



# Niger Delta Crisis and the Challenges of Development in the Region

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## Abstract

The Niger Delta crisis has drawn the attention of scholars and citizens of the region and the international community. The changing aspects of the escalating tensions in the region moved from youth restiveness to militancy, leading to disruptions in oil production and confrontations between the militant groups and the government military forces and sometimes even amongst the militant groups themselves. This descriptive survey research evaluated the Niger Delta crisis and the challenges of development in the region. A total of 837 respondents answered the questionnaire. The stratified sampling technique was utilized for the grouping of respondents into (ex-militants, staff of commissions and agencies, and the public) for the study. The questionnaires were analyzed using Statistical Package of the Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 21. Mean, cross tabulation and ANOVA were employed. The face and the content validity of the research instruments (questionnaire) were determined with the assistance of experts in the design of questionnaires and colleagues experienced in the construction of research tools. The reliability of the questionnaire was established using the Cronback Alpha reliability estimate, which gave a cumulative reliability value of .841, which demonstrates strong reliability. The major findings from this study revealed that environmental problems, socio-economic and political inequity, underdevelopment, poverty, bad governance and corruption are related to the underdevelopment of the Niger Delta region. The study recommended that for the Niger Delta region to have the opportunity to succeed, Nigeria must first remove the obstacles that prevent the region from experiencing decent and dignified standard of living. Obstacles like pollution, poverty, hunger, disease, insecurity, and socio-economic and political inequalities need to be addressed.

**Keywords:** Niger Delta, Crisis, Challenges, Development, Environmental Pollution, Poverty, Hunger, Disease, Insecurity, Socio-Economic, Political Inequalities, Region.

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## INTRODUCTION

The Niger Delta region of Nigeria is the home to the greatest part of Africa's largest mangrove forest, and the source of the oil wealth of Nigeria. The region is habitat to wonderful creeks, aquatic lives like brackish and freshwater ecosystems. The region is home to astonishing militants and insurgent organizations because of the perceived marginalization and oppression of the socio-economic wellbeing, environmental degradations of the Niger Delta. All these have culminated into what people call the Niger Delta Crisis because of the uprising to fight against object poverty, underdevelopment, bad governance and corruption. As a result, the Niger Delta region has turned out to be a hot zone of violence, insurgency, kidnapping, hostage-taking, oil pipeline sabotage, crude oil theft, gang wars, internecine struggles, anarchy and chaos (Afinotan & Ojakorotu, 2009).

Figure 1: Section of the Niger Delta Militants



Source: <http://naijagists.com/the-niger-delta-crisis-issues-challenges-and-the-way-forward-by-john-uzie/>.

Originally and cartographically, the Niger Delta consists of the present day Bayelsa, Delta, and Rivers States. In 2000, former President Obasanjo's regime included Abia, Akwa Ibom, Cross River State, Edo, Imo and Ondo States. About 33 million people of more than 45 ethnic groups including the Bini, Efik, Esan, Ibibio, Igbo, Annang, Oron, Ijaw, Itsekiri, Isoko, Urhobo, Ukwani, Kalabari, and Ogoni, are among the inhabitants of Niger Delta people.

Several issues have been on the forefront of the Niger Delta regions crisis. These issues are according to Uzie (2016) are the ownership of oil wells, pollution of the regions environment from oil extraction activities, low level of infrastructural development in almost all the oil producing communities and the region, wide spread poverty in the midst of enormous oil wealth, lack of job opportunities for the increasing youths of the region. Nwankwo (2015) highlighted that several avenues and platforms have been initiated and established to develop oil producing region, such avenues includes the establishment of the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC), which has its headquarters in Port Harcourt, the Ministry of Niger Delta Affairs, 13% oil derivation fund paid monthly to oil producing states, social corporate responsibilities to host

communities by oil companies, and the Niger Delta Amnesty Program. These intervention platforms have done little to address the environmental, socio-economic, poverty reduction, unemployment and developmental challenges of the region.

