the work was at 80% stage while in the two other zones Sagbama and Nembe, work had not begun. (Niger Delta Citizens and Budget Platform, 2012).

Another project which money was earmarked for and later abandoned was the Bayelsa State rice training and seed multiplication centre, a sum of N150million was set-aside for the project in 2012 but it has been abandoned. There are numerous of such abandoned projects spread across the state. For instance, the Airport project which three different governors embarked upon at different sites and none of which was completed by any of them.

Most of the interviewees in this study expressed the view that the elite misappropriated the resources of the state. One of the interviewees, 001, Traditional ruler remarked that “There are cases where states have misappropriated their resources. They embezzled resources meant for the development of the state “(Interview at Taylor Creeks, Yenagoa, Bayelsa State, 1/05/16).

As the response above indicated the issue of misappropriation of resources is common to all states in the region and the state chief executives reckless financial abused were unchecked by their respective legislatures that have the oversight functions to look into the activities of governmental departments. In some states in the region, the legislative branch is under the apron string of the executive branch of government.

Indeed, they are partners in crime. Besides, the central government allowed the component units to enjoy their autonomy to the fullest by not interfering or monitoring what they do with their resource.

(b) Projects

Bayelsa like other states in the region has white elephants projects spread across the state and abandoned or uncompleted. For instance, the five-star Skyscraper Tower Hotel in the state which was commenced during the administration of Alamiyeseigha has not been completed. The state airport project is another white elephants project which as indicated above was the brainchild of Alamiyeseigha and was located in his country Amassoma but Tamipreye Sylva relocated it to Zarama.

After huge amount of resources have been expended on this new site, the Dickson's administration relocated it back to the original site (Amassoma) for cost effectiveness (Pondei, 2015). This is waste of resources in a state where basic amenities like portable water, road, schools and health facilities are lacking. Commenting on the white elephants projects in the state,

An interviewee 001, Traditional ruler noted that “ (...) *In almost all the states in the region, the governors embarked on white elephants projects that are not beneficial to average common person* .“ (Interview at Taylor Creeks, Yenagoa, Bayelsa State, 1/05/16).

Likewise, interviewee 012, an Academics disclosed that:

Majority of the states chief executives embarked on white elephant projects that are beneficial to them because of the “kick- back and kick-front” that would accrue to them from such contract and not projects that would benefit the majority of the people of the state (interview at Mariri, Tarauni, Kano State, 16/7/16)

The statements above highlighted the how and why these projects identified as elephants are executed. As the statements above indicated, the projects were not meant to serve the interest of the generality of the people but the few and more importantly, they serve as conduit-pipe through which corruption is committed.

(c) Security Vote

There is no available record on amount earmarked for security vote in the state and this point to the fact that security vote is characterised by secrecy, lack of transparency and accountability. But if what is obtainable in the states in the region is anything to go by, then Bayelsa will also earmark a large portion of its revenue to security vote. This is because it is a window through which corruption is perpetrated.

In 2012, the Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) beamed its searchlight on the state because of different fraud and siphoning of public funds by state officials. The Commission filed charges against the state Commissioner of Finance, the Accountant-General , Director of Finance, among others, for theft of N2 billion belonging to the state and accepting a bribe of N500 million.

The Commissioner of Finance in his defence said the N500 million was part of the security vote spent on security in the Niger Delta (cited in Egbo, Nwakoby, Onwumere & Uche, 2012).

6.2.1.3.3 Delta State

Delta state was carved out of Bendel State in 1991 and is the third highest crude oil producing states after Akwa Ibom and Rivers States. The state has been one of the epic centres of violence in the because of poor governance. Since the return to democratic order in 1999, the state has been governed by three governors, one of which was James Ibori.

(a) Misappropriation of Funds

As already indicated misappropriation of fund takes the forms of looting, embezzlement of public funds among others. James Ibori, former Governor of Delta State (1999– 2007) was arrested in December 2007 by Economic and Financial Crime Commission for money laundering, abuse of office and theft of public funds. In 2012, the Southwark Crown Court, London found him guilty of stealing US\$250 million from Delta state he administered for eight years and sentenced to thirteen years imprisonment and his assets were frozen (Adebayo, 2013; Agbiboa & Maiangwa, 2012; Kew & Phillips, 2013; Osaghae, 2015).

Uduaghan, Ibori cousin and immediate past governor of the state was alleged to have misappropriated N9 billion excess crude funds released to the state in 2012 and N48.6 billion Delta State Oil Producing Area Development Commission funds (This Day March 27, 2014). This was part of allocation accrued to the state in respect of 13% derivation between May 2015 and November 2016 and meant for the development of oil producing communities.

A Minister representing the state at the centre Orubebe famous for his attempts at disrupting the 2015 presidential election collation, was arraigned before a court in Abuja. He was accused by the Independent Corrupt Practices and related offences Commission for perjury, corruption and diversion of the sum of 2 billion naira meant for the dualization of Part IV of the East-West Road (Nwabufo, 2016). Responding to question on misappropriation or mismanagement of the resources of the region by ruling elite, an interview 006, retired Military Officer lamented that:

Those we entrusted our commonwealth are not taking diligent care of it. Rather, they are using it for their own personal purpose while the generality of the people is suffering. I weep for this state and the country. If thing continues like this, what will become the fate of yet unborn Niger Deltans and Nigerians? (Interview at Warri, Delta State, 31/05/16).

(b) Projects

Delta State has its own fair share of white elephants projects which are dotted all over the states. The Uduaghan's administration upgrading of Osubi airport in the state gulped N37.5 billion and N7.4 was expended on demolition of a hill in Asaba airport in order to allow large planes to land in the airport (Godspower, 2012). This is a case of misplaced priority in a state where basic infrastructures are lacking For instance, Warri and its environs lack basic amenities such as roads and portable water.

(c) Security Vote

Delta State has one of the highest vote for security in the country. The state's security vote is N2 billion monthly (N24 billion annually) (Sahara Reports, 2013). Yet, the state remains the den for kidnapping, thuggery and armed robberies. The inhabitants of the city cannot move freely because of hoodlums who harassed and robbed them of their belongings.

6.2.1.3.4 Rivers State

Rivers State is the oldest state in the region and was created in 1966. It is the second highest earner from the federation account because of its second position in terms of oil production in the country. From 1999 to date, the state has been governed by four governors.

(a) Mismanagement of Funds

Dr. Peter Odili, administered the state from 1999-2007 and was accused of diversion of state fund totalling N100 billion (cited in Babalola, 2014). Similarly, Human Right Watch (2007) accused his administration of pervasive corruption and mismanagement.

He bought two private jets, a helicopter and numerous private properties of his own (Kew, & Phillips, 2013).

Rotimi Amaechi, was alleged of theft amounting to N100 billion (cited in Agbiboa & Maiangwa, 2012). The Justice George Omereji Commission of Inquiry set-up by his successor Nyesom Wike to consider how US\$39.2 million for the Justice Adolphus Karibi- Whyte Special Hospital was paid to contractor without execution of the contract, the withdrawal of N96 billion from the State Reserve Funds and other related matters, indicted him for diverting N53billion belonging to the state (The Paradigm, 2015).

(b) Projects

In Rivers state, the state embarked on the construction of the third stadium in the capital city Port-Harcourt while the older ones were neither maintained nor put to effective use. These types of projects were avenue for government officials to steal public resources or funds as the example of Rivers state where two major flyovers in the state collapsed eight years after construction as contractors and state officials colluded to approve shady construction while inflated budget funds were stolen (Niger Delta Citizens and Budget Platform, 2013).

(c) Security Vote

Rivers State has a monthly security vote of N1.5 billion and second highest vote in the country. Like other states in the region, it is the epic centre of violence where cult groups unleashed terror on the defenceless people of the state. In one of such cult war, sixteen people were killed (Onoyume, 2016). This has prompted people to call for the scrapping of security vote.

An interviewee 007, Youth leader said that:

I don't see the usefulness of the security vote when the life and property of the people are endangered by hoodlums masquerading as freedom fighters. I think it should be abolished or scrapped as our leaders use it to siphon our hard earned resources (Interview at Diobu, Port-Harcourt, Rivers State, 01/6/16).

The findings from the foregoing analysis of the four states showed that corruption has been the order of the day among the elite in the region and this has been perpetrated through contract inflation, misappropriation of funds and security vote. These findings are consistent with the existing literature (Osaghae, 2015; Babalola, 2014; Adebayo, 2013; Suleiman, 2013; Jegede, Joshua, & Olorunyomi, 2012; Saka, 2011a; Ibaba & Ikelegbe, 2010; Otite, 2009; Enweremadu, 2008; Alao, 2007; Human Right Watch, 2007).

Osaghae (2015) argued that the few ruling elite from the Niger Delta have monopolised the resources of the region and this accounted for why the region has remained underdeveloped.

By the same token, Babalola (2014) contended that corruption has become a sub-culture among the regional elite and that it played a major role in the underdevelopment of the region.

In a like manner, Enweremadu (2008), in his insightful analysis of the Bayelsa state budget under Alamiyeseigha showed how budgets were systematically structured to enrich the ruling elite by concentrating enormous expenditures on over-priced white elephant projects with no relevance to the masses but which offered opportunities for kick-backs paid by contractors whereas important social services presenting less opportunities for corrupt enrichment were underfunded.

Alao (2007), maintained that the ruling elite across the continent were insincere in the management of the resources of their respective countries and buttressed his argument with the arrest of one of the governors of the Niger Delta region for an offence related to money laundering. In his words:

...the elite in power across Africa have been dishonest in their management of the natural resources of their countries. While for a long-time evidence of fiscal recklessness and corrupt management of natural resources by the political elite have been largely anecdotal, there is now evidence to back up many of these claims. The arrest of an elected governor of one of Nigeria's oil-producing states, Diepreye Alamiyeseigha, for money laundering shows that there are clear cases of fraud and mismanagement of revenues coming from natural resources (Alao, 2007, p. 251).

From the above analysis, the ruling elite of the region have mismanaged the resources that accrued to the region and are not ready to commit political suicide by taking sides of the people in terms of improving their living standard by pursuing populist programmes that would benefit the majority of the people of the region. These examples of state executives or ruling elite of the region spending the resources of their various states on frivolous things as well as embezzling them have far greater consequences on the development of the state and violence that have raged the region.

The pervasive corruption among the elite and coupled with the decline in revenue from the federation account led to rising debt profile of these states. The states borrow to finance their budgets and also meet their financial obligations to their people in terms of payment of worker salaries and emolument and other financial commitments. According to Debt Management Office, the external debt of Akwa-Ibom state was \$59.7million as of June 30, 2013, while the domestic debt stood at N81.7 million as at 2014 making her the most indebted state in the country

Between 2008 and 2013 the debt profile of Rivers state rose from \$32.3 million to \$42.6 million in 2013 (Niger Delta citizens and budget platform, 2015). As at December 2015, the domestic debt of the Akwa Ibom state stood at N147.575 billion, Bayelsa, Delta and Rivers amounted to N103.374 billion, N320.605 billion and N134.966 billion respectively (see table 6.5 for details).

Table 6. 5

Domestic Debt of Nine States in the Niger Delta 2015

S/No	State	Debt Stock
1	Akwa Ibom	147,575,744,158.56
2	Bayelsa	103,374,234,640.82
3	Delta	320,605,705,560.12
4	Rivers	134,966,595,276.76
5	Abia	33,530,526,404.80
6	Edo	46,289,079,475.93
7	Imo	71,743,513,593.94
8	Cross Rivers	115,522,252,057.76
9	Ondo	26,647,789,528.58

Source: Adapted from Debt Management Office of Nigeria's Total Domestic

Debt of the 36 states and the FCT, as at December 31, 2015.

As table 6.5 above indicates most indebted states are states with the lion's share from the federation account and these states are Akwa-Ibom, Delta, Rivers and Bayelsa States. Bayelsa State is the least indebted of the four states that are the focus of our study while Delta State tops the pack not only among the four States but also in the region.

The findings are validated by a resource curse theory which states that resource endowed countries are associated with social vices such as corruption and mismanagement of resources. The experiences of the Niger Delta validated this assertion. The elite theory complements the resource curse theory by explaining further the role of the elites in the governance of this resource and as the experience of the Niger Delta has indicated, they have used these resources on projects that are of no benefit to the generality of the people. The resultant violence which has ravaged the region due to the failure of governance underscores the frustration of the people, which is corroborated by the frustration-aggression theory.

6.3 Summary

The chapter examines the role of the elite in relations to how they have managed the resources accrued to the nation and the region. The chapter begins by examining historical account of corruption in the country and the regime by regime account of the personalities involved. This has shown that the mismanagement of the resources of the nation which take the form of corruption is not restricted to the national elites alone at the centre but similar thing was experienced among the elite in the Niger Delta region. The elite, therefore, mismanage resources from statutory allocation, 13% derivation and allocation to the intervention agencies saddled with the development of the region through NDDC, MNDA and PAP.

The findings are supported by the combined theories employed to analyse the conflict. For instance, resource curse links resource abundant to poor governance, while the governance issue around the resources are better explained by the elite theory and the frustration-aggression theory highlights the motive behind the violence. The chapter submits that the failure of the elite to judiciously use these resources for the development of the region has contributed in no small measures to the violence still rocking the region.

The positive contribution of the elites of an effort to address the Niger Delta conflict is the subject of the next chapter and it discusses a quite number of issues among which are the strategy of managing the conflict, the various ad hoc committee established to tackle the conflict and presidential amnesty.



CHAPTER SEVEN

ELITE AND THE PRESIDENTIAL AMNESTY PROGRAMME

7.1 Introduction

As the earlier chapters, have shown the oil -rich Niger Delta has been the epic centre of violence in Nigeria and the Technical Committee on Niger Delta recommends the amnesty programme with a view to restore peace to the embattled region. This chapter examines the role the elites have played in the execution of PAP. Besides, the chapter examines the amnesty programme and discusses, among others, the strategies and various committees set up to tackle the Niger Delta conflict, the strengths and weaknesses of the amnesty programme is also examined. The chapter addresses the research question number four and tries to provide answer to whether the programme has addressed the Niger Delta Question.

7.2. Strategy of Managing the Niger Delta Conflict

This section of the study analyses the strategies used in addressing the conflict. The conflict management strategies adopted by successive governments in Nigeria are force or military and institutional. This involves the use of the military apparatus of the state to suppress militant activities in the region. The latter is agencies established to address the development needs of the region.

7.2.1 The Military Option

Some scholars have argued that the effectiveness or otherwise of managing conflict depends on the perception of the causes of the conflict (Okoh, 2005). The various stakeholders in the Niger Delta conflict have their own perceptions of the causes and this influenced the strategies adopted in addressing the problem. For example, the oil bearing communities see the conflict from the point view of the injustices that centred on skewed resource distribution, political marginalisation, and environmental degradation and strategies used were, among others, blockade and disruption of oil company's operation, sabotage and political action (Okoh, 2005). These strategies adopted by the oil-bearing communities have resulted in conflict and insecurity in the region.

