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**NIGER DELTA DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (NDDC) AND THE
DEVELOPMENT OF THE OIL PRODUCING COMMUNITIES: A CASE STUDY
OF RIVERS STATE**

BY

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APPROVAL

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DEDICATION

This work is wholly dedicated to the three most important people in my life, Peace Deinma, Favour Miebaka and their, Mother Amaka Orumie.

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ABSTRACT

This work is a critical analysis of the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) and the Development of oil producing communities: A case study of Rivers State. This simply means that after the research work which is on a particular state is concluded, generalization will be made to discover whether the commission has fared better than its predecessors that is Niger Delta Basin Development Authority (NDBDA); and the oil Mineral Producing Area Development Commission (OMPADEC) which were earlier Commissioned to address the same developmental problems facing the Niger Delta Communities of Nigeria which are situated in very difficult terrain and were blessed with the so called black gold that is, Crude Oil. However, the fact remains that only a political will on the part of the Federal Government can actually turn around the Plight of the people in the area.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Historically, the Niger Delta region was given a special development status by the then out-going colonial administration in the late 1950s. This followed agitations by the people of the area to be given a state of their own that is separate and distinct from the former Eastern Region; citing Igbo domination and hegemony as their main reason. According to Ojiako (1981) rather than recommend for the creation of a new state, the minority commission which was set up on September, 25, 1957 by the colonial secretary Sir Lennox-Boyd on the recommendation of the creation of a special area and that a federal Board be established to formulate and execute a programme of development.

Ogionwo (1997) states that the minority commission which was headed by Sir Henry Willink was admonished that "if, but only if, no other solution seemed to the commission to meet the case then as last resort to make detailed recommendation for the creation of one or more new states and in that case:

- i. To specify the precise area to be included in such state or states.
- ii. To recommend the governmental and administrative structure most appropriate for it.
- iii. To assess whether any new state recommended would be viable from an economic and administration point of view and what the effect of its creation would be on the

region from which it would be created and on the federation.

It can be observed from the very beginning that the colonial authorities did not want the issue of state creation to becloud their overwhelming desire to decolonize the country and grant political independence; hence, the stiff terms of reference handed down to the commission. Ojiako (1981).

Although the commission turned down the demand for the creation of a separate River State, it was convinced that the area, even from the point of view of its physical location, had peculiar administrative and economic problems. It therefore, recommended that Brass, Degema, Ogoni and Western Ijaw divisions be designated "Special Area" Ogionwo (1979) further stressed. The Niger Delta Development Board (NDDDB) was subsequently set up in October, 1964. Unfortunately, the Board achieved little or nothing throughout its fifteen years of existence, that is 1964 – 1979, in terms of actual development programmes. It is doubtful whether it ever succeeded in formulating any meaningful programmes at all beyond the commission of multiple of feasibility studies. The studies actually stressed the need to sand fill the water-logged areas of some communities and also to build bridges across minor creeks and rivulets. Ogionwo (1979).

The creation of River State in 1967 gave hope to many, but unfortunately, the Rivers State Government did its utmost to develop but was not enough, especially the difficult terrain of the place in direct comparison the meagre resources considering available resources. However, a second attempt at developing the area, which by now has become synonymous with oil

exploration and exploitation was, however, made by the military regime of then President Ibrahim Babangida in 1992 when the Board of the Oil Mineral Producing Area Development Commission (OMPADEC) was inaugurated.

Meanwhile, there was growing agitation among the oil producing communities, the state, which made the Federal Government in 1991 to announce a new policy designed to give some satisfaction to the development needs and demands of these communities. According to the African Guardian Newspaper of 16 September 1991:35 the policy required the Nigerian National petroleum Corporation (NNPC) and its joint venture multinational oil companies to allocate 3 percent of their total capital investment to community development purposes. This policy was a departure from previous practice according to which the companies voted any amount as they deemed fit for developing specific projects in their communities of operations.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The Niger Delta Region has always featured in several discussions on the political and economic development of Nigeria. Issues affecting this particular region bordered mainly on their marginalization in the scheme of things both politically and economically. As earlier pointed out, the people of the region, since the colonial period and following the discovery of oil in the area, have not ceased to cry out on matters affecting them. For example, they have always called for creation of new states in the area in order to further increase their chances of developing fast. Unfortunately, however, state creation and other policies that have been introduced in the area including the

establishment of the Niger Delta Development Board (NDDDB) and the Oil Mineral Producing Area Development Commission (OMPADEC) have not provided a permanent solution to the development problems of these oil producing communities. Hence, the youth restiveness and the destructive activities of militants that have feature prominently in these communities over the years. This unfortunate development has been a source of concern to both the federal government and Nigeria in general. This is more so as the crises the region had greatly disrupted oil production (the strength of Nigeria's economy) it was the attempt to find a permanent solution to the lingering crisis in the area by enhancing the development of these oil producing communities that made president Olusegun Obasanjo, on taking over the mantle of leadership in Nigeria in 1999 to establish the Nigeria Delta Development Commission (NDDC) in the year 2001.

There is no doubt the fact that government had good intentions fro setting up the commission, unfortunately, however, the activities of the Niger Delta Development Commission (NNDC) is already causing considerable controversy and debate especially among the beneficiaries (the Oil producing states). Criticism have trailed the activities of the commission in recent times. Despite the he amount of money (running into billions of naira) that the Federal Government had pumped into the commission, the crises that has ridden the oil producing communities has risen to an unprecedented dimension in recent times, thus forcing the Federal government to intervene by sending military men to the area to contain the activities of militants.

Given this skeptical scenario, it is important to critically examine the possibility of the Nigeria Delta Development Commission (NDDC) achieving its vowed purpose of promoting the development of the oil producing communities. In order to solve the basic research problem emanating from establishment of the NDDC, there are important questions that must be first raised and examined.

Fundamentally, we wish to know the relationship between the NDDC and the development of the oil producing communities. In other words, the research wishes to address these questions:

- i. Can the establishment of the NDDC promote the development of the oil producing communities?
- ii. Has the activities of the NDDC actually enhanced the development of the oil producing communities?
- iii. Are there other policies apart from the establishment of the NDDC that can solve the problem of the oil producing communities and enhance their development?