### **Statement of the Problem**

In fact, the Niger Delta crisis has been brewing for a long time and for several decades the federal government had been very cosmetic in its attempt to handle the situation. The multinational oil companies have always been applying their divide and rule tactics by thinking that they could buy off a group of elites and all could be well. Even the international community acted as if the conflict was a local one to be confined to the backwaters.

The escalating tension or conflict in the region arose in the early 1990s between the foreign oil companies and a number of ethnic groups who felt they were being exploited particularly the Ogoni(s) and the Ijaws. Ethnic and political unrest continued throughout the 1990s and persisted until 2007 within which kidnapping for ransom became rampant. Since then, competition for oil wealth had fueled violence between and amongst ethnic groups causing the militarization of the entire region by; ethnic groups as well as the Nigerian militancy (Ambily, 2007; Joab-Peterside, 2007)

With the increase in environmental problems, socio-economic and political challenges facing the region, coupled with the activities of the militants over the period; underdevelopment, poverty, bad governance and corruption working against the development of the Niger Delta region; it might be evident that the assessment of the challenges facing the Niger Delta region need to be investigated to find out if these challenges actually stand against the development of the region.

### **Purpose of the Study**

Specifically, the study is intended to:

- Examine the environmental problems responsible for militants agitation in the Niger Delta region;
- Examine the Socio-economic and Political Inequity in the Niger Delta region;
- Examine the underdevelopment, poverty, bad governance and corruption related to the development of the Niger Delta region.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided and directed the research procedure:

- To what extent are the environmental problems responsible for militants' agitation in the Niger Delta region?
- To what extent are the socio-economic and political inequities related to the development of the Niger Delta region?
- To what extent are underdevelopment, poverty, bad governance and corruption related to the development of the Niger Delta region?

## **Hypotheses**

- Environmental Problems is significantly not related to the underdevelopment of the Niger Delta region.
- Socio-economic and Political Inequity not related to the underdevelopment of the Niger Delta region.
- Underdevelopment, poverty, bad governance and corruption are significantly not related to the development of the Niger Delta region.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Challenges of the Niger Delta Region**

The Niger Delta region has been assessed as falling behind on almost all the indices that point towards enhanced individual and community development, especially those revolving around the incidence of poverty. There is in the region, which produces 90% of the country's wealth, a reasonably strong correlation between poverty and illiteracy (Ololube, Onyekwere, Kpolovie, & Agabi, 2012).

The oil industry is booming in Nigeria and the revenue of oil companies is soaring, but Nigerian locals are suffering daily from poverty, environmental degradation, and efforts to secure compensation for the exploitation of their resources. As one of the largest oil exporters in the world, Nigeria's oil has been and continues to be a great source of revenue for oil companies and for the Nigerian government. Unfortunately, the revenue of the oil industry has not contributed to remedying the issues of development—poverty, environmental degradation, sickness, unemployment, lack of state capacity to provide sustained security, and widened socio-economic and political inequity. This utilization of Nigeria's oil resources plays an important role on how Nigerian locals formulate positive and negative opinions of oil companies and the Nigerian government (Adams, Osho & Coleman, 2008).

While in a few cases social infrastructures such as pipe borne water, electricity, proper roads, school buildings, scholarship programs and job opportunities are provided to oil producing communities, such facilities are not commensurate with the impact of environmental pollution and degradation suffered by these communities, neither are they commensurate with the high profit made by a few from the activities in the region. Arguably the most detrimental of all activities of the oil companies is their collusion with the federal government to militarize the Niger Delta region. Among other things, this inevitably diverts state resources that should have been used in the development of the Niger Delta region to state security (Chukwuemeka & Aghara, 2010; Ololube et al., 2012).