The oil companies another stakeholder in the region viewed the conflict from poverty perspective and the strategy adopted is poverty alleviation through provision of basic social amenities such as roads, health centres, jetties, scholarship, employment, etc.

The Nigerian state sees the Niger Delta imbroglio as an act of disobedience in the country. The agitators were seen as criminals who hindered the free flow of oil, caused huge loss of the revenue to the government due to their bunkering and destruction of oil infrastructure and also threaten national security. For instance, at the height of militant activities in 2006, the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) attacked Shell pipelines near Warri and also killed fourteen soldiers and two civilians (Ukiwo, 2007). In 2016, another group called the Niger Delta Avengers destroyed numerous oil infrastructure and gas pipelines (Adeosun et.al, 2016). And this informed the military strategy adopted by the government to curb the menace of the group.

The primary responsibility of government is to protect the lives and property of the law-abiding citizens as no responsible government will allow criminals to take laws into their hands, all in the name of demanding for their rights. Hence, the military strategy involves the deployment of members of the armed forces or the Joint Task Force (a combined troops of the air force, army, navy and mobile police) assigned to curb the menace of the militants through the patrol of the waterways and also guarding the critical oil facilities against attack by the militants.

The military (JTF) was deployed to Odioma on the order of Chief DSP Alamieyeseigha, Bayelsa State governor, to arrest hoodlums who killed eleven people in the Obioku community on February 3, 2005 (Saka, 2011b). Following the order issued by the then Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, President Olusegun Obasanjo directs that the JTF should shoot at sight any militants, the JTF used force in

its fight against insurgency in the region. Other places where the military were deployed included Agge in Bayelsa State in 2008.

In 2009, the Military Joint Task Force launched a major military offensive against militants in Oporoza traditional headquarters of Gbaramatu kingdom. The number of personnel deployed for this mission was 3,000 and conventional warfare tactics which included land, sea and aerial bombardment were used. This bombardment was extended to other communities in the kingdom such as Okerenkoko, Kurutie, Kokodiagbene and Kunukuma (Saka, 2011b; Dode, 2012). At the end of the attack, no single militant was arrested.

Following incessant attacks on oil pipelines by the Niger Delta Avengers, the president directed that they should be crushed. Consequently, the military invaded the Gbaramatu Kingdom on May 28, 2016 in search of Government Ekpemupolo (Naija News Beat, 2016). Like the previous invasion, the militants were nowhere to be seen. It was the innocent peoples' that were on the receiving end. As the saying goes, when two elephants fight, it is the grass that suffered.

7.2.1.1 Implications of the Use of Military Force

This segment of the study analyses the implication of the use of military force as a strategy to address the Niger Delta conflict. The implications are among others, escalation of the crisis, loss of lives and property, and militarisation of the region (Ajodo- Adebajoko, 2017).

7.2.1.1.1 Escalation of Violence

The use of military force has worsen the violence in the region. As the federal government increased its military presence and intensified its effort in the search for the militants who were destroying the national assets, the militants responded with continued attacks on installations thereby aggravating the already tensed situation or atmosphere (Ajodo- Adebajoko, 2017).

7.2.1.1.2 Loss of life and Property

There were cases of maiming, raping and killing and setting ablaze houses of some community members in the region by the military (Okoh, 2005; Oluwaniyi, 2011; Aghalino, 2012). For instance, when the military invaded Odioma in 2005, scores of people lost their lives , many people were declared missing and 78 houses were destroyed (Saka, 2011b). The military invasions of Gbaramatu Kingdom in Warri South Local Government Area of Delta State in 2009 and 2016 led to the destruction of lives and property including the palace of the paramount ruler of the kingdom. In addition, over twenty thousands of people were trapped in the forest. The 2016 siege on the kingdom also resulted in the displacement of people and a complete shutdown of socio-economic life of the people (Amaize & Brisibe, 2016).

7.2.1.1.3 Militarisation of the Region

The use of military force has led to the militarisation of the region. Militants are more determined and courageous to take members of the JTF headlong. This has also resulted in the change of the modus operandi of the Protestants from peaceful strategies

such as advocacy, writing of petitions to violence means through the bombing of oil installations, kidnapping and engaging the military in a low intensity war.

As the analysis has shown, the use of force only aggravated the crisis. It was the failure of the military option in addressing the conflict that necessitated the late Nigeria leader Umaru Musa Yar'adua to dialogue with the militants, which led to the proclamation of amnesty by the president for the militants.

7.2.2 The Institutional or Developmental Agency

The second strategy employed in addressing Niger Delta conflict is the institutional or development agencies. This strategy involves institutions established by successive administrations in the country to address the developmental needs of the region and such institutions include such as Niger Development Board, Oil Mineral Producing Areas Development Commission (OMPADEC), the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) and the Ministry of Niger Delta Affairs (MNDA).

But these various institutions have failed due to underfunding and corruption perpetrated by officials that headed these institutions (Uyigue & Agho, 2007; Ikelegbe, 2010; Oviasuyi & Uwadiae 2010; Paki, 2011; Okumagba & Okereka, 2012; Jack-Akhigbe & Okouwa 2013; Osah & Alao, 2014). It is important to note that these various intervention agencies established by the central government to administer the funds disbursed to develop the region were headed by the elite of the region and this has affirmed the allegation by the federal government that the regional elite cannot be trusted to protect the interest of their people or communities.

However, the elite of the Niger Delta extraction contended that the federal government always handpicked people they knew would dance to their tune or serve their interest. They claimed government discredited the elite from the region to create the impression that the oil producing communities are at war with themselves (Alao, 2007).

An extensive discussion of these developments or intervention agencies has been documented in the literature, which we need not labour over here. However, the consensus among scholars is that the commissions and other extra- ministerial agencies have failed to address the core problems of the region (Odeyemi, 2015).

7.3 An Overview of Ad hoc Committees Reports on the Niger Delta Conflict

Prior to the Technical Committee on Niger Delta, there were various ad hoc committees established in the past to study the Niger Delta conflict. This section of the study examines these ad hoc committees and their recommendations.

7.3.1 Sir Henry Willinks Commission

Sir Henry Willink's Commission of 1957 examined the grievances of minority nationalities in the country for separate region. The Commission undertook the tour of the country and held public hearings over a period of six months. Willink's Commission recommendation in respect of the Niger Delta was that a board should be established to take care of the development needs of the region due to its peculiar nature (cited in TCND, 2008; Elaigwu, 2005). The peculiar nature implies the difficult terrain of the area. An extensive discussion of the Commission has been done in chapter three of this study (for details, see p. 82).

7.3.2 The Belgore Committee 1992

Following the riot against fuel shortage in Nigeria in 1992, the Babangida's government set-up a Judicial of Commission of Inquiry. The eight member commission was headed by Justice Alfa Belgore, then Justice of the Supreme Court and was given a month to submit its report.

The terms of reference of the commission were to identify the root causes of incessant communal discontent and violence in the oil-bearing communities and suggest ways of improving existing measures taken by government to address the conflict.

The Committee received memoranda from various oil-bearing communities and after due consideration of them, it recommended among others, a thirty year development plan for the development of the oil producing communities; the dualisation of the East-West road and the construction of the East-West rail line to link Calabar and Lagos (TCND, 2008).

The report of the Committee was not implemented by the Babangida's administration and this was due to non-commitment of the administration to Niger Delta and also the prevailing political quagmire at the time which led to the stepping aside of the self-styled military president in 1993.

7.3.3 The Don Etiebet Committee 1994

The late General Sani Abacha on assumption of office as military ruler of Nigeria in 1993, was concerned about the increasing apprehensions in oil producing communities and urged by Ogoni uprising set up an Inter-Ministerial Fact-Finding team led by Chief Don Etiebet, then Minister of Petroleum with Chiefs Alex Ibru (then Minister of Internal Affairs) Melford Okilo (Minister of Commerce and Tourism). Others were Group Managing Director (GMD), Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), Group Executive Director (GED) National Petroleum Investment Management Services (NAPIMS), Director of Petroleum Resources, Chairman Oil Mineral Producing Areas Development Commission (OMPADEC) and Chief Executive officers of oil companies operating in the country.

The Committee was to ascertain the causes of oil producing communities grievances, assess the level of development on the ground and suggests to government how to tackle the problems. The Committee toured the area and received oral presentation and one hundred and thirty-six memoranda.

Based on the findings on the tour of the oil producing areas, the committee recommended among others, the implementation of the Belgore report involving the Niger Delta; provision of social amenities such as basic health, education and generator for generation of electricity pending when they would be connected to the national grid; a master plan for the development of oil producing areas; comprehensive study of coastal areas to address problem of erosions; the decentralisation of OMPADEC operational structure; the setting-up of petroleum products distribution stations in oil producing communities; the establishment of oil and gas export

processing zones to stimulate industrial development and growth in oil-bearing communities (TCND, 2008).

Like previous committee reports before it, this report was not implemented by the government. Rather than doused tension in the region, the government executed Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight others Ogoni on November 10, 1995 (Adebanjoko & Ojua, 2013; Esikot & Akpan, 2013; Okoli, 2013).

7.3.4 The Popoola Committee 1998

The persistent agitations by the people of Niger Delta in the period after the death of Abacha made his successor, General Abdulsalam Abubakar to set up a 22-member Presidential Committee on Development Options for the Niger Delta. The Committee was headed by Major-General Oladayo Popoola, then General Officer Commanding 82 Division of the Nigerian Army. Other members of the committee were the military administrators of oil producing states, Ministers of Water Resources, Power and Steel, Education, Health, Works and Housing, Secretary to Government of the Federation, Principal Staff officer to Commander-in-Chief, representatives of the Oil Mineral Areas Development Commission, Project Implementation and Monitoring Committee (PIMCO) and many others (TCND, 2008).

The Committee was to study the proposal of the Programme Implementation and Monitoring Committee (PIMCO) on the sustainable development of the region; verify projects undertaken by OMPADEC; ascertain projects executed in relation to water supply, education, electricity, health, road and canals and to make recommendations

as to what government should do before and after Abubakar's administration (TCND, 2008). The Committee for 22 days toured the oil producing states, received and reviewed memoranda from the public and interest groups such as state governments, opinion leaders, non-governmental organisations and oil companies. In addition, the Committee engaged in direct interaction with all of them.

Based on its findings, the committee suggested among others, the setting up of an expert committee to review and consolidate existing law relating to oil with a view to ensure prompt payment of compensation to oil producing communities by the transnational oil companies; prosecution of human rights violation arising from oil exploration activities and ensuring that corporate practice is in accordance with international standard; establishment of petrol station in five oil-bearing states in collaboration with the private sector; federal government should increase its presence in Bayelsa State; oil companies should recruit their junior and unskilled staff in the communities where they operated.

7.3.5 The Ogomudia Committee 2001

The incessant destruction of critical oil installations and kidnapping in the Niger Delta necessitated Chief Olusegun Obasanjo to set up a 23-member Special Security Committee on Oil Producing Areas in November, 2001. This Committee was led by the Lt-Gen A.O Ogomudia, then Army Chief.

The committee terms of reference were among others, to identify blunders in the protection of oil infrastructure and recommend appropriate measures to safeguard oil facilities; investigates cases of oil bunkering and pipelines vandalisation; assess the role of oil companies and other stakeholders in relation to community relations and control of criminal acts in the oil-bearing states; to find out major interests and beneficiaries supporting the breakdown of normal operations in the oil industry; recommend long term measures and strategies in safeguarding Nigeria's oil resources.

The Committee, based on the first hand information received in the tour of the nine oil producing states and on-the-spot assessment of the oil-bearing communities suggested among others, the maintenance of oil pipelines to meet international standard; securing operational facilities of the Nigerian Armed Forces and the Police in the oil producing states; the Niger Delta Development Commission should be well funded and the people should participate fully in the development of projects design for them; the use of military force in resolving conflict in the region should be discouraged; the 13% derivation should be increased to a minimum of 50%; the federal government should commence immediately the East-West road; the establishment of marine transportation system for all the oil producing communities; all tiers of government should take up the responsibility of developing oil-bearing communities instead of the oil companies; the Federal Government should review laws that were the sources of disagreement with the region and such laws included the Petroleum Act 1969, Land Use Act, 1978, Associated Gas Re-injection Act, 1979 and many others (TCND, 2008).

7.3.6 The Presidential Panel on National Security 2003

The Presidential Panel on National Security was borne out of the security challenges confronting the country in the post-military era. The Committee was headed by foremost Nigerian historian, Professor Tekena Tamuno.

The Committee findings in relations to Niger Delta showed that insecurity in the region expressed in the forms of petition and agitation date back to the First Republic; the restiveness expressed by the oil-bearing communities was due to the destruction of their means of living; the oil companies on their own volition and under pressure of the oil producing areas were forced to pay compensation for polluting the environment and also provided social services.

Based on its findings, the committee suggested among others, that oil companies maintained environmental standard comparable to what was obtainable in their countries; implementation of national youth policy in order to address socio-economic problems that made the youth to take-up arms against the state; polluters of the environment should be sanctioned heavily.

7.3.7 The Niger Delta Master Plan

The Niger Delta Master Plan which was published in 2004 was the brainchild of the Niger Delta Development Commission and it examined the challenges of development and what plans and strategies to be devised.

It was 15 year development plan and provisions were made for monitoring, evaluation and review of the Plan as well as procedures for its implementation and involvement

of key stakeholders (TCND, 2008). The Plan categorised the solution to Niger Delta conflict into five broad areas namely: economic growth, natural environment, physical infrastructure, human and community needs and human and institutional resources.

In the areas of economic development and growth, the Plan recommended the establishment of Rural Development Service in each state to develop local infrastructure which would accelerate the diversification of local economy; each state should execute a provable project in a community or cluster of community.

In the area of environment, the Plan suggested among others, a review of current law and policies in order to strengthening them and also reduced the effect of oil exploration on the environment to the minimum; credible and transparent compensation system should be put in place for those affected by oil exploration.

The Plan's human and institutional development recommendations centred on provision of better education to all at all levels and establishment of entrepreneurial skill that are ingredient for productive employment. Others recommendations were re-professionalisation of the civil service through training, re-training, seminar and workshop; fighting corruption in high places through collaboration with civil society group (TCND, 2008).

7.3.8 The Presidential Council on the Social and Economic Development of the Coastal States

In 2006, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo in his quest to find lasting solution to the worsening security challenges in the Niger Delta set up the Presidential Council on the Social and Economic Development of the Coastal States of the Niger Delta.