The answer to these questions will give us insight into the activities of the NDDC, to the extent to which it has been able to meet the developmental needs of Rivers State.

1.3 OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The general objective of the study is to evaluate or assess the impact of the NDDC on the development of the oil producing communities, with Rivers State as a case study. Other specific objectives of the research include:

1. To assess whether the establishment of the NDDC is strong enough to promote the development of the oil producing communities.
2. To find out if the activities of the NDDC has actually enhanced the development of the oil producing communities.
3. To investigate if there are other policies (apart from the establishment of the NDDC) that can solve the problems of the oil producing communities and enhance their development.
4. To proffer recommendations arising from the findings of the research as to know how the preferences of the NDDC can be improved upon so that it can achieve its objectives or priorities that is, the development of the oil producing areas.

1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This research work on the role of the NDDC in the development of Rivers State is significant in a number of ways:

First, the topic is one that borders on national development with economy as the chief cornerstone. Oil is Nigeria's major foreign exchange earner. The oil producing communities (of which Rivers State is a part) is therefore very crucial to the economic development of the country. Therefore, any assessment or concern for economic development, for example through the study at hand, cannot be seen as an exercise in academic futility.

Secondly, the study is significant to the point that it is able to lay bare to the public, administrators and policy formulators,

the strengths and weaknesses of the policies that government has been embarking upon (includes the establishment of NDDC) in an attempt to find lasting solution to the problems of the oil producing communities. The findings of this study may lead to modification of government policies the Niger Delta Area as well as improve the performances of the NDDC. No less significant is the importance and contribution of this study to existing literature and knowledge on the oil producing communities and the Nigeria Delta Development Commission.

Finally, the findings of this study could be of assistance to further research ad interest on how to find solutions to the problems of the oil producing communities.

1.5 SCOPE OF LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1.5.1 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study examines the role of the Niger Delta Development Commission (NNDC) in the development of the producing communities in Nigeria. However, the oil producing communities often referred to as the Niger Delta region is relatively large covering about six states of the federation while the terrain is both difficult and unfriendly. In view of this, and as a result of the limited time and resources available for the completion of this study, the research is limited to River State, one of the major players and host to many oil exploration and servicing companies.

1.5.2 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

As often experienced in similar studies, certain limitations were encountered in the course of this tidy; one of such

limitations the time factor, given the specific time frame allowed for this study, time was a problem. The researcher had to shuttle between the campus, the research environment (River State) and place of work in order to come up with an acceptable work.

CHAPTER TWO

2.1 LITERATURE REVIEW

The first major attempt to address the problems of the Nigeria Delta was in 1957, when the Willirik's Commission was set up. The colonial administration has commissioned an inquiry to investigate the fears of minorities in the run up to the Nigerian independence from Britain. The commission reported in 1958 that "needs of those who live in the creeks and swamps of the Niger Delta are very different from those of the interior" Ogionwo (1979). The commission noted that it is not easy for a government or legislature operating from the inland to concern itself or even fully understand the problems of territory where communications are so difficult, building so expensive and education scanty in a country which is likely ever to be developed. According to Jonathan (2004) the Government eventually responded to the Willink's report by setting up the Niger Delta Development Board (NDDDB) in 1961. But the NDDDB could not solve the problems enunciated in the Willinks Report. However, subsequently development bodies such as Niger Delta Basin Development Authority (NDBDA) was set up in 1976 and the Oil Mineral Producing Areas Development Commission (OMPADEC) came on board in 1992, Guardian (2003). All these agencies were not able to bring development to the area as desired. The Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) is so far the last agency to tackle the same old problems as well as new ones. Thus, the need to examine its establishment vis-à-vis the problem that have arise in the Niger Delta which include the crisis situation. The crisis actually started in 1966, when Isaac Boro led a Twelve Day Revolution against the Federal

Government of Nigeria. According to Imobighe (2004), on 23 February, 1966, a group of young Ijaw men declared the Ijaw territory of the Niger Delta “The Nigeria Delta peoples Republic”. Their aim was to liberate the region and obtain access to the benefits from its to the benefits from its petroleum resources. The group blew up pipelines, particularly those linking Olibiri and Ugheli to Port Harcourt. Within twelve (12) days, Boro and his associates were arrested, tried and sentenced to death, but subsequently pardoned. Imobighe (2004) also stated that violent political conflict in the middle Belt and Western Region of Nigeria which national leaders could not resolve amicably in the 1960s, contributed significantly to the collapse of Nigeria’s first post – independence democratic regime in 1966. Collier & Hoeffler (2002) said that the Nigerian Civil war from 1967 to 1970, and the consequential wide spread access to and use of small arms popularized the use of force to settle disputes, particularly disputes between groups, in the rest of the country. Since the 1990s, the Niger Delta has assumed the character of a conflict ridden region. The Delta’s peculiarities as the cradle of Nigeria’s Oil industry and its associated externalities, that of a constricted land area, a fragile environment compounding difficult geographic terrain, economic deprivations, and competition by individuals and communities for a greater share of the natural wealth of the region have combined to create a theatre of almost permanent violence HRW (2002). The most common and vicious forms of conflict, in terms of lives lost and property destroyed are:

1. Intra – community

2. Inter – community
3. Inter – ethnic
4. Community and oil company conflicts.

We shall however, look at some of these conflicts with a view to identifying and understanding their causes. The case of Ogbogoro community in Rivers State can be used as one of the Intra – community crisis caused by oil. Ekpo (2004), in the book “The Niger Delta and Oil Politics”, has argued about how oil has divided once peaceful communities and put them into conflict. In Ogbogoro community, for example, violent intra – community conflict has flared sporadically since 1993. According to Ekpo under dispute is the 1978 agreement that the community reached with an Oil Services Company, ARCO. It requires the company to pay a modest annual rent to the community. In 1998, Oil (Nig) Ltd and West African Field Services leased the property when ARCO left. They signed an agreement that promised higher rent, contracts and jobs to local people, Ekpo further stated that this raised the stakes for Eze Oha, the traditional head of the community, because he became responsible for distributing the compensation of the community. At the same time, a new candidate emerged who made a successful claim to the right to serve as the traditional head. This divided the community into two camps, with one behind the old ruler and another behind the new ruler. Several lawsuits were filled and pending in court when, as a result of rising tension in the community, the Rivers state Military Administrator set up a caretaker committee and representative council to disburse the benefits from the oil companies to the indigenous members of the community. In 1998, supporters of the new ruler

violently challenged the committee's attempt to collect fees for market stalls. According to Ekpo (2004) "Hell then broke loose". Rampaging youths engaged in gun battles, burnt down houses and destroyed millions of naira worth of property. At the end, two Youth Forum members were dead, 50 houses had been burnt down to ashes, Waterfront Youth fled the community to become refugees. Ojo, (2004). Said another struggle for an adequate share of the benefits from oil resulted in the so called "Nembe War". In Nembe, like Ogbogogo, the oil companies (Shell, Agip, etc) negotiated an agreement with the chiefs on compensation, contracts and job opportunities. As usual, the chiefs kept a disproportionate share of such benefits, appropriating most of the money for themselves and assigning most the money for themselves and assigning most contracts to their front companies. Ojo further stated that Even jobs in the companies could be obtained only through the nomination of the chiefs. In the late 1990s, excluded youths organized to interject themselves into these transactions. They started harassing oil workers, taking hostages, occupying flow stations, etc to make the oil companies negotiate with hem and make side payments. The side payments usually amounted to such huge sums that soon the youths spits into factions to make separate demands. Rival gangs emerged, and soon second and third generations of youths were extorting money from the oil companies. According to Ojo (2002), once when the first - generations youths were away to collect their largesse from the state headquarters. Yenagoa, a younger group took control of Nembe and banished them. Violent clashes by rival youth gangs imposed a reign of terror on Nembe until the community rose in 2000 to resist. What

is evident from these examples of intra-community conflict is that they arise because of struggles over the sharing of benefits from oil. Quite often a community's traditional ruler or council of elders, which negotiates with the companies, is at the centre of such conflicts. In the case of inter-community conflicts they do not always result in violence. Some cases are settled in courts – Niger Delta communities are famous (or perhaps notorious) as patrons of the judiciary system Ajomo (1982). The courts in such urban centres as Port Harcourt and Warri have a series of these cases. Chokor (2000) has argued that “since only the physically strong can fight, male youths are often the most active participants”. The role of the elders, both male and female, is usually advisory, particularly in terms of the needs for moderation. As in the case of intra-communal conflicts, inter-communal conflicts are not new in the Niger Delta. But the incidences have increased phenomenally since the 1970s, and particularly since the 1990s. Some noteworthy examples that led to widespread destruction of life and property shall be mentioned. For instance, in the conflict between Okpoama and Ewoama as reported in the Niger Delta Today (NDT) the latter community was completely destroyed. In the Liama and Beletiana case of the 1990s, the destruction of Beletiana was such that even by the middle of 2005, it was difficult to imagine that a town of several thousand people once existed there. The dispute between Oleh and Olomoro illustrates the kind of issues that can spark a conflagration; According to NDT, the Shell Petroleum Development Company Oil Flow Station in the area straddles the communities land, with 80 per cent in Oleh and 20 per cent in Olomoro, but Olomoro and Uzere have 70 per cent of

the oil produced while Oleh has only 20 per cent. The flow station is named after Olomoro, which the Oleh community does not like, while the royalty payment favours Oleh despite its lower production quota, which Olomoro contest NNPC (2003). In 2000, the Shell Petroleum Development Company negotiated with the two communities to replace its old pipelines. Labour was to be recruited 80 per cent from Olomoro and 20 per cent from Oleh. Each community was to keep exhumed old pipelines. After the exercise, Olomoro predictably had more pipelines to share. Oleh youth invaded the sharing site and, in the ensuing battle, lost their leader. They retreated to Oleh to attack Olomoro indigenes in their community, burning down houses and shops. The police came from Benin to restore law and order, but their response was to raze Oleh to the ground. NDT. (2005). Inter – ethnic conflict, in spite of its low occurrences, is the most well known of the delta conflicts to the Nigerian public, largely because it usually involves a bigger area and a greater loss of life and property. The following incidences are noteworthy:

1. Ijaw vs Itsekiri (Delta State)
2. Urhobo vs Itsekiri (Delta State)
3. Ogoni vs Okirika (Rivers State)
4. Ogoni vs Andoni (Rivers State)
5. Ilaje vs Ijaw (Ondo State)

The inter – ethnic conflicts demonstrates that not all conflicts in the Niger Delta are related to oil exploration. Quite a few are the result of historical disputes that erupt violently because violence has become the prevalence mean of resolving disputes in the region. Adebawu (2001). Some inter – conflicts may also be attributed to the government's failure to involve

people in deciding policies that affect them and / or to deliver development results. NDT (2001) said, many persist because the government has been unable to deal with the roots causes or to find acceptable solutions. The Warri conflicts (Ijaw versus Itsekiri and Urhobo Versus Itsekiri) provide some prominent examples of inter –ethnic confrontations. The Warri district of Delta state has had longstanding land disputes involving the Itsekiri, Ijaw and Urhobo, who have the largest settlements in the area. Worika et al (2003) has argued that, Unending litigation preceded the discovery of oil in the area, which made Warri the second most important oil city in Nigeria. The claims and counter – claims revolve around who owns the city of Warri. The courts have, of course, not been able to resolve this question to the satisfaction of all parties, hence the numerous and unending court cases. The situation has been compounded by the reorganization of local government administration in Warri. According to Ekeriko until 1997, the Itsekiri dominated two local governments in Warri. Their more numerous neighbors, the Ijaw and Urhobo, considered this a spiteful deprivation of political rights. So when the government decided to create a third local government in 1997, the Ijaw and Urhobo, especially the former, hoped that the headquarters of the new local government, Warri South West, would be sited at Ogbe-Ijoh, one of their settlements. Instead, the headquarters ended up Ogodigben, an Itsekin settlement. For the next few months rampaging Itsekin and Ijaw youths attacked each other villages, destroying properties, killing, maiming and disrupting travel on the waterways, as well as stopping oil production. The Delta State Government instituted a commission of inquiry but was unable to

publish its report or issue a “White Paper” until a new civilian administration came into office in 1999. The violence abated some what when the local government headquarters relocated to Ogbe – Ijoh, ANEEJ (2003) concludes.