### **Environmental Problems**

The World Bank (2008) and UNDP (2011) had identified environmental pollution, and death as one of the major plague that has threatened the existence of mankind. The Niger Delta is in the throes of becoming an environmental wastebasket. From the oil spills to the round-the-clock gas flares and effluents from industrial wastes, the fragile ecosystem of the Niger Delta is under constant assault (Nwogwugwu, Alao, & Egwuonwu, 2012). However, it is beyond human imagination that no detailed study of oil exploration in Niger Delta and its effect on the

environment exists (Ile & Akukwe, 2001). The unbridled exploitation of crude oil and natural gas beneath the lands of the Niger Delta has caused indescribable and irredeemable ecological devastation of the Niger delta land (Azaiki, 2007). According to Okaba (2005), the environmental impact of the oil industry in the Niger Delta of Nigeria as land deprivation, soil quality alteration, destruction of aquatic ecosystem and air pollution.

A major environmental tragedy in the Niger Delta is the waste of our aquatic ecosystem. This aspect is significant to the people, being that it constitutes a grave threat to the economic hub of their lives, which is fishing. It is a common sight that in the process of oil exploration and production materials such as drill cuttings, drill mud and other fluids that are used to stimulate production are discharged into the environment and most end up in the streams and rivers. These chemicals are hardly degradable and the skimming of oil on the water surface hardly resolve the problem since most of the oil might have sunk down to the bottom of the water leaving grave consequences such as: (a) surface and ground water quality deterioration in terms of portability, aesthetic and recreation, (b) destruction and reduction of fish life and fisheries production of the waters, (c) destruction by acute and sublethal toxicity of aquatic flora and fauna of spills on water and benthic macro (Okaba, 2005; Nwaomah, 2009a).

Gas flaring is a primary source of air pollution in the Niger delta. The oil companies are wrecking the ecosystem of the Niger delta through uncontrollable gas flaring. Gases flaring takes place twenty four hours and some are believed to have been burning for over thirty years, thereby resulting in the release of hydrogen sulphide. The oil companies are not only destroying the Niger delta, but they are also contributing to global warming (Comet Newspapers, 2001). The pollutions released and the noises from the vibration are injurious to human health...It is also argued that the chemical emissions from the flaring contribute to acid rain, trigger skin diseases (Okaba, 2005) and the quick corrosion of roofing sheets in the Niger Delta area, a common sight in this region. A secondary source of air pollution in the Niger Delta is the incidents of fire resulting from leakages from the exposed and corroded oil pipes that are scattered all over the region (Nwaomah, 2009b). The environmental degradation being carried out by the oil companies in the Niger delta as a result of their noncompliance with internationally recognized environmental standards are damages that their consequences cannot be limited by time. Unfortunately, available evidence shows that the trend is worsening as the government lack the political will to ensure compliance to rules by the oil companies (Nwogwugwu, Alao, & Egwuonwu, 2012).

### **Socio-economic and Political Inequity in the Niger Delta**

The concept of development implies that people should enjoy, without discrimination, all rights and obligations - including human, political, social, economic and cultural rights — that belonging to a state implies. Development also includes social inclusion — or having equal access to the political, social and economic policy making processes, as well as drawing equal benefits from them. Development is likewise premised on the establishment of rule of law and independence of the justice system. Each individual in a society should have the same rights and obligations and be subjected to the same set of rules. These basic elements, which are predicated on the equality of all before the law, effectively remove any risk of arbitrariness manifesting itself in discrimination, abuse or oppression (Ogata in Ololube et al., 2012). Since 1970, Nigeria's political, economic, and policy elites have established an authoritarian power structure that allow for central control of strategic resources including the country's substantial oil

deposits. Such auricle has not only banished the great majority of ordinary Nigerians from the policy making process, but has also led the power elites to pursue social and economic strategies that are short sighted, self-serving, and not at all driven by the needs of the people. The consequences have been material scarcity, deep frustration, and youth restlessness in the Niger Delta region (Chukwuemeka & Aghara, 2010).