The Council made up of representatives from Bayelsa, Rivers and Delta, was charged to engage and seek for solutions to the problems in the Region. In March 2007, the Council met and reviewed the security challenges in the region and based on that made some of these recommendations:

The granting of amnesty to the militants to encourage them to come out of the creeks; provision of employment to the youth in order to channel their energies to productive use; economic empowerment for the people of the region so as to enable them participate fully in oil and gas sector; use of the militants for surveillance on oil infrastructure in the creeks; provision of good governance by all tiers of government; government funding of youth initiatives for peace in the region (TCND, 2008).

7.3.9 The Peace and Conflict Resolution Committee

The Peace and Conflict Resolution Committee established by the late Nigeria leader, Umaru Musa Yar'Adua. The 20-member committee was chaired by Senator David Brigidi, has Kingsley Kuku as its secretary.

It liaised with relevant stakeholders on issues aimed at addressing violence in the region. Meanwhile, the federal government directed affected states in the region to replicate this committee in their states. The committee toured various parts of the region to solicit for support and co-operation of the militants to accomplish its goals. Members of the committee could reach the militants because of outstanding relationship existing among some members of the committee and the militants.

The committee got stoppage of hostilities pledge by militants in Ondo and a commitment to join the peace process by Boyloaf fighters (ICG, 2007; Ukiwo & Ebiede, 2012). However, the committee comprised people of questionable character and did not reflect the government's stated goal of addressing the conflict (ICG, 2007).

According to Udens Eradiri (cited in ICG, 2007) erstwhile scribe of Ijaw Youth Congress (IYC) noted that:

They are people who have been involved at various levels in sponsoring hostage-taking, yet these persons are those used as members of the committee. The committee is evil. It is a committee that will continue to perpetuate hostage-taking in the region, and encourage violence in order to have something [to do] (cited in ICG, 2007, p.4).

Following the federal government directive that Peace and Conflict Resolution Committee be set-up in the states affected by the militancy, the Sylva's administration in Bayelsa state established an 8-Man Peace and Conflict Resolution Committee under the Chairmanship of Chief Jephtah Foingha, a businessman and politician from Nembe. He owned an oil services company and his reputed of ensuring that those companies he rendered services to enjoyed hitch-free operations in Bayelsa State, in

Nembe axis. This was because of his influence among the local militia members in the area.

The secretary of the committee was Mr Selepere Ben, the younger brother to a warlord, Victor Ebikabowei (AKA Boyloaf). Also, Chief Timipia Tiwei Orunimighe a member of the committee had ties with the militants in the state. With such calibre of members, it was easy for the committee to gain access to the warlords in the state. Subsequently, the committee ended hostilities in the state and a formal agreement signed between the Bayelsa State Government and the militants on December 7, 2007 (ICG, 2007).

7.3.10 The Technical Committee on Niger Delta

In 2008, the Federal Government proposed a peace summit on the Niger Delta that would include all the major stakeholders in the region. A renowned Nigeria scholar, administrator and former Foreign Affairs Minister, Professor Ibrahim Gambari, was appointed to head the proposed summit. But the people of the region rejected his appointment because of his antecedence. As Nigeria's permanent representative to United Nations under the maximum military ruler, General Sani Abacha, he defended the execution of Ken Saro-Wiwa and his kinsmen and called the Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People a gang of criminals (Obi & Rustad, 2011).

The state governors and prominent elite from the region in their discussion with the then vice-president, Dr Goodluck Jonathan, expressed the view that what the region needed was not another talk shop but suggestions that would lead to actions geared towards addressing the region's conflict (Obi, & Rustad, 2011).

Obi and Rustad (2011) noted that the Niger Delta leaders suggested to the central government through the vice-president the following:

.... to set up a body to appraise the various reports that have been submitted on the way forward for the Niger Delta, from the Willink Commission of 1958 to 2007 and let the body come out with the things to be done or not done from the different reports and then, the larger house like the stakeholders gathered, could be called to fine-tune and ratify the final report (cited in Obi & Rustad, 2011, p. 201).

Based on the suggestions of the elite from the Niger Delta, the federal government set up the Technical Committee. The Technical Committee on Niger Delta also known as Mitee Committee comprised 45 members, all Niger Deltans under the chairmanship of Ledum Mitee and inaugurated in September 2008.

Its terms of reference were:

To collate, review and distil the various reports, suggestions and recommendations on the Niger Delta from the Willink Commission Report (1958) to the present, and give a summary of the recommendations necessary for government action. To appraise the summary recommendations and present a detailed short, medium and long term suggestion to the challenges in the Niger Delta. To make and present to Government any other recommendations that will help the Federal Government achieve sustainable development, peace, human and environmental security in the Niger Delta region (TCND, 2008, p.VI).

The committee suggested an increased in the derivation from the current 13% to 25% and a gradual increase to 50%; setting up of Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration Commission, which would be responsible for addressing issues of arms and militancy; granting of amnesty to the militants; completion and dualisation of East-West road; ensuring good governance at all levels of government; ending of gas flaring by 2008 and many others ((TCND, 2008.)

7.4 The Presidential Amnesty Programme

The Presidential Amnesty Programme as the name implies is an amnesty programme granted by the late Umaru Yar'adua's administration to militants who took up arms against the state. Prior to the Presidential Amnesty Programme (PAP), states like Rivers, Bayelsa and Delta had one time, or the other launched disarmament programme.

In Delta State between 1997 and 1999, the state government initiated a disarmament programme aimed at promoting peace among the several ethnic nationalities such as Ijaw, Uhrobo and Itsekiri in the state were at one another throats. Short term loan, cash, employment, training and jobs were provided in exchange for the militants weapons (Aghedo, 2013).

In 2004, during Dr Peter Odili's administration, cult groups in the state engaged in supremacy battle and this led to the breakdown of law and order. Between October 2003 and October 2004, the Asari's Niger Delta Peoples' Volunteer Force and Tom's Niger Delta Vigilante engaged in a fierce battle for the control of oil bunkering routes. The battles were fought in Buguma, Bukuma, Tombia, and Ogbakiri because of their proximity to profitable bunkering routes in Cawthorne Channel. The duel was later extended to the Port-Harcourt and this dislocated the socio-economic activities of the state (HRW, 2005).

To restore peace to the state, the government launched a disarmament programme. The programme was arm-buy-back, and the government paid N250,000 each for over 3,000 old guns surrendered by the militants, even though the price of a new gun was N125,000 (Aghedo, 2013). However, the programme was not well executed, and this led to an upsurge in violence in the state. The militants were promised 4,000 jobs, yet training was provided for 2,000 youths most of them could not get jobs after complete their training (Aghedo, 2013).

In 2007, Bayelsa also signed a peace accord with the main militants in the state by granting them amnesty. It was a cash for peace arrangement and the militants were paid off rather than being attacked by the Joint Task Force. The accord hit the rock because it was politicised (Nwajiaku-Dahou, 2012; Aghedo, 2013).

The Federal Government Presidential Amnesty Programme was based on the Technical Committee on Niger Delta Report and the Presidential Panel on Amnesty and Disarmament of Militants in the Niger Delta. The latter panel was inaugurated on May 5, 2009 to implement the recommendation of the Technical Committee on Niger Delta regarding the granting of amnesty to the militants.

After the Panel recommendations were approved by both the Federal Executive Council and the National Council of States, the then president Umaru Yar'Adua proclaimed a 60-day amnesty on 24 June, 2009 under which all the militants in the region surrendered their arms and get compensated and rehabilitated.

The aims of the amnesty were “to contribute to security stabilisation in the Niger Delta through the DDR programme as a precondition for medium and long term development.” (cited in Ushie, 2013, p.31).

7.4.1 Components and Phases of the Presidential Amnesty Programme

This segment of the study examines the components and phases of PAP. The Presidential Amnesty Programme has three components and they are disarmament, demobilisation and rehabilitation. The table 6.1 below shows the components of the PAP stated above and the various activities involved in each component and its duration.

Table 7. 1

Structure of Presidential Amnesty Programme for Niger Delta

Disarmament	Demobilisation/Rehabilitation	Reintegration
Duration: 6 August to 4 October, 2009	Duration: 6 to 12 months	Duration: up to 5 years
Collections of arms, ammunition, explosives	Ex-militants report to camp	Knowledge and skill acquisition
Biometrics	Verification and documentation	Financial empowerment
	Transformational training	Placement programmes
	Peace building and conflict resolution	Microcredits
		Education
		Reconciliation with local community

	Counselling	Conflict resolution framework/ mechanism
	Career guidance	Monitoring and evaluation
	Wellness assessment	Exit from amnesty
	Reintegration classification	
	Educational and Vocational placement	
	Graduation and demobilisation	
Key enablers		
Disarmament camps	Transformational training centres	Partnering government agencies, NGOs and private organisations.
	Rehabilitation camps	Oil and gas institutions (OGIs)
		Tracking and support system



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Source: Adapted from Ushie (2013) p.2

As the table 7.1 above shows the period earmarked for disarmament was between 6 August and 4 October 2009 and at the end of the period 20,192 militants accepted the offer of amnesty (table 7.2 shows details breakdown of the numbers).

And by the end of this closure, 15,000 ex-militants surrendered 2,700 sophisticated weapons and 287,445 ammunitions to the Presidential Amnesty Committee (Obi & Rustad, 2011; Udegbunam, 2013).

The figure 7.1 shows the arms and ammunition collected during the disarmament process of the Presidential Amnesty Programme.



Figure 7.1 Arms and other Accessories surrendered by Militants during the First Phase of Disarmament Programme

Source: Daily Post

The pressure mounted by those excluded in the first phase of the amnesty led to the second phase in which 6,166 were registered and a third phase in which 3,642 were registered bringing the number to 30,000 (Ekumaoko, 2013; Ibaba & Arugu, 2013; Tubodenyefa & Felix, 2013).

The weapons recovered during these two phases were 18,971 locally made arms, 482 automatic weapons; 20, 132 rounds of ammunition and 295 magazines from Bayelsa and Delta States, Rivers, 82,406 ammunitions were recovered, Akwa Ibom, 959, Cross River, 9,748, Edo, 722, and Ondo, 9,725 (Uzodinma, 2013).

The need to accommodate more militants in the programme between 2009 and 2012 was borne out of agitation by those excluded initially from the programme. For instance, Latu group from Bakassi Peninsula and late John Togo had to be included.

Secondly, the genuineness of the programme intention attracted those who originally adopted the Sidon look approach (afraid of the sincerity of the government) saw it as a ploy by the government to get them arrested when they came out of the Creeks and so when this did not occur, they demanded to be included in the programme (kelegbe & Umukoro, 2016).

Table 7. 2

Participants in the First Phase Presidential Amnesty Programme for Militants in the Niger Delta

State	Male	Female	Registered
Akwa Ibom	155	8	163
Bayelsa	6,900	61	6,961
Cross-River	159	1	160
Delta	3,361	-	3,361
Edo	450	-	450
Imo	297	3	300
Ondo	1,198	2	1,200
Rivers	6,958	39	6,997
NDDC	571	19	600
Total	20,049	133	20,192

Source: Adapted from Ushie (2013) p.34

A close examination of the table 7.2 above shows that majority of the participants in the programme were from the core Niger Delta states of Bayelsa, Delta and Rivers and this further confirmed that these states were the epic centres of violence and majority of the armed groups were found in these states. Rivers led the pack with a total number of 6, 997 participants closely followed by Bayelsa with 6, 961 participants and Delta with 3, 361. The others states had low numbers because they were not predominantly dominated by the Ijaws who spearheaded the struggle and also they had few armed groups (Ushie, 2013).

Interestingly, the female folks were not left out in the militancy and in the female category, Bayelsa led the pack and closely followed by Rivers State. The low number of women compared to the men could be attributed to cultural and physical factors. Most Nigerian communities frowned at women involvement in violence activities and any woman that venture into such enterprise is considered a deviant and ostracise by the community (Tubodenyefa & Felix, 2013).

The physical nature of the activities. The militants undergone series of trainings and deprived themselves a lot of comfort in the Creeks which most women folk would not be ready to do and because of these factors and some others, the number of women that engaged in militancy were few compared to their male counterpart (Tubodenyefa & Felix, 2013).

The second component of the PAP is the demobilisation and as table 7.1 above shows, quite a number of activities are involve and this includes among others, the report of the ex-militants to camp, verification and documentation, counselling , career

guidance, educational and vocational placement. The figure 7.2 below captures the process wherein, the ex-militants were being verified and documented. This took place in Calabar, Cross Rivers State and militants oriented way from violence and combat to those of civilian lives (Ikelegbe, 2010; Ajibloa, 2015). The militants received N1, 500-naira daily as feeding allowance and N20, 000 naira per month for the three months' period of demobilisation. (Ikelegbe, 2010).



Figure 7. 2 Niger Delta Ex-Militants being screened during the Demobilisation Process

Source: Information Nigeria

The last component is the reintegration/reinsertion programme and as table 7.1 shows, it has a number of activities among which are knowledge and skill acquisition, financial empowerment, conflict resolution, education, placement programme.

While at the camp, the ex-agitators received 20,000 monthly stipends and were later increased to N65, 000 naira. The programme involved re-engaging the ex-militants into the social and economic aspects of society. Government agencies and stakeholders such as civil society organisation, local and international non-governmental

organisations and donor agencies were to partner in seeing to the accomplishment of the goals of this stage of the programme.

Placement into the different skills acquisition/vocational programmes was based on interests and performance in placement evaluations for automobile technology, aviation, underwater welding, boat building, ocean diving, pipeline welding, crane operations, fish farming and entrepreneurship as well as formal education.

Other available vocations were air traffic control, commercial pilot, grounds handling operations and aircraft engineering (cited in Osah & Amakihe, 2014).

The reintegration stage is still ongoing as the ex-militants are undergoing training in and outside the country to acquire skills to be meaningful members of the society. Some have completed their studies and training and reintegrated into the society while others are still undergoing training and studies. For example, 89 ex-militants were employed in Nigeria, South Africa, United Arab Emirate and Ghana after completing their training in welding, fabrication and other maritime activities (Ushie, 2013). It is important at this point to examine the strengths and weaknesses of this programme and this will be analysed in the next sections.

7.4.2 The Strengths of Presidential Amnesty Programme (PAP)

This sub-section analyses the advantages or gains of amnesty and some of these include educational opportunity, peace and rise in oil production and revenue of government. These points are discuss below:

7.4.2.1 Educational Opportunity

It offers educational opportunities for those who in their dreams would not have thought they would have such opportunities. According to Ayorinde (cited in Udegbumam, 2013) many of the ex-militants have received (and some are still receiving) both formal and informal education in different parts of the globe.