The Odi Massacre

The Odi massacre provides one of the most instructive examples of the growing politics of oil. The process of distorting and reconstructing an extra-oil threat or conflict to give it an oil import in order to justify the state’s security action, including a ruthless military campaign is what Omeje (2007) called “oilification”. By corollary, it is the government’s accredited agencies that consequently oilify. Most remarkably, oilification thrives on pranks and propaganda, spin and deceit. For instance, a large number of the extra-judicial atrocities perpetrated in the 1990s by the defunct Rivers State Task Force on internal Security headed by Major Okuntimo against many law abiding persons and groups throughout the state, and who were ostensibly unconnected with the anti-oil campaign were expediently rationalized via oilification, see NDT (2001). In recent years, special military task forces, such as the River State special Task Force on Internal Security, “Operation Andoni, Operation Hakuri and Operation Restore Hope have been created and used, especially in different parts of Rivers, Delta and Bayelsa States, (the most restive oil producing states) to torture and persecute large sections of people in the name of resolving oil conflicts both real and imagined, Vanguard Newspaper (2002) reports. An overview of the entire incident will suffice to drive home the point. In early November, 1999, some

militant Ijaw youths had abducted a team of seven (7) policemen that came on an intelligence mission in the oil town of Odi in Bayelsa State. Ibeanu (2002:165) said that the policemen had gone to Odi to investigate rumours that some Ijaw youths were mobilizing to storm the city of Lagos in reprisal for attacks carried out a month earlier in (an ethnic Yoruba Metropolis) by OPC against the Ijaw residents in Lagos. Refractory ethnic Yoruba organization Odua Peoples Congress (OPC). The militant Ijaw youths in Odi are said to be mobilizing local volunteers to fight in the Ijaw-Yoruba (OPC) ethnic clashes in the Lagos suburb of Ajengunle. They were originally part of the (PDP) to victory in the 1998/1999 general election in Bayelsa State. According to the NDT (2001). Dumped by their patrons after the elections, these jobless youths reconstituted themselves into a criminal gang, terrorizing the inhabitants of the state capital, Yenegoa. A combined team of soldiers and mobile policemen sacked them from their Yenegoa base in September, 1999 and this compelled the group to relocate to Odi, the hometown of their leader, Ken Niweigha, Era (2002) reported how the group intensified their local terror activities in Odi before the outbreak of the Lagos ethnic hostilities, which youth being entirely Ijaw attempted to capitalize on to reinvent themselves as champions of a supposedly popular pan-ethnic course. Relations between the Ijaw and the Yoruba have deteriorated in recent years especially in the south-western state of Ondo where a minority Ijaw community had previously clashed with the dominant ethnic Yoruba. The Lagos conflict is believed in many quarters to be a carryover of the Ondo crisis. ERA (2002), also reported that despite all appeals and entreaties from

government and civil groups, the lawless Odi youths executed the (7) policemen, an act that aroused total public outrage. Part of the reasons why the youths perpetuated such a rare dastardly killing of their disarmed captives was that the policemen were said to have been led by a Yoruba officer, Thomas Jokotula, who few months earlier had headed a combined team of servicemen that dislodged the lawless youths from their Yenegoa bas, ERA (2002;7). President Olusegun Obasanjo responded to the murder incident by ordering the Bayelsa State Governor, Diepreye Alamiyesegeha, in a letter dated 4th November, 1999 to produce the culprits within fourteen (14) days for prosecution. The president further threatened to invoke his executive power by imposing a state of emergency on Bayelsa, if the murderers were not arrested and presented for prosecution. A few days to the expiration of the orders of the presidency laid siege to Odi. The Federal Government's explanation was that the lawless Odi gang, among other things posed a major threat to oil. According to the Nigerian Defense Minister, Gen. Theophilus Danjuma who after the expiration of the president's ultimatum, authorized the Odi invasion code-named "Operation Hakuri II" said this operation was initiated with the mandate of protecting lives and property, particularly oil platform, flow stations, operating rig terminals, pipeline, refineries and power installations in Niger Delta. The vanguard, Newspapers reported further that the rule of engagement of over 2000 troops that invaded Odi was to shoot inhabitants at sight and at the end of swift two (2) days operation, some 2,483 civilians were reportedly killed (vanguard, 2002:ERA, 2002). Beyond the veneer of oilification, the Odi genocide is primarily

episodic of the larger ethnic Ijaw-state confrontations. The Ijaw resistance against the oil industry and the state came to the fore during the second half of the 1990s in the aftermath of the tragic decapitation and crushing of the famous Ogoni resistance by the state. Since then massive state violence has been severally employed against the Ijaw, the largest ethnic groups have been the most vociferous minority groups championing the growing advocacy for regional autonomy, resource control at the sub-national levels and self-determination proposal that, the state considers both upsetting and threatening Obibi & Ebi (2003). Ijaw youths seems to have the largest spread of militant groups that at various times particularly since 1997, have been involved in armed confrontation with the state security forces over ecological issues. These Ijaw militant groups include inter alia the Niger Delta Volunteer Force (NDVF), Pan Niger Delta Revolutionary Militia (PNDRM), Ijaw Youth Council (IYC), Federated Niger Delta Ijaw Communities (FNDIC), Movement for the survival of Ijaw Ethnic Nationality (MOSIEN) and the Niger Delta Oil Producing Communities (NDPOC) Ikelegbe (2001:434-459); AP (2003). The profile of Ijaw resistance is extraordinarily enhanced by the belief of the general public including members of the armed forces that most Ijaw militants compliment their armed protest with a special talismanic power sourced from the people's formidable Egbesu deity that makes them impervious to bullets see, Ibeabu (2000:28). Occult belief systems it must be emphasized, have substantial impact on current power relations, politics and development in Africa. In contemporary history, there have been different instances from countries like Cote d'Ivoire, Kenya, Tanzania, Togo, Benin