For instance, in making contribution to the debate on the Petroleum Industry Bill (PIB), the recent exposition in the Nigerian Senate by Senator Enang, member representing Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial District revealed that Northerners control a larger part of the country's oil wealth. Contrary to what they would want the world to believe. The oil is produced in the Niger Delta, yet it is the people of the North-East and the North-West and little of the North-Central, almost nothing for the South-West and South-East that own and controls Nigeria oil blocks. Almost nothing for the South-South, which is the Niger Delta oil Producing areas. With this in mind, this is an inequitable and unjust sharing formula (PUNCH, 2013).

### **Underdevelopment, Poverty, Bad Governance & Corruption**

The Niger Delta communities have remained grossly socio-economically underdeveloped and pauperized amidst the immense oil wealth owing to systematic dis-equilibrium in the production exchange relationship between the state, the Trans-national companies and the people. Enormous money had been derived from oil export but the area has been subjected to severe land degradation, socio-economic disorganization, increasing poverty, misery, military occupation and bloody violent threats to individuals (Nwogwugwu, Alao & Egwuonwu, 2012).

Violent threats to individuals can be defined as the act of intimidation. Intimidation is an intentional behavior, which can —cause a person of ordinary sensibilities fear of injury or harm. Harm is a physical, mental or emotional damage. It is an act or instance of injury, or a material and tangible detriment or loss to a person. The precise definition of a violent threat varies according to the context in which it is used (<http://definitions.uslegal.com/t/threat-of-harm/>). In this context, the researcher have used the term in a straightforward way to represent the actions, inactions and intimidations of oil companies and the federal government employed to achieve their goals without considering the plight of the people of the region (Ololube et al., 2012).

For over six decades, the oil exploration industry has violated the Niger Delta region's environment and exploited its resources without offering any form of compensation. Since 1956, oil companies, in collaboration with successive governments in Nigeria, have extracted billions of dollars' worth of oil and gas from the Niger Delta region (Oronto & Okonta, 2003). The people of the region are increasingly frustrated by the actions of their government and oil companies and have insisted on reparations. These exploration activities have caused considerable disruption in individual lives and to communities (Adams et al., 2008), and the lack of response from government officials and oil companies has and continues to be a compounding source of tension. In reaction to government inaction, use of military force and the insensitivity of the oil industry, groups of young people have begun to plan and execute their own protection and reclamation measures. Several of these groups (labeled by the federal government as militants) have resorted to violent threats and attacks to secure payouts, job programs, funding for better educational programs, and compensation for the resources the government and oil companies are profiting from (Adams et al., 2008).

Poverty is defined as the inability to attain a minimal standard of living. Given this definition, there remains the problem of measuring standard of living so as to be able to express

the overall severity of poverty in a single index. Consequently in some cases, poverty has been defined as a lack of command over basic consumption needs, with the poverty line represented by the cost of those needs (Aigbokhan, 2000). Nigeria has been assessed as falling behind on most of the indices that point towards enhanced individual and community HS, especially those revolving around the incidence of poverty and attempts towards poverty reduction. It has a Human Development Index (HDI) of 156, life expectancy at birth of 51.9 years, 70% of the population living below poverty line, (UNDP, 2011). Apart from these grim statistics, for a long time Nigeria was identified as a country particularly afflicted by HIV/AIDS with an infection rate of 5.8%, a threshold that constitutes a significant threat to the country's human security. The link between poverty and HIV/AIDS has dire consequences for human security in Nigeria. Poverty exacerbates HIV/AIDS but HIV/AIDS aggravates poverty. Despite its diverse natural resources, Nigeria remains a monolithic economy dependent on petroleum resources as its main source of foreign earnings.

Poverty has traditionally warranted significant attention from governments and civil societies because its most fundamental characteristic is deprivation, which denies people and communities the options necessary to exercise choices about their lives. Such deprivation is linked to a host of other risk factors, identified by the World Bank as —low level of nutrition, illness, and the inability to access information or to take advantage of educational opportunities at the primary and secondary level, including human trafficking, famine, desertification, and conflict (Ambe-Uva & Adegbola, 2009), the sum of which exclude individuals and communities from the enjoyment of any macroeconomic developmental gains.