For example, many of these ex-agitators were sent to Israel, Malaysia, India, Belarus, South Africa, United Kingdom, Russia, United States of America, the Philippines, Trinidad and Tobago and Romania to acquire different skills. Supporting the viewpoint that amnesty offers educational opportunities for the people of the Niger Delta. Majority of those interviewed believed amnesty programme has offered a platform for some youths of the region to be educated. An interviewee (002) Youth noted that:

The AP to a great extent has offered educational opportunity for some of the youth from the region. This is because many who have not dreamt in their lives they would travel abroad to study, the AP offers such category of people the platform (Interview in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State 3/5/16).

Also, commenting on the educational opportunity, the programme offers its participants, Asari Dokubo, leader of the Niger Delta People's Volunteer Force in an interview granted the Nation Newspaper, maintained that:

It has brought a lot of positive result. A lot of people have been trained; there has never been any adult scholarship programme in Nigeria that has trained as many people as the amnesty programme has done. A lot of people have been given a new lease of life; a lot of people have changed for the better (Dokubo, 2016).

However, the so-called training and skill acquisition and career advice fall short of expectations for higher status internationally recognised qualifications that will equip ex-agitators for employment opportunity in oil and gas industry (Nwajiaku-Dahou, 2012).

Similarly, Ogbogbo (2015) argues that the continuing efforts at training the ex-militants in different callings within and outside Nigeria shore have not addressed the current joblessness in the Nigerian labour market. According to him, most of the trainee from the vocational training institutions have not secured jobs. The consequence is that there are army of unemployed youth and a good of them are ex-agitators.

7.4.2.2 Relative Peace



The Presidential Amnesty Programme has brought peace to the region. The security situation in the region has stabilised and this created an avenue for the repaired of critical oil infrastructure. Kingsley Kuku highlighted the gains of PAP to include reducing the menace of kidnapping, entrenchment of peace in the creeks and lessening destruction of oil installations (Osah & Amakihe, 2014).

In response to the question on the gains of PAP, majority of the participant held the view that with the introduction of the programme, peace had returned to the region. An interviewee 002 a Youth noted that: “The amnesty programme to a great extent has brought relative peace to the region... At the time, it came on board, the various militia

groups stopped their attacks on oil infrastructures” (Interview in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State, 03/5/16).

Similarly, Interviewee 003, Youth said that:

One thing, we cannot take away from the amnesty programme is that its introduction brought a fragile peace to the region. Why I said fragile peace is because there are still skirmishes here and there. Prior to its introduction, people could not sleep with their eyes closed, but today, we can at least sleep with our eyes closed. Kudos to the initiators and we are also grateful to the late President Umar Musa Yar’adua for listening to the stakeholders and approved the programme (Interview in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State, 03/5/16).

The two statements above highlighted the positive contribution of the PAP and the commitment showed by the then Yar’adua administration towards addressing the Niger Delta conflict. This finding supports the positions of Osah and Amakhime (2014) that the peace provided by amnesty has created an opportunity for local and foreign contractors who previously relocated and abandoned their sites to return and fast-track the development of the region.

However, Ikelegbe and Umukoro (2016) maintained that the peace has little effects on the condition and agitations of the people and submitted that the current peace and security in the region is not only delicate but also vulnerable to violent conflict recurrence. This position also resonates in Amaechi and Evah statements.

Rotimi Amaechi the immediate past governor of Rivers and the current Minister of Transportation noted that:

The amnesty has turned into a curse of sorts. Before the Amnesty was declared, Rivers state enjoyed relative peace as people carried out their legitimate business without fear. The Amnesty has made

some of the boys who were chased out to come back and cause havoc in the city (Isine, 2010, p.42).

Similarly, Joseph Evah argued that the relative peace attributed to amnesty programme was a graveyard peace. In his words:

What you have in the Niger Delta has been a peace of the graveyard. Although it is true that Amnesty Programme is in place, but how many people will programme benefit out of millions of our people whose daily lives and means of livelihood are being destroyed by oil exploration? (Evah, 2016).

7.4.2.3 Increase in Oil production and Revenue

The ending of attacks on oil infrastructural facilities had led to increase in oil production and revenues of the government. The amnesty programme has led to improvement in oil production from its previous 800,000 bpd during the periods of hostility to between 2.6 million bpd to 2.8 million bpd (Tubodenyefa & Felix, 2013).

A common view among the majority of the participants in this study was that the programme has led to increase in both oil production and revenue. An interviewee 002 a Youth noted that: “the amnesty programme has brought about increased in oil production which resulted in more revenue for the state.”(Interview in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State, 03/5/16).

Likewise, another interviewee 001, Traditional ruler disclosed that:

We must pat our leaders from this zone on the back for the instrumental role they played in bringing into fruition this programme as well as ensuring its implementation. Having said that, the programme has increased oil production and revenue for all tiers of government. With the cessation of hostilities in the zone,

the multi-national oil companies were able to deploy their resources both human and capital in order to ensure continuous flow of oil (Interview at Taylor Creek, Yenagoa, Bayelsa State, 1/05/16).

Corroborating the statements above, Deziani Maduekwe, then Minister of Petroleum Resources noted that Nigeria's oil production has increased because of the introduction of PAP. In her words:

The nation's actual crude oil (plus condensate) production rose to an average 2.39 million bpd, consistently maintained above the budgeted level of 2.30 million bpd... Similarly, gas sales rose by more than 70% to an average 4 million standard cubic feet per day in 2011 and for the first time, industry supplied more domestic gas than consumed by the power and industry sector. The Nigerian Liquefied Natural Gas Company (NLNG) had one of its most successful years with production peaking at 21.2 million metric tons in 2011 alone. Thanks, in no small part, to the amnesty programme which allowed unhindered access to oil and gas operations and activities (Opara, 2012).

However, oil bunkering has increased. According to Nigerian National Oil Corporation (NNPC), the country is losing around 180,000 bpd of crude oil to oil bunkering organisation totalling US\$7 billion per year (Amafuele & Opara, 2012).

Also, the Vice-President, Professor Yemi Osinbajo put the figure at 400,000 bpd amounting to N4.8 billion daily (Adedeji, 2015).

7.4.3 The Weaknesses of the Presidential Amnesty Programme

The section discusses the weaknesses of the Presidential Amnesty Programme and this includes non-inclusiveness of the programme, nepotism, corruption and mismanagement, failure to address the root causes of the Niger Delta conflict and poor implementation. These points are extensively analyse below

7.4.3.1 Non-inclusive nature of the Presidential Amnesty Programme and Rewarding of Militancy

The Presidential Amnesty Programme excluded ex-agitators, who fought for the so-called liberation of the people of the Niger Delta that resulted in the late president of Nigeria, Umaru Yar'Adua proclaiming the amnesty. These groups or set of people believed they were stakeholders and may enjoy what other militants enjoyed by the virtue of having taken part in the struggle. The second and third phases of the disarmament took place to accommodate those militants excluded in the first phase and yet there are those who are still demanding to be included in the programme.

Besides, the programme failed to include the vulnerable in the society like the aged, children and widows that lost their breadwinner or those who lost properties in the course of the insurgency (Akinwale, 2010; Nwajiaku-Dahou, 2010). Moreover, the communities where the battle took place during the insurgency and those youths that did not take up arms against the state were not part of the programme.

Most of the interviewees in this study argued that the PAP was non-inclusive. They averred that it was meant for those who took up arms against the state while the law-abiding ones were excluded from the programme.

As one interviewee 007 a Youth leader said:

The amnesty programme only targeted those people that are carrying guns. Those that are kidnapping oil workers and asking for ransoms. They left out those other youths that did not join. People like us that said we would not join them. We want to struggle to go to school. The amnesty programme did not include us. There is the fear that a time will come when those that did not take up arms against the state will say if the language the government understands is taking up arms (violence) then lets me take up arms. The government encourages gangsterism, hooliganism by the way they are going about the amnesty because they are only giving money to those that took up arms while those that did not were neglected (Interview at Diobu, Port-Harcourt, Rivers State 1/6/16).

Also, an interviewee 012, an Academic speaking in an angry tone maintained that:

If the amnesty had worked why do we have the Niger Delta Avengers? In a region with say 15 million and less than a quarter is under amnesty. What do you expect to happen? It can't work. The amnesty programme is tailored toward what....to learn a trade or acquire skill. Well, it is okay for those who are learning the trade. What is the community benefiting from the programme? It is not all communities that are involved in kidnapping business. Sizeable numbers are not and yet the problems of oil still lingered in the various communities. Some people were just handpicked, and the government addressed their needs and excluded the communities. There are diverse groups with different cultures and traditions in the region, but the amnesty did not capture this. Rather, the programme has alienated the boys from their various communities. The "boys" no longer live or visit their communities, they live in big cities such as Port-Harcourt, Abuja, Lagos, (Interview at Mariri, in Taruni Local Government, Kano State, 16/7/16).

Supporting the above position, Ledum Mitee, in his insightful assessment of the amnesty programme argued that by appeasing the militants, a wrong signal is being sent that violence pay. In his words:

If you try to continually appease the militant segment of a community, what you create is a situation where people would believe that the only way they attract attention is to unleash violence. This has a profound snowballing effect because other people could begin to think this is the way to go. It also creates a situation, like I have always said that when you continue to take this appeasement measure, you create a situation where people now believe that they can get money without work... we have created that mind-set in some people that only those who can unleash some violence get attention (Mittee, 2016).

Similarly, AVM Lucky Ochuko Ararile, in his appraisal of the amnesty programme argued that it centred on militants only and warned of the dire consequences if other youths are not integrated into the programme. In his words:

One thing is to train them, and the other one is to get them employed and we are talking of about 30,000 persons. When I finished the disarmament, we actually had 20,000 plus but subsequently more were added and it is now about 30,000. We are only talking about people who carried arms or purportedly carried arms. We have a lot of youths, millions of them that are yet to be attended to in the Niger Delta. And if they are not taken care of, they might think the only way government responds to issues is when they get violent. That message need to be avoided, the youth problem must be addressed holistically in the Niger Delta and indeed Nigeria (Ogbemudiaon, 2013).

Also, Asari Dokubo, in a press interview noted that:

It is wrong for you to single out a group of people. These people when they started their agitation, according to them, they were not agitating for themselves, they were agitating on behalf of the people, so you cannot go on and give them a bribe (amnesty programme) in total exclusion of the people they claimed they were fighting for. And it is also wrong for them to accept the amnesty because they were delegates and they considered themselves as delegates, so they were on an errand for the people. So, morally it is wrong. So, the programme should be given to the oil-bearing communities and not the whole of Niger Delta. It should be given to communities who have suffered deprivation, degradation of their environment and social dislocation (Dokubo, 2013).

These findings are consistent with the extant literature (Akinwale, 2010; Albert, 2015; Ibaba, & Arugu, 2013; Nwozor, 2010; Oluwaniyi, 2010). According to Ibaba and Arugu (2013), the programme focused on the individuals (30,000 ex-agitators) needs who surrendered their arms and registered for the programme; ignoring the oil-bearing communities and non-armed individuals who shared the same belief with the ex-agitators who are being pampered.

Moreover, the non-comprehensive nature of the programme may lead to violence unless the needs of the majority or larger population are addressed (UKNDWG, 2012). Similarly, Davidheiser and Nyiayaana (2011) argued that it focuses on demobilised ex-agitators and overlooked the needs and feelings of other inhabitants of the region who also suffered from the region's numerous problems. The wholesale avoiding of disillusioned non-combatants has not only left intact the injustices fuelling the conflicts but also a widespread belief that government only reacts to law breakers with guns.

7.4.3.2 Nepotism

The Presidential Amnesty Programme (PAP) favours a particular nationalities and militia groups in the Niger Delta. The selection of the participants for the programme is based on nepotism. For instance, those responsible for implementing the programme in collaboration with some warlords recruited their relations for the programme instead of those the programme is meant to serve. This use of one's position to benefit one's family, relation or friend is what Joseph (1987) referred to it as prebendalism.

The handlers of the programme in collaboration with the ex-warlords have been accused of corruption and mismanagement of fund. For instance, the militants alleged embezzlement of funds by the handlers of the programme through non-maintenance of camps, poor feeding and living condition and non-payment of allowances (Ikelegbe, 2010). About 80-90% of the budget spent on consultants and leaving only 20 for rehabilitation of the ex-militants. The number of ex-agitators inflated by their respective leaders to cornered the resources in collaboration with the officials of the programme (Oluwaniyi, 2011; Aghedo, 2012). Most of the interviewees in the study believed that the procedure in the recruitment of the ex-militants was not transparent. The exercise was based on family ties, friends and close association.

Commenting on this, an Interviewee 006 a retired Military Officer, had this to say:

You see in this country, when the government introduces or set-up something, the usual thing people do, those that manage the programme is to go to their villages, call their relations and friend and fixed them up. What happened with the amnesty programme is that the warlords were given slots to fill for their foot soldiers, but they brought people who were not footed soldiers to fill the slots and

that's why those excluded were demanding for their inclusion in the programme (Interview at Warri, Delta State, 31/05/16).

By the same token, an Interviewee 010, Academic noted that: “the PAP was opened to the warlords and these warlords used their discretion to recruit people as ex-militants who eventually become the beneficiary of PAP.” (Interview at Tombia, Port-Harcourt, Rivers State, 2/6/16).

The quoted statements above underscored the prevalence of “man knows man” (a network of families or close relations ties) that characterised the recruitment of the militants into the PAP programme.

7.4.3.3 Failure to Address the Root Causes of the Niger Delta Conflict

Another criticism of the PAP is that it failed to address the core causes of the conflict that gave birth to the insurgency. Critics were of the view that issues such as environmental degradation, unfairness in the distribution of proceeds from the sale of crude oil otherwise known as revenue allocation, poverty, unemployment are neglected by the amnesty programme.

Commenting on this in a high tone, which depicted that the Interviewee (002) was angry, he stated that:

The issues that gave rise to the militancy are environmental degradation; neglect by the central government to the plight of the people of the region; revenue allocation ‘...’ These issues gave rise to militancy in the region and they were not addressed by the amnesty programme. What the amnesty has done is to pat the

militants on the back by rewarding their leaders with juicy contract of pipelines surveillance and the foot-soldiers with skill acquisition, training abroad, and monthly allowance which a fresh graduate in the country is not earning. The programme became another conduit pipe for our elite to milk the nation (Interview at Yenagoa, Bayelsa State, 3/5/16).

Also, expressing his view on the issue that the root causes of the conflict has not been addressed by the amnesty programme, Ledum Mitee had this to say:

I have always said militancy was not the problem of the Niger Delta; it was an extreme expression of frustration not dealing with the problems of the area. The problems of the area have been there, they have to do with the environment, corporate social responsibility, dislocated means of livelihood... None of those issues have been dealt with. All we got to hear is that some people got annoyed and carried guns and so let's buy them off. The main issues still remain and you have now even attracted a situation where people now say the only way they can feel appreciated is to carry guns so as to be like the other people who have been settled (Mittee, 2016).