Republic and South Africa of occultic systems permeating the public over a broad range issue, such as mesmerisation and prosecution of people using witchcraft, divination and oath taking to affirm political loyalty or to establish official wrong doing, talismanic empowerment for personal protection undertaken by some public office holder, regime security as well as offensive defense and combating of threats see Omeje (2001); Kohnert (2003). Nonetheless the question of casualty in respect of the use of occultic power and its presumed outcome can hardly be consistently explained to the satisfaction of a researchers scientific mind and thus remains in that sense mystical and mysterious, Kelsall (2003:197). It is noteworthy that in a few isolated incidents, especially in noncombatant situations the Ijaw militants have gained temporal advantages over the states security forces. The two most striking examples include the storming at the Yenegoa Government House in July 1998 by thousands of Ijaw youths who overpowered the state's security forces to release the detained MOSIEN's president, Tim Ogoriba and the successful abduction killing of the seven (7) policemen that sparked the Odi massacre. But in most cases, such temporal magical power and invincibility of the Ijaw militants, resulted in more severe state crackdown and laying of military siege to Ijaw land. Kelsall (2003) further stressed.

Crude Oil Prospecting in Nigeria

The review on the aspect of crude oil prospecting in Nigeria will normally begin with a history of crude oil exploration. Crude oil or hydrocarbon is one of the established major commercial energy sources in the world and it accounts from

over 41% of the world fuel mix (Ajomo 1982). The commodity is undoubtedly the most convenient energy resource because of its accessibility, transportability and cost qualities. Prospecting for crude oil commenced in Nigeria in 1908 when a German Company known as the Nigeria Bitumen Corporation commenced exploration activities in the araiomi ARAROMI AREA OF PRESENT ONDO state. (SPDC 2002. The operation of the company ceased at the outbreak of hostilities between Britain and Germany during the first world war in 1914, and upon losing the war, the activities of company were not resumed. Petroleum activities in Nigeria however did not commence until 1953, when the Dutch and Britain consortium of the royal dutch and shell company commenced operations in the eastern part of Nigeria under the corporate name shell D' Arcy, the forerunner of the present shell petroleum Development Company of Nigeria see Adebawu (2001)

The company was awarded the sole of concessionary rights to prospect for crude oil, covering the whole of territory Nigeria . this was made possible by the first legislation promulgated in respect of crude oil and gas operation known as the mineral Oil Act 1914. this act was to regulate the right to research for, win and work mineral oils in Nigeria. Mineral oil according to the act includes "Bitumen, asphalt, and all other bituminous substances with exception on coal". The Act conferred on the Governor- General of Nigeria (who was appointed by the Queen of England) the right to grant licensees and leases to companies, which must be registered in Britain or its colony and having its principal place of business in Britain or its colony and having its principal place of business in Britain or

its Dominion Nigeria see (Nigeria Mines Manual, 1944: 128 – 129)

The activities of shell D' Arcky which was interrupted by the second world war resumed in 1947. however, it was not until 1956 that crude oil was discovered in commercial quantities at Lolaibiri in present day Bayelsa State. After several years of search and an investment of over ₦30 million, shell began crude oil production and export from its Oboibiri oil Field on February 17, 1958, at a production rate of 5,100 barrels per day. (Jonathan (2004) also recalled that in 1961 other companies like Mobil, Gulf, Agip Safrap (now EIF) Tennaco and Amosea (now Texaco) etc had joined both on – koshore and off –shore oil hunt with varying degree of successes. The production level increased leading to a crude oil export level of 2 million barrels per day in 1972. by 1979 the export was 2.3 million barrels per day Philip's (1989) observes that the continued growth of the Nigerian economy will be based on the fourtune from crude oil reserve. He noted for instance , that out of a total proven reserve of 20 billion barrels. Philips's further states that the reserves Could be increased to over 30 billion barrels with more intensive exploration and development. Udeeme & Ekpo (2002), predicts that the demand of crude oil is expected to to be on the increase. They stated that the global demand for crude is expected to rise from 65. 5 million barrel per day to around 79 million barrel per day by the year 2020. despite the above however, it is worthy of note that the prospecting an production of crude oil has resulted in environmental pollution and this will now be examined.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF CRUDE OIL PRODUCTION IN NIGERIA: OIL SPILLAGES

Sneed & Goodley (1979: 53) refers to crude oil pollution as the release of petroleum effluents with its synergistic properties into the environment, in quantitative or concentration that are either too great to great for natural process to dissipate in a reasonable time to cause significant permanent damage to the eco- system. Crude oil pollution according to (Uchegbu 1983) occurs through two main sources. They are oil spillage and gas flaring. While gas flaring which refers to the burning of gas in the course of crude oil production attracts little attention despite its devastating effects, oil spillage that is the deliberate or accidental release of crude oil into the environment, have more far reaching effects..... Madueke (1988:55). According to Monodu (1984:20) oil spillage in Nigeria is as old as oil prospecting itself. He noted that the first oil spillage occurred in Koluama in present day Bayelsa state. Oyefolu and Awobayo (1980:140) Ifeade & Nwankwo (1988: 129) remarked that between 1970 and 1982 about 1,412 oil spillage cases were recorded. These resulted in the release of about 1,674, 352 barrels of crude petroleum into the environment. In recent years, Onuora (1994:20) records that shell petroleum Development company (SPDC) in 1992 experienced 2645 cases of oil spillage in 1993 the figure shot up to 3595 cases....

Causes of crude oil spillage

Uchegbu (1983:225) and Ajaikaye (1977: 245) Nwanmwo (1977:245) have curiously identified the causes of crude oil spillage to include; flow line / pipeline leak;; over pressure,

overflow of separator and tank, sabotage of oil field facilities, hose failure due to vibration, grounding or collision of oil tankers etc. in the case of oil spillage due to sabotage of oil field facilities. Garba (1991: 6) observes that in recent times in Nigeria, the oil producing communities realizing that they are entitled to some compensation now focus attention on what they can get from oil disaster. Worst still is the suspicion that some people tamper with oil pipe installations. Sabotage of oil pipe installation is in fact assuming an unprecedented dimension when consideration is given to SPDC Report (1994:4) that out of 3593 recorded oil spillage incidents suffered by the Shell Petroleum Development Company's sabotage of facilities in fact accounted for over 1835 cases in 1993.