Non-communicable diseases include diabetes, cardiovascular disease, cancer, and chronic respiratory illness often caused by pollution from oil explorations and exploitations. Diseases pose a significant challenge to HS in Niger Delta, Nigeria and Africa as a whole and their impacts are immediate. Ssengonzi et al. (2004) found that illnesses (of self, relatives, or friends) combined with funerals accounted for the majority of reported absence of teachers from schools. This is not peculiar to the educational sector alone but is spread across all spheres of the national economy. In terms of communicable diseases, it is estimated that the Human Immuno-deficiency Virus (HIV)/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) alone have killed over 100,000 people in the Niger Delta and tuberculosis (TB) accounts for 70,000 thousand deaths each year. According to the 2008 UNAIDS Report, it is estimated that 3.1 percent of Nigerians ages 15-49 are HIV-positive (UNAIDS, 2008).

Globally, it has been estimated that about half a million women die each year of pregnancy related causes and diseases, 99 percent of them are in developing countries (Harrison, 1990). The case is even stronger in the Niger Delta region. At least nine percent of the pregnancies in the region are complicated by a disease that is aggravated by pregnancy, including malaria, iron-deficiency, anemia, hepatitis, tuberculosis (TB), and heart disease (Niger Delta Human Development Report, 2006).

An essential element of human security is the opportunity for all citizens within a national boundary to live in peace and security within their own borders (Ogata, 1998). According to Ogata, this implies the capacity of states and citizens to prevent and resolve conflicts through peaceful and non-violent means and after the conflict is over, the ability to effectively carry out reconciliation efforts. It would never be our scientific intention or historical role to interpret only the Niger Delta's structures of dependence. However, given the growth in the international stature of the region's oil producing capacity, it is encouraged to mention briefly the problem of oil and class struggle. In reality, there is an oil or energy crisis that has

resulted in the marginalization of the region's citizens. Thus, the exploited in the oil producing region gain emancipatory relevance within the national and international struggle and fight for freedom. Oil development has brought about insecurity in the region and the nation at large. Failure on the part of the state to provide security for its citizenry has resulted in some public places (e.g., schools) being used as a safe haven in the emancipatory struggle in the Niger Delta.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Design**

The design adopted for this study is a descriptive survey research). This study included specific research design features from a broad theoretical perspective to help assess the issues of Niger Delta crisis and the challenges of development. The choice for a descriptive survey research is to describe specific characteristics of the target population, which involves the gathering of limited data from the study's accessible population. It employed this method with the hope of identifying the current challenges and the developmental conditions in Bayelsa State in particular and the Niger Delta in general.

### **Population of the Study**

The population of the study covers Abia, Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross Rivers, Delta, Edo, and Rivers States because of their central position in the Niger Delta. However, Bayelsa State had more militant groups than other oil producing state. Bayelsa is located on the southern coast of Nigeria, and is bordered by Delta State and Rivers State and the Atlantic Ocean, covering an estimated 21,100 square kilometers and an estimated population of 1,703,385 million people (National Population Census Report, 2006). The state is comprised of eight local government areas, viz; Ekeremor, Sagbama, Ogbia, Southern Ijaw, Nembe, Brass, Kolokuma/Opokuma and Yenagoa.

In this regard, the population of this study from which conclusions were drawn and generalizations made may comprise of youths and others from the Niger Delta region where militancy was perceived to be more prevalent.

### **Sample/Sampling Technique**

Stratified sampling technique was used in the grouping of respondents into (ex-militants, staff of commissions and agencies, and the public) for the study. The adoption of the technique was informed by the idea that everyone in the sample frame is a living witness to the problem under consideration. Since the population of the Niger Delta states is too large for consideration, 837 respondents were drawn from the following categories or groups:

- The ex-militants;
- Commissions/agencies saddled with the task of implementing program;
- Members of the public.