The above views expressed by majority of those interviewed are consistence with extant literature Adeyemo & Olu-Adeyemi, 2010; Ekumaoko, 2013; Davidheiser & Nyiayaana, 2011; Ikelegbe, 2010; Joab-Peterside, 2011; Odemene, 2011; Omokhoa, 2015; Ushie, 2013). They all agreed that the amnesty did not address the root causes of the conflict in the Niger Delta. Ekumaoko (2013, p. 8) argues that “there is no ecological rehabilitation in the amnesty programme and poverty; lack of infrastructure and unemployment is on the rise”.

In the same vein, Ushie (2013) argues that unemployment, poverty and inequality have remained endemic despite introduction of the programme. According to Nigerian Bureau of Statistics (2012), 68% of the Niger Deltans are poor and unemployment in the region stood at 27%, six points higher than the national average. Contrary to the

majority perception that the amnesty programme has not addressed the Niger Delta Question, Ajibola (2015) in a study, stated that 79% of respondents believed the programme had addressed the demands of the people of the region.

7.4.3.4 Poor Implementation of the Presidential Amnesty Programme

The amnesty programme implementation is faulty. It is not in accordance with the Technical Committee on the Niger Delta recommendation. According to Oluwaniyi (2011), there was no proper planning for the DDR programme. Rather, the central government whose representatives were the elite from the Niger Delta together with those from the region collaborated with ex-militant's commanders who were only interested in their personal aggrandisement failed to carry along those militants on the ground.

Albert (2015) contends that amnesty was imposed by the federal government without negotiation or mediation that could have articulated the other key components of the peace process which the amnesty deal was supporting. According to him Nigerian brand of amnesty did not conform to the best global practice of empowering victims, most especially the Niger Delta oil-bearing communities devastated by oil exploration and destroyed by military operation that took place in the region.

In other part of the globe, the victims were to come out to define what the perpetrators did against them, the amnesty did not capture this. Supporting this position, some participants expressed the view its implementation was faulty. It falls short of what the Technical Committee on Niger Delta (2008) recommended. An interviewee 011, Academic had this to say:

If you look at the Technical Committee on Niger Delta (TCND) report, there were certain recommendations concerning how the region should be developed. They talk about cleaning of the environment, development of system that could reduce unemployment; that could ensure that people from this region has accessed to world class education and also a strong recommendation around derivation. The amnesty programme was one recommendation of the many recommendations and even at that, its implementation was not how it was recommended. If you look at the TCND recommendations, it recommended that amnesty should be granted to the militia groups and should be followed by DDR process. But essentially what AP turns out to be was a way of sharing money from the federal government to a group of people. So, essentially creating an elitist class that were not just politicians as if we didn't have enough problem with the politicians; within a different class of elite that also have access to the nation's resources without necessarily looking at the main issues in the region (Interview at Tombia, Port- Harcourt, Rivers State (3/6/16)

Supporting the view that the implementation of the programme was faulty. Eke (2014), noted the scantiness nature of the disarmament process, shabbiness of the demobilisation process and the ineffectualness of the reintegration process. He argued further that the resurgence of violence was an indication of its poor implementation.

Albert (2015) contends that the Niger Delta amnesty programme was a departure from the standard practice by not seeking to pursue long but short-term agenda. According to him the federal government was only interested in settling the militant to have uninterrupted supply of oil in the Niger Delta.

Similarly, Okolie-Osemene and Udeke (2013) argue that the conception and execution of the Niger Delta DDR did not reflect the important components which would have helped in the stability of the region.

There is no doubt that the amnesty programme has not addressed the core problems of the Niger Delta. The environmental degradation, unemployment, underdevelopment, poverty and so are still ravaging the region. As most of the people interviewed in this study and the secondary interviews have shown the relative peace in the region has been attributed to the president being the son of the soil and it would not do the region any good to make the country ungovernable for him. In other words, ethnicity plays significant role in the relative peace enjoyed in the region until the resurgence in the militants activity in the region in 2016.

Concurring with the above position, Annkio Briggs in an interview noted that “We step down on the agitation because Jonathan was the president” (Briggs, 2012). These views found support in Nnorom, and Odigbo (2015), they maintain that the relative peace enjoyed in the region was because of the sympathy and sentiment for President Goodluck Jonathan, who is a Deltan and not the amnesty program. They warned of grave consequences if the nation neglect to address the environmental degradation, and underdevelopment problems confronting the region.

The findings on the elites contribution to the efforts at addressing the Niger Delta conflict through the role they played in the Presidential Amnesty Programme and the contributions of this programme to human capacity development of the region found support in the inevitability and desirability of the elites in a society in the elite theory. The theory points to the need for vesting power in the hands of few people who are cohesive and knowledgeable about the need of society and how to go about addressing those needs.

The Niger Delta experience has shown that the elites were instrumental in the efforts to address the conflict by suggesting to the Federal Government of Nigeria under the leadership of late Umaru Musa Yar'adua to offer amnesty to the militants, which the government accepted and the elites of the Niger Delta extraction who recommended the programme made up the nucleus of those who implemented the programme. The programme failed to address the core problems that gave birth to militancy in the region.

7.5 Summary

The chapter examines the Presidential Amnesty Programme (P.A.P) recommended by elite of the Niger Delta extraction as a way of addressing or resolving the conflict that has engulfed the region. The chapter argues that the elite have played pivotal roles in the conception and implementation of the programme.

The chapter has identified P.A.P weaknesses to include corruption, failure to tackle the core causes of the Niger Delta conflict and poor implementation while the strengths are among others relative peace in the region, educational opportunity for the ex-militants and others, increased in oil production and revenue. It has been established that the relative peace in the region during Jonathan was due to his ethnicity and not the amnesty.

The next chapter examines, among others, the summary of the chapter by the chapter of the study, the theoretical and methodological contributions and suggestion for further study.



CHAPTER EIGHT

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

8.1 Introduction

The chapter highlights among others, the objectives of the study; chapter by chapter summary of the study; summary of the findings; study contributions; limitations of study; suggestion for further study and conclusion. The study essentially focuses on the role the elite of Niger Delta extraction played in the Niger Delta conflict. The objectives of this study as highlighted in chapter one of this thesis are to examine the elite's contribution to political -cum electoral violence in the Niger Delta; to analyse why the (elite) are demanding the control of natural resources of the region and political reorganisation of Nigeria; to examine the level of transparency and accountability of the elites in the management of the resources of the region and to examine the effectiveness or otherwise of the amnesty programme advocated for addressing the conflict in the region.

8.2 Overview, Summary and Contribution

Chapter one provides a general over view of the entire study and contains the core questions and objectives of the study as highlighted above. The study is situated within interpretivism world view and employs qualitative method and semi-structure interview as its means of data gathering. Data management is done manually and thematic analysis is used in data analysis.

Chapter two examines the review of both conceptual and related studies on Niger Delta conflict and from the review of the extant literature five themes emerged and they are: governance failure, impacts of oil on the environment, poor corporate social responsibility, strategies for addressing the conflict and defective federal structure and fiscal allocation. The combined theories (elite, resource curse and frustration-aggression) and theoretical model developed to analyse the conflict are critically analysed and their utilities to the analysis of the Niger Delta are painstakingly examined.

Chapter three focuses on the evolution of Nigerian state and how the nature of its formation and character have impacted on the Niger Delta conflict. The Nigerian state formation is categorised into three phases pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial. The chapter also examines the evolution and agitation of Niger Delta conflict and traced its evolution to colonial era and this resistance which started during colonial period has continued to this day. The Adaka Boro's secession bid of 1966 and the Ken Saro-Wiwa and his Ogoni struggle for self-determination whose death marked a turning point in the Niger Delta struggle from non-violence to violence have been critically analysed. The chapter submits that the current violence in the region which has come into existence in the early life of this present administration could be attributed to number of policies or decisions taken by the administration among which are: the fight against corruption, revocation of contracts given to some ex-warlords, etc.

In chapter Four, the role of the elite as regard violence in the Niger Delta is investigated. The emergence and composition of elite in Nigeria and Niger Delta are dissected and analysed. As the study has shown, the Nigerian elites are conglomeration of different segments of elite such as the military, economic, bureaucratic, traditional and political elites. Specifically, the chapter discusses the role of elite in the political-cum electoral violence in the Niger Delta and argues that the battles for who control the oil wealth of the region makes the political contest in the region to be prone to violence. The elite have supported violence in the region through financing, procurement of weapon and its distribution to the armed groups, hate speeches, among others. The impacts of their roles can be seen in the proliferation of SALW and armed groups in the region who engage in supremacy battle to continue to enjoy the patronage of their clients, loss of lives and property and polarisation of the region.

Chapter Five has centred on the analysis of resource control and political restructuring. It begins with the discussion of meaning of resource control and from the analysis, three types of resource control have been identified, absolute, and principal and increased revenue allocation. The rationale for resource control are among others, environmental degradation, lack of social amenities, inequity in the distribution of proceeds from the oil wealth, lack of participation in oil and gas sector.

Consequently, the agitation has led to improvement in MNOC corporate social responsibility, more attention is now given to the region through the various intervention agencies set-up by the federal government.

Nevertheless, the demands have been a publicity stunt by the elite aimed at gaining support from the people of region and to cover up for their lack of initiatives and policies that could transform the region from her present state of underdevelopment to one of the most developed part of Nigeria.

The issue of political restructuring of the polity has been examined and a recurrent decimal in the discussion is the defective nature of the current federal set-up which has necessitated the call for its reform. The argument is that the current federal system is centralized and the need for non-centralised federal structure where the component units will be financially autonomous to discharge their constitutional responsibilities.

Chapter Six, examines the role of the elite in relations to how they have managed the resources accrued to the nation and the region. The chapter analyses the historical account of corruption in the country and the regime by regime account of the personalities involved. The study indicates that the mismanagement, money laundering and embezzlement of resources which are all forms of corruption characterised the state of affair in Niger Delta region. However, it is important to note that political corruption is not peculiar to Niger Delta alone, it is a nationwide affair. But what differentiates the elite of Niger Delta extraction from others is the degree and level to which they have taken graft to.

The various personalities' involved in the mismanagement of the resources in the region are meticulously examined. The elite, therefore, have mismanaged resources from statutory allocation, 13% derivation and allocation to the intervention agencies responsible for the development of the region through NDDC, MNDA and PAP.

They have used these resources on projects that are of no benefit to the majority of the people. Projects that would improve the living standard of the people such as those on health and education are accorded less priority and evidence to this could be seen in the budgetary allocation to these social sectors. The resultant is violence which has ravaged the region due to the failure of governance in the region.

Chapter Seven discusses the Presidential Amnesty Programme (P.A.P) recommended by elite of the Niger Delta extraction as a way of tackling the conflict in the Niger Delta. From the analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the PAP examined, it can be argued that the weaknesses far outweigh the strengths and coupled with the fact that lately, there has been a resurgence in militancy activities in the region, one could conclude that the programme is a failure. It has been established that the relative peace witnessed in the region during the Jonathan administration is because he is a Niger Deltan and the resurgence in the militancy in the region under a Fulani from the northern part of the country point to the fact ethnicity cannot be ruled out in the conflict.

8.2.1 Summary of Main Findings

This section of the study summaries the key findings of the study and they are discussed below:

8.2.1.1 Political –Cum Electoral Violence

The findings from the study showed that the elite comprising of political, economic and traditional elite supported violence through recruiting, sponsorship, inciting hate speeches and procurement of arms for the boys to prosecute their heinous activities. For instance, they sponsored and armed numerous armed groups such as Niger Delta Vigilantes Service, Niger Delta People Volunteer Force, and Niger Delta Avengers.

8.2.1.2 Resource Control and Political Restructuring

The findings indicated that people of the region were dissatisfied with the state of environment of the region, the oil revenue allocation formula and the use of their resources to develop other parts of the country. Thus, the elite demanded an upward review of the present revenue allocation formula and the reconfiguration of the present political arrangement as well as devolution of more powers to the region. However, there was no unanimous agreement on who should control and manage the resources. The majority were against the Federal Government continuing control of the resources and wanted more powers devolved to the states. Others preferred the oil-bearing communities to control and manage their resources.

Moreover, contrary to the claim by the elite that the allocation of resources have been skewed in favour of other regions, this study found that resources distribution to the region has been on the rise compared to other regions in the federation but these resources have not been well utilised.

8.2.1.3 Transparency and Accountability in the Management of Resources

On the issue of transparency and accountability in the management of the oil wealth that accrued to the state. The findings revealed that there were divergence views. There was no consensus among those that took part in this study. Some believed that the elite of Niger Delta extraction could not be wholly blamed for the corruption and mismanagement of funds of the region. They argued that they had accomplice from other ethnic groups especially the major ones. Those that subscribed to this view believed that when funds were allocated to federal government agencies and extra-ministerial units responsible for development of the region, the contracts awarded by these agencies were given to people who were not from the region and the contracts were not executed.

For others, the elite of the region were not transparent and accountable in the management of the resources of the region. There were cases of money laundering, mismanagement and corruption established against some of the ruling elite in the region for which some of them had been convicted while for others, their cases are still pending in courts. The findings also showed that through their failure to effectively and efficiently manage the resources of the region, they contributed to violence.

8.2.1.4 Elite and Presidential Amnesty Programme

The elite of Niger Delta extraction also played significant role in an effort to address the conflict in the region. A classic example is the role they played in the conception and execution of the amnesty programme. Furthermore, they persuaded the boys to come out of the creeks and embraced the amnesty when the 'boys' were suspicious of the then government intentions and they (elite) also constituted the arrow head that

implemented the programme. However, the same elite were reported to have siphoned some of the resources meant for the execution of this programme.

In examining the elite' role in conflict mitigation through the lens of presidential amnesty programme, this study found out that the programme had not been able to address the fundamental or core issue that gave birth to the militancy. What the programme has succeeded in doing was to celebrate violence through the award of juicy contract to some of the ex-militant leaders and payment of monthly stipend to the foot-soldiers which is above the national minimum wage pay to fresh graduate in Nigeria.

8.3 Contribution of Study

It is expected to provide an update and better picture or understanding of the problem confronting the region. The conflict in the Niger Delta has always been examined from the lens of multi-national oil company and the federal government dominated by the majority ethnic groups lording it over the minority ethnic group and ignoring the role the elite of Niger Delta extraction played in encouraging and sustaining the conflict in the region.