Effect of crude oil spillage

Studies by some scholars like Nwoboshi (1979:20 Agiobu Kemuer) (1983: 17) and Imevbore (1991:31) reveal the adverse impact of crude oil spillage in Nigeria, they assert that petroleum effluents into the marine environment (including estuaries or onto the land) can have such deleterious effects as: harm to the environment, hazard to human health, impairment of quality for the use of sea water, reduction of amenities etc. Nwanmwo (1979: 71) has articulated the effect of oil spillage to include: interference with natural operations of water stream as a result of blanketing of the surface by the thin oily film could result in fish kill, retardation of vegetation along the shore line, unpleasant taste in fish which could be traced to crude oil waste, producing potential fire hazards when

concentration is existence of unsightly spots around piers, rivers, and beaches.

Oil production

Nigeria is Africa's fourth largest economy, with a Gross Domestic product (GDP) at current prices standing at \$41.5 billion in year 2001 coming behind South Africa's \$112.9 billion, Egypt's \$93.5 billion, and Algeria's \$54.6 billion. GDP growth rates are far below the 7.0 and 4.5% respectively required to achieve a significant reduction in poverty and attain international goals by 2015 (ADB 2002: 3). The heavy dependence on crude oil has exposed the economy to the boom – and bust cycles of development and a concomitant unstable revenue profile. For thirty five years of oil production, Nigeria has earned an estimated \$350 billion at 1995 prices and some critics have observed that the level of development recorded in the country is not commensurate with the huge earnings from crude oil exports (Gary and Karl (2003), Sala-i-Martin and Subramanian (2003)).

2.2 THEORETICAL FRAME WORK

In relation to this study which borders on the development of the Niger Delta Region which coincidentally also produces the bulk of the nation's oil wealth which has caused *vis-à-vis* the conflict in the area, it is pertinent to situate the study within a defined and relevant theoretical framework. The Niger Delta is the producer of the crude oil wealth of the nation (Nigeria), but the people of the area lack both empowerment and actual

development in terms of infrastructure and education as compared to the other regions of the Country. The region and the rest of the country and by extension the world indeed the have recently been locked in a bitter armed struggle which struggle for the resources of the region among various groups in the country can be likene to the Basic Resource Theory.

The Basic Resource Theory

This theory assume that basic or natural resources play a major role in the development of a particular locality or region. According to essang (1975;299) the emphasis that economic progress hinges on the availability, quality and magnitude of basic natural resources in a particular area or economic region is real and true. Essang said that when these natural resource are exploited or developed they bring Socio- economic benefit to the locality that owns them. Okoye (1992:17) had recalled that cash crops like cocoa, graoundnut and palm kernel contributed to the rapid development of werstern, Northern and Eastern regions of Nigeria. In the same vein, it is expected that crude oil wealth might aid the rapid infrastructurl and educational development of the regions which poses it. Instead, however, what the people had seen was deprivation and object poverty, whereas they also see affluence displayed by the workers in the oil industry which surrounds. They also realize daily that, majority of the workers are non- Niger Deltans, more so, this is

the richest class of people in the area even though their own sons and daughters of the soil are not among the beneficiaries of that class. In fact unemployment in the region is one of the highest in the country and perhaps Africa. On the whole the Basic Resource Theory will provide a platform for understanding the relationship between possessing natural resources in an area and lack of development. It will also help us to understand why this can lead to crises.

2.3 RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The study intends to examine the following hypotheses:

1. The establishment of the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) has actually enhanced the development of the oil producing communities.
2. The activities of the NDDC has actually enhanced the development of the oil producing communities.
3. There are other policies apart from the establishment of the NDDC alone that can solve the problems of the oil producing communities and enhance their development.

2.4 OPERANALISATION OF KEY CONCEPTS

Community: The peoples who reside live and work in one locality and are subject to the same laws, have the same interest etc. a body politic.

Commission: the act of committing doing or perpetrating. The act of entrusting. A certificate which confers a particular authority. A body of person acting under public authority.

Delta: An alluvial, typically triangular-shaped, silt deposit at or in the mouth of a river. Anything triangular delta.

Development: Gradual evolution or completion from one stage to another. To expand or bring out the potentialities, capabilities, etc cause to come to completeness or perfection.

Oil (petroleum) Production: An oily, Liquid mixture of numerous hydrocarbons, chiefly of the paraffin series, found in many widely scattered subterranean deposits, and extensively used for heat and light. A number of very important substances are obtained by the fractional distillation of petroleum, such as petroleum ether, gasoline, naphtha, benzene, kerosene, paraffin etc.

Produce: To bring forth or bear; yield, as young or natural product. To bring about; causes to happen or be. The act or process of producing. That which is produced or made; any tangible result of industrial, artistic or literary labour.

River Niger: is 2,600 miles (4, 185km) long, rising on the Fouta Djallon- Plateau, South West Republic. Just below Timbuktu, Mali, the Niger begins a great bend, flowing first east and then southeast out of Mali, through the republic of Niger and then into Nigeria. At Lokoja, central Nigeria, the Benue its chief tributary, joins the Niger, which then flows south, emptying through a great delta into the Gulf of Guinea. The delta 14,000. sq miles / 36,260Km is the largest in Africa – is characterized by swamps lagoons, and navigable channels. The course of the Niger long

Puzzled Western geographers, only from 1795 to 1797 did Mungo Park, the Scottish explorer, correctly establish the eastern flow of the upper Niger, and it was not until 1830 that Richard and John Lander, English explorers proved that the river emptied into the Gulf of Guinea. The River and its tributaries drain most of the country; Nigeria has a 500 mile (800km) coastline, for the most part made up of sandy beaches, behind which lies a belt of mangrove swamps and lagoons that average 10 miles (16km) in width but increases to 60 miles (95km) wide in the great Niger Delta in the East.