## Questionnaire

In order to gather the relevant data needed for the study, a questionnaire designed along 6-point Likert type scale 1=Totally disagree (TD), 2=Partly disagree (PD), 3=Disagree (D), 4=Partly agree (PA), 5=Agree (A), and 6=Totally agree (TA), was administered to respondents. The questionnaire was divided into two sections: section 'A' dealt with issues of respondent's personal data (gender, age, and marital status). Section 'B' was designed to elicit information on variables that may or not be responsible for the Niger Delta crisis and the challenge and its impact on development in Bayelsa State of Nigeria. Section two of the questionnaire comprised 21 items (Environmental Problems, 6 items; Socio-economic and political inequity, 5 items; Underdevelopment, poverty, bad governance and corruption, 10 items).

## Data Collection and Analysis

The data gathered for this study was collected from respondents living in Bayelsa State and the various commissions and agencies responsible for implementation and the rehabilitation of ex-militants. Data were randomly elicited from ex-militants from the Aluu and Obubra rehabilitation camp. A total of nine hundred questionnaires were distributed to respondents in the selected areas (Camps, Commissions and the Public), of which eight hundred and fifty-four were returned. From the returned questionnaires, eight hundred and thirty seven questionnaires were selected for analysis. Seventeen questionnaires were not used because of errors and omissions in completing the questionnaires.

The questionnaires were analyzed using Statistical Package of the Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 21. Mean, cross tabulation and ANOVA were the means of analysis. Means were used to determine the strength of some variables to the weakness of others. Cross tabulation was used because it is one of the simplest and most common ways of demonstrating the presence or absence of a relationship (Bryman & Cramer, 2011). The ANOVA analysis was set at  $p < 0.05$  significance level. Respondents for this study included 589(70.4%) male and 248(29.6%) female. 514(61.4%) were between 20-30 years, 276(33.0%) were 31-40 years, and 31(3.7%) were 41-50 years, while 16(1.9%) were above 50 years. Of these, 284(33.9%) were single, 553(66.1%) were married. (See Table 1).

Table 1: Frequency and percentage for respondent' personal data

s/n	Respondents background information	Frequency	%	
1	Gender	Male	589	70.4
		Female	248	29.6
2	Age	20-30 years	514	61.4
		31-40 years	276	33.0
		41-50 years	31	3.7
		Above 50 years	16	1.9
3	Marital Status	Single	284	33.9
		Married	553	66.1

## **Validity of Instrument**

The face and the content validity of the research instruments (questionnaire) was determined with the assistance of experts in the design of questionnaires and faculty colleagues experienced in the construction of research tools. The inputs of these evaluators helped to restructure a number of questionnaire items.

## **Reliability of the Instrument**

The reliability of the questionnaire was established using the Cronback Alpha reliability estimate, which gave a cumulative reliability value of .841, which demonstrated strong reliability. The reliability of the variables in this study might be termed to be high enough judging by the fact that it varies between 0 and 1 and the nearer the result is to 1-, and preferably at or over .8- the more internally reliable is the scale (Bryman & Cramer, 2011, Ololube, 2013).

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Research Question 1 and Hypothesis 1**

The research question states that “to what extent are the environmental problems responsible for militants’ agitation in the Niger Delta region”? And the hypothesis states that “environmental Problems is significantly not related to the development of the Niger Delta region”

The results in Table 2a and b were tallied along agree and disagree. Based on the data as shown in Table 2a and b, 87.4% believe that environmental pollution is one of the major plagues that have threatened the existence the Niger Delta region. In the same vein, Table 2b posited significant result in the ANOVA analysis at ( $F = 37.302, P < .000$ ); the result further revealed that 72% are of the view that the fragile ecosystem of the Niger Delta is under constant assault because of the activities of the oil industries. ( $F = 7.099, P < .009$ ); also, 81.6% of the respondents were of the opinion that the Niger Delta is becoming an environmental wastebasket as a result of oil exploration in the region. The ANOVA analysis holds the same view that there is a significant relationship at ( $F = 10.085, P < .001$ ). In addition, 90.2% agree that the oil spills and the round-the-clock gas flares affects the inhabitants of the Niger Delta region same is true of the ANOVA analysis at ( $F = 55.371, P < .000$ ). 75.1% agree that the major environmental tragedy in the Niger Delta region is the waste of its aquatic ecosystem and that it has significantly related to the crisis in the region at ( $F = 7.835, P < .005$ ). A further analysis of the cross tabulation revealed that 95.5% agree that oil exploration and production materials affects surface and ground water quality and it is significantly related to the Niger Delta crisis ( $F = 153.125, P < .000$ ). On the whole, the results show that environmental problems are significantly related to the crisis and underdevelopment of the Niger Delta region. Therefore, hypothesis 1 was rejected.