This study was able to show the pivotal role played by the elite in the conflict through financing, arming and logistic support they gave to the 'boys'. Accordingly, this led to among others, insecurity, proliferation of arms and armed group and the underdevelopment of the region. As no investor will invest in a chaotic environment where there is no safety for his investment and staff.

Thus, this study has enriched our understanding of the political economy of conflict in the region through a new perspective or explanation it offers to the ongoing conflict in the region thereby contributing to the body of literature on the conflict in the region.

Interestingly, the study has brought to fore not only the involvement of the prominent elites from the region in illicit oil bunkering but also the use of the resources obtain from this illicit trade to finance electioneering campaign in the region.

8.3.1 Theoretical Contribution

The combination of theories used have enriched our understanding of the conflict and these theories are resource curse, elite and frustration-aggression theories. The relevant of these theories to the findings of this study are discussed below.

One of postulations of the elite theory is the inevitability of elite in society. The elite are the enlightened few in the society whose voices can be heard and who influence or make decisions on behalf of the mass of the people. This few minority who because of their skill, wealth, and office ruled over the majority, have spearheaded the campaign for an upward review of the revenue allocation formula, political restructuring of the polity and also steering the ship of the state in their respective states in the region. Nevertheless, the various segments of the elite in the Niger Delta were also involved in the perpetration of violence in the region through incitement of the people against the Nigerian state and multi-national oil companies.

Another relevance of this theory which the finding of this study supported is its assumption that all men like power. This assumption attests to why it is difficult for the elites to relinquish power and also accounted for the phenomenon of political violence that has characterised the body politic of the region and the country. The elite of the Niger Delta used an unorthodox method to get or retain power and this method includes election rigging and the assassination of formidable political opponents.

The resource curse which some of its postulations are poor economic performance, increased social conflict, among others. The findings of this work validated some of these assumptions. For instance, the oil-producing states of the Niger Delta despite the huge transfer from the Federation Account have not used the resources to develop the region. The region not only is the least developed of the six regions in the country, but also one of the most indebted region in the country. Specifically, the lack of transparency and accountability of the elites are corroborated by the resource curse theory which attributes the reliance of government on oil rents rather than taxation from the people for this state of affairs. The states in the region depend on statutory grant and 13% derivation allocation from the centre rather than taxation which the people could have used to make government transparent and accountable are poorly generated.

Resource curse is evident in the poor service delivery or what in local parlance is called dividends of democracy. The mismanagement of resources by the elite contributed to bad governance. In other words, resource curse is evident in the way elite of the region have resorted to corruption and plundering of the resources meant for the development of the region in order to remain relevance in the politics of the region and the country

as godfathers for those incumbent power holders and for those aspiring for elective office in the nearest future. The profligacy and waste in public expenditure exemplified by white elephant projects embarked upon by the states chief executives in the region for their own gain is an evidence of the contribution of this theory to the findings of this study.

Another assumption of the resource curse theory is that oil is an impediment to democratic practice. This assumption found expression in the neo-patrimonial nature of the region's politics in which the political gladiators could use their offices to dispense largesse to their cronies and their lack of transparency and accountability to those they governed because the resources used to administer the state was from oil rent and not taxes from the people and so, they have no reason to account for their stewardship.

Also, contrary to the resource curse thesis which states that the abundance of natural resources translates into conflict. The study has been able to show that the presence of oil alone cannot automatically translates into conflict but the role of the elite who decides how the proceeds of this God given resources are disbursed and utilised has to be considered.

This has been supported by Mahler (2010) who argued that oil added flame to the already existing socio-economic, cultural division and political-institutional factors to cause violence in the region. In essence, there are other factors that contributed to the violence in the region apart from oil while Dode (2012) findings agreed with key postulations of the theory that it has contributed to conflict, poverty and

underdevelopment of the third world countries due to bad governance and poor management of resources. Therefore, it is how the managers managed these resource that makes it to be a curse rather than blessing. Thus, the findings enhanced our understanding of the theory.

The frustration-aggression theory postulations which provide justification for aggressive behaviour also improved our understanding of this study. The theory postulates that aggression is a product of frustration and frustration is a product of aggression (Dollard, et al, cited in Berkowitz, 1989). The finding of this study corroborated the assumption that frustration can lead to aggressive behaviour. The failure of the elite to address inequity in the oil wealth distribution, mismanagement of resources, poverty, unemployment, environmental degradation, among others, made the people to be disenchanted. Consequently, they became frustrated and aggressive towards those they perceived to be responsible for their

Lastly, the theoretical framework model (see figure 2.2, p.51) designed by the author served as a guiding post that enhanced an understanding of the study. It describes the relationship among the various layers of the concentric circles. The items in each ring depend on the item in the small ring. For instance, oil is in the innermost part and closely follow by the elites and the control of this oil wealth account for a fierce battle among the elite.

Next is resource curse and its relationship to oil is that it leads to poor economic performance, hinder democracy and caused conflict among others. The resource curse concerns mismanagement of oil proceeds and whenever such issue is examined, it cannot be discussed in isolation of the elite. The next in the ring is the frustration–aggression and its relationship with oil is that the inhabitants or owners of oil except the proceeds derived from this resource to bring about qualitative change in their lives and due to mismanagement of these resources by the elite, they become frustrated and aggressive and went all out to deal with those they perceive to be responsible for their predicament using violence means.

8.3.2 Methodological Contribution

This study adopted qualitative research method, using different sources of data gathering method. The use of these various sources of data collection methods such as interview, observation, primary documents, secondary interviews and other secondary data compliment the weakness in each of the other data collection methods and thereby enhance the trustworthiness of the findings.

8.3.3 Practical Contribution

The findings from this study have implication for addressing the Niger Delta conflict. As one of the findings has shown that the elite played key role in the fuelling and sustaining the conflict through sponsorship and arming of the youth organisation and the mismanagement of funds of the region. Therefore, any resolution of the conflict must take into account this “unseen hands” that incite and benefit from the conflict.

In all, this study serves as a guide to policy makers, academics, Federal Government and its extra-agencies such as NDDC, MNDA, DSS, NIA, DIA, states and local governments in the region, CSO, local and international NGOs who are interested in the development of the region and also finding lasting solution to the resolution of the Niger Delta debacle. Put differently, the study should be of interest to aforementioned governmental and extra-ministerial agencies especially on issues relating to oil politics and violence in the Niger Delta.

8. 4 Recommendations of Study

As the findings of this study have shown oil wealth is central to violence in the Niger Delta and is responsible for the fierce battle among the elite for the soul of the region. In other words, the struggle for the control of oil wealth is the most underlying factor responsible for violence in the region. Thus, every conflict in the region has oil undertone. This section of the study recommends how the conflict in the region can be addressed and all the major stakeholders have a role to play in this regard.

The regional elite who are close to the people must ensure that they utilise the resources of the region for the development of the region through embarking on meaningful projects that take care of the needs of individuals' communities. Besides the regional elite at various levels of government must ensure that priority is given to education, health and other social amenities in order to develop human capacities of the people and thereby alleviating poverty that have become endemic in the region.

The regional elite should also mandate all tiers of government in the region and those wealthy individuals from the region to complement government efforts in establishing industries in the region to provide employment for the teeming youth of the region.

Addressing the mismanagement of resources in the region and the country at large would require restructuring of the governance system and strengthening of the existing institutions in order for them to tackle the menace of corruption. For instance, the Economic and Financial Crime Commission and Independent Corrupt Practices Commission should be well funded and free of political interference by the executives to discharge their duties.

Moreover, the legislature should be alive to its oversight function and assert its independence from the executive arm of government. In most of the states in the region, the legislature has become a rubber stamp for the executive and this has worsened the governance in the region. The so-called representative organ of the people, which could have acted as a check on the excess of the executive has become a rubber stamp.

For the legislature to do its work, it must be independent and free of executive control and interference. They should not seek financial gratification or contracts from the executive branch of government which may hinder the discharge of their duties. The State Houses of Assembly owed it a duty as the most representative organ to adhere to the letter and spirit of the Constitution by ensuring that the executive branch of government is transparent and accountable in the management of the resources of the states in the region.

The membership of this House should comprise people of impeccable moral character and knowledge who can discharge their duties without fear and favour.

There is a need for value reorientation among both the leaders and the people of the region. This becomes imperative because of value attached to violence in the region. The leadership and followership need to be sensitised on the need that they can achieve or accomplish their dreams in life through non-violent means. Thus, the commodification of violence should be discouraged by all and sundry. The campaign on this should be carried out in all print and electronic media as well as in social media in all the local languages of the region. The campaign should also be extended to the country at large. People should be told in the plain language they understand that violence is harmful to the development of the region as it chases away investors.

The people themselves too have a role to play if they want to put an end to violence and attract investment to the region. They must shun violence and advise other youths who may want to take to violence. More importantly, they should hold their leaders accountable for the resources put in their care. This they can do by voting credible and honest leaders who are selfless and have the interest of them at heart in all levels of government in the region and by extension those that will represent them at the centre.

Meanwhile, election is one way of holding leaders accountable to people. They should not go to sleep even when these leaders have been elected. The people should always put them on their toes by demanding from them transparency and accountability for their policy and actions.

In other words, they should not be docile, they should be fully involved in government activities by writing petition on any government official who is found wanting in the discharge of his duty. Moreover, they should also discharge their duties to the state. That is prompt payment of taxes. This is one of the ways by which they can demand transparency and accountability from their leaders.

Furthermore, they should also protest any government policies or programme that are anti-people. All these should be done within the ambit of law and in a peaceful manner. Lastly, they should reject at the poll any leader that failed to deliver on his campaign promises.

The multi-national oil companies operating in the region are also culpable for the violence in the region. They should stay clear of the politics in the region and fulfil their obligations to the oil bearing communities through proper funding, effective and efficient corporate social responsibilities to their host communities. They should be transparent in their dealings with them and take appropriate actions necessary to douse tension in the region when the need arises.

More so, the oil companies should conform to international practices by ensuring that the environment is well protected and when oil spill occurs prompt measure should be taken and they should put an end to gas flaring in the region.

Besides, they should give priority to indigenes of the area when recruiting their Nigerian staff. This would make them a stakeholder in the oil companies operating in their areas. It is not the usual pipeline surveillance contract given to the local communities but top management positions for those indigenous people that are qualified.

The central government also has a role to play in the resolution of the conflict in the region. The government should ensure that the multi-national oil companies comply with international practices by putting an end to the reckless destruction of the environment and gas flaring. Moreover, the Federal Government should ensure the participation of the people of the region in oil and gas sector of the economy by allocating oil blocks to the indigenous people of the area.

In addition, the current federal structure is centralised. Therefore, there is need for the central government to devolve some of its legislative and taxing power to the states. For instance, the central government should devolve such items as mines and minerals, Labour (wages), primary education and taxing powers like mining rents and royalty as well as value-added tax (VAT) to the states.

These recommendations if implemented by all the major stakeholders in and out of the region will go a long way in addressing the Niger Delta imbroglio. The stakeholders owed it a duty to ensure that peace and tranquillity return to the region so that development can take place. As the saying goes peace is a requisite for development.

8. 5 Challenges and Limitations of the Study

Although this study has some contributions as indicated in the foregoing, it has also a number of limitations. Some of the participants declined to participate at the last minute and this was augmented by print interviews of some of the dramatic personae or major stakeholders in the conflict. And those that participated were not willing to go for another round of the interview session. They also complained of the duration of the interview and this necessitated the change of the proposed phenomenological study design and its replacement with case study not as a design per se but as an object of study.

Another limitation of this study was the issue of non-response bias. In other words, the accuracy of the interview used as a means of data gathering in this study depended on the honesty of the participants. To get around this problem, the researcher used existing literature to verify data collected from the participants.

Moreover, the study was restricted to conflict associated with oil and political violence in the region and perpetrated by armed groups supported by some elite in the region against the Nigerian State. The study focused on four of the nine states in the region. Though other states in the region were mentioned during the research but the focus of the study was on the four states (Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Delta and Rivers State).

Furthermore, the findings of the study may be limited in their generalisability, but the findings of this study may be used as a basis for developing an approach for measuring the moderating or mediating effects of regional elites in the relationship between oil politics and violence in the Niger Delta of Nigeria.

8.6 Suggestions for Further Research

The issue of oil and conflict in developing nations will continue to attract the attention of policy makers and scholars if the elite continued to mismanage the resources of the states and also promotes violence through patronage of armed groups. Further studies can be extended to other geo-political zone of the country. For instance, north-east geopolitical zone of the country is presently experiencing armed insurrection waged by an Islamic fundamentalist group called the Boko Haram. The study should examine the role the elite of the region played vis-a vis the one played by the Niger Delta elite in order to establish or refine the strategic role elite play in furthering and sustaining conflict.

Moreover, a comparative study of the roles of elite in oil and non-oil countries should also be conducted to prove or refine the assertion that elite struggle for the control of oil wealth accounted for violence in the Niger Delta.

As indicated earlier, this study employs qualitative method to examine the role of elites in the Niger Delta conflict. Other studies can carry out quantitative analyses of the conflict. For example, investigating the moderating effect of elites on the relationship between oil politics and political violence.

8.7 Conclusion

From the foregoing findings, there is no doubt that the elite of Niger Delta extraction played significant role in fuelling and sustaining the Niger Delta conflict through the various means identified above.

However, they were not the only culprits in this venture, the multi-national oil companies and the central government were also instrumental to the conflict in the region. But it is very important to note that their roles in this conflict far outweigh others. They had the opportunity to put the development of the region in the front burner but they failed to utilise the opportunity. The immediate past president of Nigeria is from the Niger Delta Dr. Goodluck Jonathan spent five years as president and instead of focusing on the development of the region, his government through political settlement awarded contract to those few militant leaders that were not allowing oil to flow in the region thereby missing the golden opportunity to right the wrong of the previous administrations headed by the majority ethnic groups.

Moreover, the different segments of the elites ranging from the traditional rulers, businessmen and the political elite as well as the ex-warlords who have made fortune through their militancy did not invest their money in their immediate state or communities or use their resources to solve their communities needs. Rather, some of these elites including the so-called Generals invested their money in Lagos, Abuja and others outside the shore of Nigeria.

Furthermore, the state chief executives in the region failed to establish industries that will create employment opportunity for the army of unemployed youth in the region. The region is well blessed with numerous other resources which they could have exploited in junction with the private sector or the states in the region coming together to pool their resources and establish a joint palm oil plantation, rubber industries, agro-allied industries as well as petro-chemical industries.

But they did not, instead they continued to agitate for more resources when they have failed to account for the little they received. In other states of the country that are not enjoying the derivation, they are forging ahead. For example, the joint rice venture between Lagos and Kebbi States known as Lake Rice has created employment opportunity and additional sources of revenues for the two states involved in this venture. This is a clarion call for the elite in the Niger Delta to be innovative and committed to improving the lots of their people. They should learn from the collaboration of these two states.