CHAPTER THREE

THE STUDY AREA/GENERAL INFORMATION

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

An Indept Analyse of the Research Questions

That the people of the Nigeria Delta area of Nigeria suffer from environmental degradation, perennial flooding, landslide, oil pollution, erosion and minor earth tremors on a daily basis can no longer be news to the informed and open-minded people the world over who have come to terms with dangers posed by the aforementioned disasters both natural and man-made

3.1 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This has to do with the research design used for the work. We shall be doing quantitative and qualitative research. We are talking about the method used in conducting the study.

3.1.1 STUDY POPULATION

The population of the study is 200 persons. In order to obtain an unbiased and representative information from our respondents, a sample size of 160 were obtained from the sample population. However, questionnaires were designed and distributed based on the sample size and due to unforeseen circumstances, 120 were duly completed and retrieved while 25 were voided.

3.2 METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION

The use of the questionnaire and interview techniques constituted the main source for gathering our primary data and the secondary data comes from books, journals, magazines and newspapers as well as other published and unpublished documents. We also had the added advantage of being direct observers. The questionnaire distribution is shown in table 1.

below:

S/N		Distributed	Questionnaire Retrieved
1.	Port Harcourt	80	40
2.	Ahoada	40	31
3.	Okrika	40	29
Total		160	100

DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Information gathered shall be presented in tables and charts and analysed using simple percentages.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

This section presents and analyses field work survey obtained mainly from responses from the interview using statistical table and simple percentages with a view to testing the hypotheses postulated in chapter one. The hypotheses may be accepted or rejected depending on the responses of the interviewees.

Testing hypotheses

Hypotheses 1: The establishment of the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) can promote the development of the oil producing communities.

To test this hypothesis, items on tables 4.1.2 and 4.1.3 were used. As indicated earlier, there were responses to the question: is the NDDC promoting the development of the oil producing communities? 43% of the respondents answered “Yes” and 51% answered “No” while 6% were undecided.

Similarly, respondents to item on table 4.1.3 also showed a trend where respondents rated the establishment of the NDDC as low and claim that it failed to promote development in the area.

From the above, one can safely deduce that the majority of the (people) respondents affirmed that the NDDC is not promoting the development of the oil producing communities. This is a failure of the first hypothesis.

Hypothesis 2: The activities of the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) has actually enhanced the development of the oil producing communities.

To test this hypothesis also responses to findings on table 4.1.2 and 4.1.3 gave us the following statistical details in response to our enquiry: Has the establishment of the NDDC enhanced the development of the Niger Delta?

In answering this question, the respondents were almost evenly divided as the figures show. Those who believed that the NDDC has actually enhanced development in the Niger Delta region are 46% whereas respondents who disagree are 49% out of the 160 sample population.

Also, when the question was put whether apart from the NDDC any policy of government can solve the Niger Delta problem and enhance development? 52% of the many respondents disagree, arguing rather that there is no sincerity on the part of the Federal Government to develop the Niger Delta as was done in Abuja. This second hypothesis is also a failure as it can be clearly seen.

Hypothesis 3: There are other policies apart from the establishment of the NDDC alone that can solve the problems of the oil producing communities and enhance their development”.

To test this particular hypothesis table 4: 14 and 4. 1. 5 would be extremely useful. The question was put whether: there are other policies that can solve the problems of the Niger Delta? This question was almost unanimously answered, with many saying that Government should create a ministry at the Federal level as it did for Abuja. Also, the study population agreed that the creation of a ministry can adequately tackle the problems and eventually solve it. But as usual, there are those

who do not agree, although it is an insignificant number of 12% as compared to the overwhelming 73% of the population of study who agree with the hypothesis, This is a very positive and successful hypothesis.

Also, some respondents accuse government of gross insensitivity, saying that the government over the years has been hypocritical in the handling of issues relating to the development of the Niger Delta, especially the oil producing communities of the area who face environmental degradations as a major future threat.

This last hypothesis 1:

Testing hypothesis 1:

Table 4.1. 2: Percentage findings on 'Is the NDDC promoting the development of the oil producing communities

Category of response	Frequency	Percentage
No	61.2	51
Yes	51.6	43
Not sure	7.2	6
Total	120	100%

Data from the above table revealed that respondents are divided with those choosing no in the majority with 61.2 (51%

Table 4.1.3: Percentage findings on “How would you rate the establishment of the NDDC?”

OPTIONS	Frequency	Percentage
High	20	25
Low	84	70
Not sure	6	5
Total	120	100%

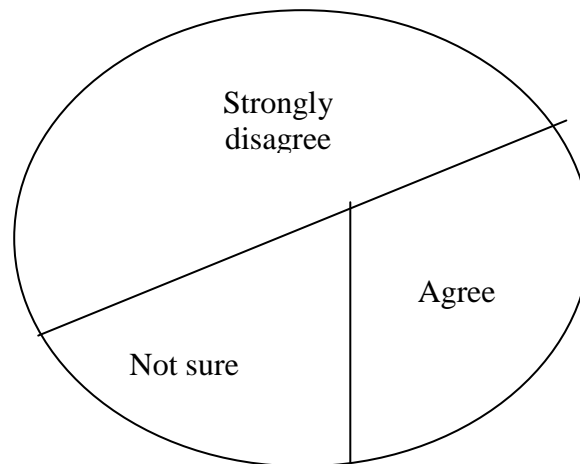
Testing hypothesis 2

Table 4.1.4 Percentage on findings “Has the establishment of NDDC enhanced the development of the Niger Delta?”

Category of response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	55.2	46
No	60	50
Not sure	4.8	4
Total	120	100%

When we asked the question, “Has the establishment of NDDC enhanced development in the Niger Delta 55.2 or (46%) of the population answered in the affirmative, while 60 or (50%) strongly disagree only 4.8 (4) said that they were not sure.

Also, figure I shows the same trend on the area of strong disagreement on whether there is an enhancement in development in the Niger Delta.



Testing hypothesis 3

Table 4.1.5 Percentage on findings on whether ‘There are other policies apart from the establishment of the NDDC alone that can solve the problems of oil producing communities and enhance their development?’