Table 2a: Cross tabulation Analysis showing whether environmental problems is responsible for militants agitation in the Niger Delta region

<i>s/n</i>	<i>Variables</i>	<i>Disagree (D)</i>	<i>Agree (A)</i>
1	Environmental pollution	12.6%	87.4%
2	Threat to fragile ecosystem	28%	72%
3	Environmental wastebasket	18.4%	81.6%
4	Oil spills/gas Flaring	9.8%	90.2%
5	Threat to aquatic ecosystem	24.9%	75.1%
6	Threat to surface/ground water quality	4.5%	95.5%

Table 2b: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) showing whether environmental problems is responsible for militants agitation in the Niger Delta region

<i>s/n</i>	<i>Variables</i>		<i>Sum of Squares</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Mean Square</i>	<i>F Ratio</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
1	Environmental pollution	Between Groups	11.489	1	11.489	37.302	.000
		Within Groups	257.178	835	.308		
		Total	268.667	836			
2	Threat to fragile ecosystem	Between Groups	4.721	1	8.721	7.099	.009
		Within Groups	1272.020	835	1.523		
		Total	1276.741	836			
3	Environmental wastebasket	Between Groups	.272	1	16.272	10.085	.001
		Within Groups	2686.395	835	3.217		
		Total	2686.667	836			
4	Oil spills/gas Flaring	Between Groups	72.545	1	72.545	55.371	.000
		Within Groups	1093.974	835	1.310		
		Total	1166.519	836			
5	Threat to aquatic ecosystem	Between Groups	10.907	1	10.907	7.835	.005
		Within Groups	1162.500	835	1.392		
		Total	1173.407	836			
6	Threat to surface/ground water quality	Between Groups	172.230	1	172.230	153.125	.000
		Within Groups	939.178	835	1.125		
		Total	1111.407	836			

## Research Question 2 and Hypothesis 2

The second research question states “to what extent are socio-economic and political inequity related to the development of the Niger Delta region”? And the second hypothesis states “socio-economic and political inequity are significantly not related to the development of the Niger Delta region”

Tests to determine if a significant relationship exists between socio-economic and political inequity in the Niger Delta region and the crisis and underdevelopment in the Niger Delta region shows that 86.2% agree that the people of the Niger delta are greatly excluded from the decision making process ( $F = 137.567, P < .000$ ). Respondents (68.5%) agree that individuals in the Niger Delta should have the same rights and obligations and be subject to the same set of rules, and it is assumed that most people in the region are not entitled to those rights ( $F = 6.725, P < .045$ ). Whereas 88.8% agree that Nigeria’s political, economic, and policy elites have established an authoritarian power structure that allows for central control of strategic resources including

the country's substantial oil deposits ( $F = 42.245, P < .000$ ). While 96.3% agree that the authoritarian power structure consequences have been material scarcity, deep frustration, and youth restlessness in the Niger Delta region ( $F = 344.357, P < .000$ ). Finally, 66.9% Northerners control the lion's share of the country's oil wealth. They own and control Nigeria oil blocks leaving almost nothing for the South-south the Niger Delta oil producing areas ( $F = 4.938, P < .027$ ). Therefore, the overall result revealed that socio-economic and political inequity is significantly related to the crisis and underdevelopment of the Niger Delta region. Thus hypothesis 2 was rejected. (see tables 3a and b).