In the final analysis, the role of the elite of Niger Delta extraction in the Niger Delta conflict can be seen from both positive and negative angles. From the positive side, they contributed immensely to efforts to improve the lots of their people through their demands for justice and equity from both the Nigerian state and the multi-national companies operating in the region. These demands especially that from the Nigerian state resulted in an upward revenue allocation formula and the return of derivation as basis for revenue sharing. Besides, the elite's effort also led to the emergence of Dr. Goodluck Jonathan as the first Ijaw ethnic nationality to be the president of Nigeria.

They have also contributed to efforts in addressing the conflict in the region through the amnesty programme. The elite from the region ensured that the boys were persuaded to come out of the creeks and embrace the amnesty and constituted the team that implemented the programme. Presently, the Niger Delta elite through Pan Niger Delta Elders Forum (PANDEF) once again are mediating in current conflict in the region between the Niger Delta Avengers and the Federal Government.

The negative contributions of the elite were: they supported violence in the region through sponsoring, arming, inciting and protecting the boys from law enforcement agencies and justice. By and large, if all the major stakeholders in the conflict failed to play their roles particularly the elite from the region, failed to play their roles, peace will remain a mirage in the region.



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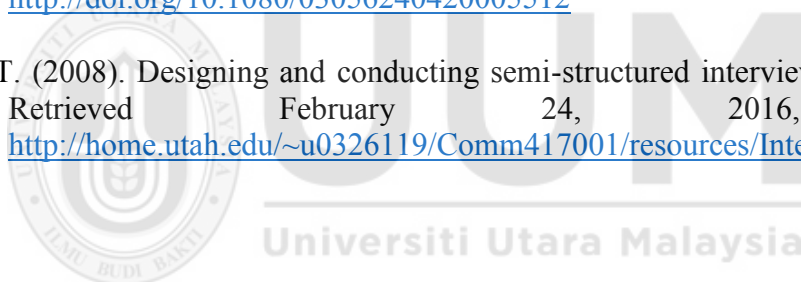
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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Consent Form



Consent Form

Dear Sir/ Madam,

I am a doctoral student of the School of International Studies at Universiti Utara Malaysia. I am conducting research on the topic “Oil Politics and Violence in the Niger Delta of Nigeria: The Role of the Regional Elites”. The objectives of the study are: to examine the roles played by the elite in the political violence in the region; analyse the reasons for resource control and political restructuring of Nigeria by the elites of the Niger Delta; assess the effectiveness of the amnesty programme championed by the elite of the Niger Delta and to exam the level of transparency and accountability of the elite of Niger Delta in the management of the oil rent of the region.

You have been chosen as one of the participants for this study. As such, I am writing to request that you spare some of your valuable time to give me an audience. If you accept participation in this study, the researcher will conduct a face-to-face interview with you at a time and place convenient for you. The interview will be audio recorded and it will last for an hour.

Your participation in this research is voluntary and you should feel free to withdraw from the study at any stage and for whatever cause. You may also wish not to react to any questions that you are not comfy with.

There are no major risks expected from your participation in this study. Your participation may provide you with a sense of self-pride knowing that you could assist in getting a permanent resolution to the conflict in the Niger Delta. Please, also note that there will be no compensation for taking part in this study.

All data collected during the interview will be treated with extreme confidentiality. Your name or anything that identifies you will not be included in the information you provide and this information will simply be utilized for the study alone.

The researcher can be reached in Nigeria through this phone number 08068327593. If you have any question about the study before or after the interviews, you can reach the researcher via email at babsadeosun90@gmail.com. You may also contact my supervisor Dr. Norafidah Ismail at norafidah@uum.edu.my.

Thank you.

Yours Sincerely,

Ahmed. B. Adeosun

DECLARATION

I -----hereby confirm that I have read and understood fully the contents of this document and the nature of the study and hereby consent to participate in the study. I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the study at any time, should I so desire.

Signature ----- Date.....

Researcher's Signature----- Date-----



Appendix A : Interview Protocol

Study: Oil Politics and Violence in Niger Delta of Nigeria: The Role of the Regional Elites

Time of Interview:

Date:

Place:

Interviewer:

Interviewee:

Position of the interviewee:

Questions:

1. How do the regional elites contribute politically to the Niger Delta conflict?

Specific question

In your opinion, how do the elites contribute to oil-related and political-cum electoral violence that have ravaged the region?

2. There have been agitation by the leaders from this region for resource control and political restructuring of the polity. Why this call and what is your take on this?

Specific questions:

- a. What is resource control?
 - b. Why are the elites agitating for resource control and political restructuring?
 - c. What is your assessment of the role of the elites in the demand for resource control and political restructuring?
3. The major stakeholders in this region through the Technical Committee on Niger Delta recommended the Amnesty Programme as a solution to the Niger

Delta conflict. What is your assessment of the programme and the role of the elites in its formulation and execution?

4. What is your take on the level of transparency and accountability of the Niger Delta elites in the management of the resource of the region?
5. Is there anything else you would like to discuss on regional elites' role in the Niger Delta crisis that you did not have an opportunity to speak about?

Thank you very much for participating in this interview and I like to assure you of the confidentiality of your responses and potential future interviews.



Appendix C: Ogoni Bill of Rights

OGONI BILL OF RIGHTS

PRESENTED TO THE GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE OF NIGERIA October,
1990

WITH

AN APPEAL TO THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

By

The Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP) December, 1991
Published by Saros International Publishers, 24 Aggrey Road, PO Box 193, Port Harcourt,
Nigeria for The Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP) June 1992

WE, the people of Ogoni (Babbe, Gokana, Ken Khana, Nyo Khana and Tai) numbering about 500,000 being a separate and distinct ethnic nationality within the Federal Republic of Nigeria, wish to draw the attention of the Governments and people of Nigeria to the undermentioned facts:

1. That the Ogoni people, before the advent of British colonialism, were not conquered or colonized by any other ethnic group in present-day Nigeria.
2. That British colonization forced us into the administrative division of Opobo from 1908 to 1947.
3. That we protested against this forced union until the Ogoni Native Authority was created in 1947 and placed under the then Rivers Province.
4. That in 1951 we were forcibly included in the Eastern Region of Nigeria where we suffered utter neglect.
5. That we protested against this neglect by voting against the party in power in the Region in 1957, and against the forced union by testimony before the Willink Commission of Inquiry into Minority Fears in 1958.
6. That this protest led to the inclusion of our nationality in Rivers State in 1967, which State consists of several ethnic nationalities with differing cultures, languages and aspirations.
7. That oil was struck and produced in commercial quantities on our land in 1958 at K. Dere (Bomu oilfield).
8. That oil has been mined on our land since 1958 to this day from the following oilfields: (i) Bomu (ii) Bodo West (iii) Tai (iv) Korokoro (v) Yorla (vi) Lubara Creek and (vii) Afam by Shell Petroleum Development Company (Nigeria) Limited.
9. That in over 30 years of oil mining, the Ogoni nationality have provided the Nigerian nation with a total revenue estimated at over 40 billion Naira (N40 billion) or 30 billion dollars.

10. That in return for the above contribution, the Ogoni people have received NOTHING.

11. That today, the Ogoni people have:

(i) No representation whatsoever in ALL institutions of the Federal Government of Nigeria;

(ii) No pipe-borne water;

(iii) No electricity;

(iv) No job opportunities for the citizens in Federal, State, public sector or private sector companies;

(v) No social or economic project of the Federal Government.

12. That the Ogoni languages of Gokana and Khana are underdeveloped and are about to disappear, whereas other Nigerian languages are being forced on us.

13. That the Ethnic policies of successive Federal and State Governments are gradually pushing the Ogoni people to slavery and possible extinction.

14. That the Shell Petroleum Development Company of Nigeria Limited does not employ Ogoni people at a meaningful or any level at all, in defiance of the Federal government's regulations.

15. That the search for oil has caused severe land and food shortages in Ogoni one of the most densely populated areas of Africa (average: 1,500 per square mile; national average: 300 per square mile).

16. That neglectful environmental pollution laws and substandard inspection techniques of the Federal authorities have led to the complete degradation of the Ogoni environment, turning our homeland into an ecological disaster.

17. That the Ogoni people lack education, health and other social facilities.

18. That it is intolerable that one of the richest areas of Nigeria should wallow in abject poverty and destitution.

19. That successive Federal administrations have trampled on every minority right enshrined in the Nigerian Constitution to the detriment of the Ogoni and have by administrative structuring and other noxious acts transferred Ogoni wealth exclusively to other parts of the Republic.

20. That the Ogoni people wish to manage their own affairs.

NOW, therefore, while reaffirming our wish to remain a part of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, we make demand upon the Republic as follows:

That the Ogoni people be granted POLITICAL AUTONOMY to participate in the affairs of the Republic as a distinct and separate unit by whatever name called, provided that this Autonomy guarantees the following:

- (i) Political control of Ogoni affairs by Ogoni people;
- (ii) The right to the control and use of a fair proportion of OGONI economic resources for Ogoni development;
- (iii) Adequate and direct representation as of right in all Nigerian national institutions;
- (iv) The use and development of Ogoni languages in all Nigerian territory;
- (v) The full development of Ogoni culture;
- (vi) The right to religious freedom; and
- (vii) The right to protect the OGONI environment and ecology from further degradation.

We make the above demand in the knowledge that it does not deny any other ethnic group in the Nigerian Federation of their rights and that it can only conduce to peace, justice and fairplay and hence stability and progress in the Nigerian nation.

We make the demand in the belief that, as Obafemi Awolowo has written: In a true federation, each ethnic group no matter how small, is entitled to the same treatment as any other ethnic group, no matter how large.

We demand these rights as equal members of the Nigerian Federation who contribute and have contributed to the growth of the Federation and have a right to expect full returns from that Federation.

Adopted by general acclaim of the Ogoni people on the 26th day of August, 1990 at Bori, Rivers State and signed by: (see under).

ADDENDUM TO THE Ogoni BILL OF RIGHTS

We, the people of Ogoni, being a separate and distinct ethnic nationality within the Federal Republic of Nigeria, hereby state as follows:

- (a) That on October 2, 1990 we addressed an Ogoni Bill of Rights to the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, General Ibrahim Babangida and members of the Armed Forces Ruling Council;
- (b) That after a one-year wait, the President has been unable to grant us the audience which we sought to have with him in order to discuss the legitimate demands contained in the Ogoni Bill of Rights;
- (c) That our demands as outlined in the Ogoni Bill of Rights are legitimate, just and our inalienable right and in accord with civilized values worldwide;
- (d) That the Government of the Federal Republic has continued, since October 2, 1990, to decree measures and implement policies which further marginalize the Ogoni people, denying us political autonomy, our rights to our resources, to the development of our languages and culture, to adequate representation as of right in all Nigerian national institutions and to the protection of our environment and ecology from further degradation;

(e) That we cannot sit idly by while we are, as a people, dehumanized and slowly exterminated and driven to extinction even as our rich resources are siphoned off to the exclusive comfort and improvement of other Nigerian communities, and the shareholders of multi-national oil companies.

NOW, therefore, while re-affirming our wish to remain a part of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, we hereby authorize the Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP) to make representation, for as long as these injustices continue, to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, the Commonwealth Secretariat, the African Commission on Human and Peoples rights, the European Community and all international bodies which have a role to play in the preservation of our nationality, as follows:

1. That the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria has, in utter disregard and contempt for human rights, since independence in 1960 till date, denied us our political rights to self-determination, economic rights to our resources, cultural rights to the development of our languages and culture, and social rights to education, health and adequate housing and to representation as of right in national institutions.
2. That, in particular, the Federal Republic of Nigeria has refused to pay us oil royalties and mining rents amounting to an estimated 20 billion US dollars for petroleum mined from our soil for over thirty-three years.
3. That the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria does not protect any of our rights whatsoever as an ethnic minority of 500,000 in a nation of about 100 million people and that the voting power and military might of the majority ethnic groups have been used remorselessly against us at every point in time.
4. That multi-national oil companies, namely Shell (Dutch/British) and Chevron (American) have severally and jointly devastated our environment and ecology, having flared gas in our villages for 33 years and caused oil spillages, blow-outs etc., and have dehumanized our people, denying them employment and those benefits which industrial organizations in Europe and America routinely contribute to their areas of operation.
5. That the Nigerian elite (bureaucratic, military, industrial and academic) have turned a blind eye and a deaf ear to these acts of dehumanization by the ethnic majority and have colluded with all the agents of destruction aimed at us.
6. That we cannot seek restitution in the courts of law in Nigeria as the act of expropriation of our rights and resources has been institutionalized in the 1979 and 1989 Constitutions of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, which Constitutions were acts of a Constituent Assembly imposed by a military regime and do not, in any way, protect minority rights or bear resemblance to the tacit agreement made at Nigerian independence.

7. That the Ogoni people abjure violence in their just struggle for their rights within the Federal Republic of Nigeria but will, through every lawful means, and for as long as is necessary, fight for social justice and equity for themselves and their progeny, and in particular demand political autonomy as a distinct and separate unit within the Nigerian nation with full right to (i) control Ogoni political affairs; (ii) use at least fifty per cent of Ogoni economic resources for Ogoni development; (iii) protect the Ogoni environment and ecology from further degradation; and (iv) ensure the full restitution of the harm done to the health of our people by the flaring of gas, oil spillages, oil blow-outs, etc. by the following oil companies: Shell, Chevron and their Nigerian accomplices.

8. That without the intervention of the international community the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and the ethnic majority will continue these noxious policies until the Ogoni people are obliterated from the face of the earth.

Adopted by general acclaim of the Ogoni people on the 26th day of August 1991 at Bori, Rivers State of Nigeria.

Signed on behalf of the Ogoni people by:

BABBE:

HRH Mark Tsaro-Igbara, Gbenemene Babbe; HRH F.M.K. Noryaa, Menebua, Ka-Babbe; Chief M.A.M. Tornwe III, JP; Prince J.S. Sangha; Dr. Israel Kue; Chief A.M.N. Gua.

GOKANA:

HRH James P. Bagia, Gberesako XI, Gberemene Gokana; Chief E.N. Kobani, JP Tonsimene Gokana; Dr. B.N. Birabi; Chief Kemte Giadom, JP; Chief S.N. Orage.

KEN-KHANA:

HRH M.H.S. Eguru, Gbenemene Ken-Khane; HRH C.B.S. Nwikina, Emah III, Menebua Bom; Mr. M.C. Daanwii; Chief T.N. Nwieke; Mr. Ken Saro-wiwa; Mr. Simeon Idemyor.