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	87.6	73
No	14.4	12
Not sure	18	15
Total	120	100%

Data from table 4. 1. 5 above show that 87.6 or (73%) of the respondents stated that there are other policies, especially the creation of a Niger Delta ministry that can solve the problems of the oil producing communities. Whereas an

insignificant number of respondent 14.4 (12%) say no. another 18 or (15%) are not sure.

On the question wither the inclusion of Ondo, Abia, Imo and Edo was political an overwhelming 85% agree and went ahead to say that government was insincere in the handling of the Niger Delta affair. Those who say no are only 8% while not sure are 70%

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 SUMMARY

The federal government has a role to play in correcting the imbalance and neglect of the people of the Niger Delta, the living condition of the producers of the national wealth are living in hell. The elites in the Nigerian society have everything while the Rivers communities have nothing: Their petitions are thrown into the waste bin. If they protest they” send soldier, they do not honour agreements. Graduates are without jobs. Other natives from other states take up their jobs. Food production is low, and hunger persist, all because the environment is polluted and scavenged.

The social, economic and environmental harm to health and livelihood that impelled the River people of the Niger Delta’s campaign for economic, social and political rights remains the reality for many inhabitants of the area. Corruption and mismanagement of federal and state levels has further deprived the Rivers people of the benefits from their own resources.

It is hoped that the creation of ‘Special Areas” for development will help in bridging the gap in developing the area. Government therefore should stop its diversionary and political undertone in solving the unending problem.

5.2 CONCLUSION

Finally, the marginalized people of Rivers State do not see the creation of the Niger Delta Commission as a solution to their problem, but rather as an attempt to extend their exploitation. The people fought vigorously to pursue campaigns aimed at

reclaiming their economic and social right, you can even add political rights. Companies and government fail to live up to their promises. Projects and jobs promised the people for development purposes are never kept.

Concise steps must have to be taken by the federal government and the state governments to address the long standing demand of the Niger Delta people as contained in most of its agitations. Many federal government, oil companies and its' agencies owe a lot of money of River State communities. Some of the oil companies withheld their contributions to the communities. In June 2005, delegates from oil producing states walked out of the national political conference after the federal government refuse to offer more than 17% of the oil revenue to the oil producing states.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Firstly, the federal government should endeavour to reconcile the problem of neglect and exploitation faced by the oil producing areas especially the River state. As an offshoot of this and to bring government closer to the people "Special Area" development zones should be created instead of the present Niger Delta development Commission. A ministry for the Niger Delta should be created.

Secondly, the constituting states in the Niger Delta Commission do not represent the true position of the Niger Delta, government politicized issue by clustering it with – Abia, Imo, Edo, and Ondo States. One would not be surprised if a

state in the North is added to it. This policy of government is both political and diversionary.

Thirdly, steps should be taken by the federal government to foster development in the Rivers State and other oil producing states by addressing their long suffering, long standing demands, bastardization of their environment by approving a higher percentage of National Oil Revenues from 13 percent to 45%. This will be used for development purposes.

Fourthly, security forces should discontinue to kill people, raze communities with impunity thereby causing environmental harm to the health and livelihoods of the people. The economic, social and political rights of the people of River State should not be impeded.

Finally, the federal government, state governments and power elites in the society should stand to face widespread local and internal condemnation for its ambiguous and belated interventions. Sustainable development and popular participation in the production and distribution of oil revenue should be upheld by the federal government.

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APPENDIX

Department of Public
Administration and
Local Government,
University of Nigeria,
Nsukka.

Dear Sir/ Madam,

RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

The Researcher is a postgraduate student of Public Administration, University of Nigeria, Nsukka Conducting a study on the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) and the development of the oil producing communities: A case study of Rivers State.

Kindly respond to the bits of information required below. Your response are for academic purposes only and will be handled confidentially, please.

Thanks

Your faithfully

Orumie S.T..

QUESTIONNAIRE

Instruction: Kindly tick (✓) in the appropriate response space provided for the questions and make short statements where applicable.

Background/Personal Data

- (1) Sex: (a) Male [] (b) Female []
- (2) Age: (a) 18-25 [] (b) 25-40 [] (c) 41 & above []
- (3) Marital status: (a) Married [] (b) Single []
- (4) Highest Educational level attained: (a) FSLC []
GCE/WASC O level [] (c) First Degree [] (d) above
First degree []
- (5) Social status
-
- (6) Occupation
-
- (7) Do you think that the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) like other agencies between it have contributed to the development of Rivers State? (a) Yes (b) No (c) Explain
-
- (8) What is the role of the Federal Government in the alleviation of the escalating problems in Rivers state
-
- (9) Do you think the inclusion of Edo, Imo, Abia and Ondo in the Niger Delta is a step in the right direction? (a) Yes (b) No

(c) explain

(10) Is the policy of Government diversionary and political? (a)

Yes (b) No

(c) explain further

(11) Has the standard of living increased in the Niger Delta?

(a) Yes (b) No

(12) Has the income of the Niger Delta people increased in line with the exploitation, exploration and exportation of crude oil

(a) Yes (c) No

(c) None of the above, it so specify

(13) Is there inflation in the region that is more than other parts of Nigeria?

(a) Yes (b) No (c) it no, please specify

(14) What about the conflict in the area, does it in anyway affect other things in the area, please specify

(15) Is it necessary for then Federal Government to create a Board for soil producing communities and another fro the Niger Delta communities? If so why

(16) Has the establishment of the NDDC enhanced the development of the Niger Delta? (a) Yes (b) No (c) Specify

(17) Is the NDDC promoting development of the oil producing communities?

(a) Yes (b) No (c) please, if yes specify

(18) Apart from the establishment of the NDDC, are there other policies of Government that can solve the problems of the oil producing communities? (a) Yes (b) No (c) specify

(19) Are there other polices that can solve the problems of the Niger Delta? Please specify

(20) How would you rate the NDDC (a) High (b) Low (c) Explain Further

(21) Did the NDDC promote development? Explain

(22) Will the creation of a ministry for the Niger Delta be a good idea?

(a) Yes (b) No (c) no sure explain further

(23) Is the inclusion of Ondo, Abia, Imo and Edo State Political?

(a) Yes (b) No (c) Explain