NYO-KHANA:

HRH W.Z.P. Nzidee, Genemene Baa I of Nyo-Khana; Dr. G.B. Leton, OON, JP; Mr. Lekue Lah-Loolo; Mr. L.E. Mwara; Chief E.A. Apenu; Pastor M.P. Maeba. TAI: HRH B.A. Mballey, Gbenemene Tai; HRH G.N. Gininwa, Menebua Tua Tua; Chief J.S. Agbara; Chief D.J.K. Kumbe; Chief Fred Gwezia; HRH A. Demor-Kanni, Meneba Nonwa.

THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY SHOULD:

1. Prevail on the American Government to stop buying Nigerian oil. It is stolen property.
2. Prevail on Shell and Chevron to stop flaring gas in Ogoni.
3. Prevail on the Federal Government of Nigeria to honour the rights of the Ogoni people to self-determination and AUTONOMY.
4. Prevail on the Federal Government of Nigeria to pay all royalties and mining rents collected on oil mined from Ogoni since 1958.
5. Prevail on the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund to stop giving loans to the Federal Government of Nigeria; all loans which depend for their repayment on the exploitation of Ogoni oil resources.
6. Send urgent medical and other aid to the Ogoni people.
7. Prevail on the United Nations, the Organisation of African Unity and the Commonwealth of Nations to either get the Federal Government of Nigeria to obey the rules and mores of these organisations, face sanctions or be expelled from them.
8. Prevail on European and American Governments to stop giving aid and credit to the Federal Government of Nigeria as aid and credit only go to encourage the further dehumanization of the Ogoni people.
9. Prevail on European and American Governments to grant political refugee status to all Ogoni people seeking protection from the political persecution and genocide at the hands of the Federal Government of Nigeria.
10. Prevail on Shell and Chevron to pay compensation to the Ogoni People for ruining the Ogoni environment and the health of Ogoni men, women and children.

Appendix D: The kaiama Declaration

THE KAIAMA DECLARATION

by

IJAW YOUTHS OF THE NIGER DELTA

BEING COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT THE END OF THE ALL IJAW YOUTHS CONFERENCE WHICH HELD IN THE TOWN OF KAIAMA THIS 11TH DAY OF DECEMBER 1998

INTRODUCTION

We, Ijaw youths drawn from over five hundred communities from over 40 clans that make up the Ijaw nation and representing 25 representative organisations met, today, in Kaiama to deliberate on the best way to ensure the continuous survival of the indigenous peoples of the Ijaw ethnic nationality of the Niger Delta within the Nigerian state.

After exhaustive deliberations, the Conference observed:

- a. That it was through British colonisation that the IJAW NATION was forcibly put under the Nigerian State
- b. That but for the economic interests of the imperialists, the Ijaw ethnic nationality would have evolved as a distinct and separate sovereign nation, enjoying undiluted political, economic, social, and cultural AUTONOMY.
- c. That the division of the Southern Protectorate into East and West in 1939 by the British marked the beginning of the balkanisation of a hitherto territorially contiguous and culturally homogeneous Ijaw people into political and administrative units, much to our disadvantage. This trend is continuing in the balkanisation of the Ijaws into six states- Ondo, Edo, Delta, Bayelsa, Rivers and Akwa Ibom States, mostly as minorities who suffer socio-political, economic, cultural and psychological deprivations.
- d. That the quality of life of Ijaw people is deteriorating as a result of utter neglect, suppression and marginalisation visited on Ijaws by the alliance of the Nigerian state and transnational oil companies.
- e. That the political crisis in Nigeria is mainly about the struggle for the control of oil mineral resources which account for over 80% of GDP, 95 %of national budget and 90% of foreign exchange earnings. From which, 65%, 75% and 70% respectively are derived from within the Ijaw nation. Despite these huge contributions, our reward from the Nigerian State remains avoidable deaths resulting from ecological devastation and military repression.

f. That the unabating damage done to our fragile natural environment and to the health of our people is due in the main to uncontrolled exploration and exploitation of crude oil and natural gas which has led to numerous oil spillages, uncontrolled gas flaring, the opening up of our forests to loggers, indiscriminate canalisation, flooding, land subsidence, coastal erosion, earth tremors etc. Oil and gas are exhaustible resources and the complete lack of concern for indiscriminate canalisation, flooding, land subsidence, coastal erosion, earth tremors etc. Oil and gas are exhaustible resources and the complete lack of concern for ecological rehabilitation, in the light of the Oloibiri experience, is a signal of impending doom for the peoples of Ijawland.

g. That the degradation of the environment of Ijawland by transnational oil companies and the Nigerian State arise mainly because Ijaw people have been robbed of their natural rights to ownership and control of their land and resources through the instrumentality of undemocratic Nigerian State legislations such as the Land Use Decree of 1978, the Petroleum Decrees of 1969 and 1991, the Lands (Title Vesting etc.) Decree No. 52 of 1993 (Osborne Land Decree), the National Inland Waterways Authority Decree No. 13 of 1997 etc.

h. That the principle of Derivation in Revenue Allocation has been consciously and systematically obliterated by successive regimes of the Nigerian state. We note the drastic reduction of the Derivation Principle from 100% (1953), 50% (1960), 45% (1970), 20% (1975) 2% (1982), 1.5% (1984) to 3% (1992 to date), and a rumoured 13% in Abacha's 1995 undemocratic and unimplemented Constitution.

i. That the violence in Ijawland and other parts of the Niger Delta area, sometimes manifesting in intra and inter-ethnic conflicts are sponsored by the State and transnational oil companies to keep the communities of the Niger Delta area divided, weak and distracted from the causes of their problems.

j. That the recent revelations of the looting of national treasury by the Abacha junta is only a reflection of an existing and continuing trend of stealing by public office holders in the Nigerian state. We remember the over 12 billion dollars Gulf war windfall, which was looted by Babangida and his cohorts We note that over 70% of the billions of dollars being looted by military rulers and their civilian collaborators is derived from our ecologically devastated Ijawland.

Based on the foregoing, we, the youths of Ijawland, hereby make the following resolutions to be known as the Kaiama Declaration:

1. All land and natural resources (including mineral resources) within the Ijaw territory belong to Ijaw communities and are the basis of our survival.
2. We cease to recognise all undemocratic decrees that rob our peoples/communities of the right to ownership and control of our lives and resources, which were enacted without our participation and consent. These include the Land Use Decree and The Petroleum Decree etc.

3. We demand the immediate withdrawal from Ijawland of all military forces of occupation and repression by the Nigerian State. Any oil company that employs the services of the armed forces of the Nigerian State to "protect" its operations will be viewed as an enemy of the Ijaw people. Family members of military personnel stationed in Ijawland should appeal to their people to leave the Ijaw area alone.

4 ... Ijaw youths in all the communities clans in the Niger Delta will take steps to implement these resolutions beginning from the 30th of December, 1998, as a step towards reclaiming the control of our lives. We, therefore, demand that all oil companies stop all exploration and exploitation activities in the Ijaw area. We are tired of gas flaring; oil spillages, blowouts and being labelled saboteurs and terrorists. It is a case of preparing the noose for our hanging. We reject this labelling. Hence, we advise all oil companies staff and contractors to withdraw from Ijaw territories by the 30th December, 1998 pending the resolution of the issue of resource ownership and control in the Ijaw area of the Niger Delta

5. Ijaw youths and Peoples will promote the principle of peaceful coexistence between all Ijaw communities and with our immediate neighbours, despite the provocative and divisive actions of the Nigerian State, transnational oil companies and their contractors. We offer a hand of friendship and comradeship to our neighbors: the Itsekiri, Ilaje, Urhobo, Isoko, Edo, Ibibio, Ogoni, Ekpeye, Ikwerre etc. We affirm our commitment to joint struggle with the other ethnic nationalities in the Niger delta area for self-determination.

6. We express our solidarity with all peoples organisations and ethnic nationalities in Nigeria and elsewhere who are struggling for self-determination and justice. In particular we note the struggle of the Oodua peoples Congress (OPC), the Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (Mosop), Egi Women's Movement etc.

7. We extend our hand of solidarity to the Nigerian oil workers (NUPENG and PENGASSAN) and expect that they will see this struggle for freedom as a struggle for humanity

8. We reject the present transition to civil rule programme of the Abubakar regime, as it is not preceded by restructuring of the Nigerian federation. The way forward is a Sovereign National Conference of equally represented ethnic nationalities to discuss the nature of a democratic federation of Nigerian ethnic nationalities. Conference noted the violence and killings that characterized the last local government elections in most parts of the Niger Delta. Conference pointed out that these electoral conflicts are a manifestation of the undemocratic and unjust nature of the military transition programme. Conference affirmed therefore, that the military are incapable of enthroning true democracy in Nigeria.

9 We call on all Ijaws to remain true to their Ijawness and to work for the total liberation of our people. You have no other true home but that which is in Ijawland.

10 We agreed to remain within Nigeria but to demand and work for Self Government and resource control for the Ijaw people. Conference approved that the best way for Nigeria is a federation of ethnic nationalities. The federation should be run on the basis equality and social justice.

Finally, Ijaw youths resolve to set up the Ijaw Youth Council (IYC) to coordinate the struggle of Ijaw peoples for self-determination and justice.

Signed for the entire participants by:
Felix Tuodolo and Timi Kaiser-Wilhelm Ogoriba



Appendix E: Research Participants

Interviewee 1

Traditional Ruler, A paramount ruler from one of the towns in Yenagoa Local Government Area of the Bayelsa State. A key position holder in the Bayelsa Traditional Council and also a member of the Pan Niger Delta Elder Forum (PANDEF).

Interviewee 2

Youth from Yenagoa, Bayelsa State, an environmental activist and a staunch member of the Ijaw Youth Congress, Secretary Niger Delta Wetland Centre, Yenagoa. The interviewee has participated in numerous effort to protect the environment through advocacy programme and effort to alleviate poverty in the region through empowerment programme which the centre coordinates.

Interviewee 3

A youth from Amasssoma in Bayelsa State. An ex-agitator turned environmentalist and has been active in campaign for the protection of environment and peace in the region.

Interviewee 4

A Community leader, Director in Bayelsa State Civil Service and Chairman of Civil Liberties Organisation. He has been involved in the security related issues in the state. He is a member of State Security Council and work with security agencies such as JTF, DSS and others to monitor and nip in the bud the activities of the militants in the state. He has written several articles on Niger Delta conflict.

Interviewee 5

A Senior Advocate of Nigeria, Politician and Opinion leader, Warri, Delta. He was a member of the House of Assembly in the old Bendel State (now Edo and Delta) in the Second Republic and also Special Assistant to the Governor in the short-lived administration of Late Brigadier-General Samuel Ogbomudia in the Second Republic. A loyal member of South- South Peoples Assembly and PANDEF

Interviewee 6

A Community Leader, retired Senior Military Personnel and current Commandant-General Eagle Flight Chaplain and Elder, Warri Delta State He has served in different formations in the state and the country and since retirement, he has been involved in peace advocacy and training of youth. He was former Adviser on Security Matters to Chief Felix Ibru, the former Governor of Delta State. A staunch member of South-South People Assembly and PANDEF.

Interviewee 7

A Youth Leader and politician from Sagbama. He was former Speaker of the Local Government legislative branch of government and a Doctoral candidate at University of Port-Harcourt. He was Supervisory Councillor for Works in Sagbama Local Government Area. An ex- officio member of the Ijaw Youth Council, the apex youth organisation in the region.

Interviewee 8

A Senior Official of the largest non-governmental organisation in the region, Partnership Initiative in the Niger Delta (PIND). He has trained over 300 people from over 50 different communities across the region on preventing, mitigating and reporting elections related violence before and after elections. He has authored several articles on Niger Delta conflict and convened and presided several stakeholders engagement forum with Police, Department of State Service, Independent National Electoral Commission, Traditional rulers and youth.

Interviewee 9

An High Chief from Olobiri in Bayelsa State and Ellu kingdom in Delta State and also a Network Coordinator for a Civil Society Organisation that involves in peace building in the region. Former Special Adviser on Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs in Bayelsa State in the Timipre Sylva's administration.

Interviewee 10

An Academician, Senior Research Fellow, French Institute for Research in Africa (IFRA), University of Ibadan and Research Coordinator Partnership Initiatives in the Niger Delta (PIND). An Early Warning and Research Coordinator at Chevron's Foundation for Partnership Initiatives in the Niger Delta (PIND). He has written extensively on Niger Delta conflict and was involved in the broker of peace between two ex- militants leaders, Asari Dokubo and Ateke Tom.

Interviewee 11

An Academician, Senior Research Fellow and Peace building Coordinator Partnership Initiatives in the Niger Delta (PIND). He was at one time Special Assistant on Youth to the erstwhile governor of Rivers State, Dr Peter Odili and member of a Steering Committee on River State amnesty programme and has been involved in training as well as advocacy for peace throughout the length and breadth of the region. He has authored several articles, organises workshop and seminars on peace building throughout the length and breadth of the region.

Interviewee 12

An Academician, Nigerian Police Academy, Kano and Former Head of Security Unit at Shell Nigeria Limited. He has authored and co-authored several articles on Niger Delta conflict. As an employee of Shell, he was involved in the distribution of compensation to oil producing community's security surveillance and protection of oil installations. He was an ex-agitator, who in the past has been involved in the Niger Delta struggle.

Other Interviewees

13. Chief Edwin Clark- Leader South-South People Assembly, South-South Peoples Congress, Pan Niger Delta Elder Forum, Leader of the South-South to the 2014 National Conference, former Federal Commissioner for Information, Commissioner for Education in the old Mid-West State, Commissioner for Finance in the defunct Bendel State (now Edo and Delta states).
14. Annkio Briggs, an environmentalist and human rights activist, founder and executive director of Agape Birthrights, a non-governmental organisation and spokesperson for both Ijaw Republican Assembly and United Niger Delta Energy Development Security Strategy. A delegate to the 2014 National Conference.
15. Ledum Mitee, an environmentalist, President of the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP), former Chairman of the Technical Committee on Niger Delta (TCND), Chairman of Nigerian Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative, NEITI and delegate to the 2014 National Conference.
16. Lucky Ochuko Ararile, imperial majesty, the Ovie of Umiaghwa-Abraka Kingdom in Ethiope-East Local Government Area of Delta State. A retired AVM and pioneer Coordinator of the Presidential Amnesty Programme for ex-militants.
17. Joseph Evah, an Ijaw activist, coordinator of Ijaw Monitoring Group and erstwhile publicity secretary of Ijaw apex ethnic group, Ijaw National Congress and member Pan Niger Delta Elder Forum (PANDEF).
18. Asari Dokubo, an ex-militant, former president Ijaw Youth Council, an influential pressure group that seeks to influence government policies in favour of the region.; founder Niger Delta People's Volunteer Force, one of the dreaded militia groups that operated in the region.