Table 3a: Cross tabulation Analysis showing whether Socio-economic and political inequity are significantly not related to the development of the Niger Delta region

<i>s/n</i>	<i>Variables</i>	<i>Disagree (D)</i>	<i>Agree (A)</i>
7	ND is greatly excluded from the decision making process	13.8%	86.2%
8	Most ND people in the region are not entitled to their rights	31.5%	68.5%
9	Authoritarian power structure	11.2%	88.8%
10	Material scarcity, deep frustration, and youth restlessness in the ND	3.7%	96.3%
11	Northerners control the lion's share of the country's oil wealth	33.1%	66.9%

Table 3b: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) showing whether Socio-economic and political inequity are significantly not related to the development of the Niger Delta region

<i>s/n</i>	<i>Variables</i>		<i>Sum of Squares</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Mean Square</i>	<i>F Ratio</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
7	ND is greatly excluded from the decision making process	Between Groups	125.700	1	125.700	137.567	.000
		Within Groups	762.967	835	.914		
		Total	888.667	836			
8	Most ND people in the region are not entitled to their rights	Between Groups	5.507	1	15.507	6.725	.045
		Within Groups	1234.493	835	1.478		
		Total	1240.000	836			
9	Authoritarian power structure	Between Groups	1.481	1	111.481	42.245	.000
		Within Groups	992.816	835	1.189		
		Total	994.296	836			
10	Material scarcity, deep frustration, and youth restlessness in the ND	Between Groups	284.288	1	284.288	344.357	.000
		Within Groups	689.342	835	.826		
		Total	973.630	836			
11	Northerners control the lion's share of the country's oil wealth	Between Groups	10.907	1	10.907	4.938	.027
		Within Groups	1844.500	835	2.209		
		Total	1855.407	836			

### Research Question 3 and Hypothesis 3

The third research question states “to what extent are underdevelopment, poverty, bad governance and corruption related to the development of the Niger Delta region”? While the third hypothesis states “underdevelopment, poverty, bad governance and corruption are significantly not related to the development of the Niger Delta region”

A two-tailed ANOVA ( $F$ ) and Cross tabulation analysis to determine whether relationships exist in the relationship between underdevelopment, poverty, bad governance and corruption and the Niger Delta crisis was conducted (see tables 4a and b). The study found that underdevelopment,

poverty, bad governance and corruption are significantly related with the Niger Delta crisis. The result revealed that 89.2% of the respondents agree that unemployment is the Niger Delta region is as a result of bad governance and corruption ( $F = 295.878, P < .000$ ); and 84% are of the view that the lack of response from government officials and oil companies has continued to be a compounding source of tension in the region ( $F = 145.408, P < .000$ ). The result from respondents (73.6%) depicts that the reaction to government inaction and use of military force and the insensitivity of the oil industry, groups of young people have begun to plan and execute their own protection and reclamation measures ( $F = 11.046, P < .007$ ). To this end, 77.6% of the respondents believes that poverty and hunger stands as major challenge to the development of the Niger Deltans and the country at large ( $F = 18.878, P < .000$ ). In addition, according to the result, it revealed (71.1%) that a major cause of poverty is the inability of the individual to achieve his/her set goals and targets in the region ( $F = 9.127, P < .003$ ). while, 79.9% of the respondents agree that the poverty incidence, lack of educational development and unemployment have been on a visible upward trajectory in the region ( $F = 20.524, P < .000$ ). 80% of respondents agree that diseases that results from poverty pose a significant challenge to human security in Niger Delta, and their impacts are immediate on the development of the region ( $F = 31.965, P < .000$ ). Whereas 91.1% agree that illnesses of different kinds (self, relatives, or friends) combined with funerals accounted for the majority of reported absence of workers from their offices and institutions, which leads to underdevelopment of the state and national economy ( $F = 128.001, P < .000$ ). While 99.9% of the respondents agree that the elimination of poverty completely and developing all aspects of the individual is to start a process of commitment to social aspirations and attainment of regional and national goals ( $F = 528.000, P < .000$ ). And 79.7% of the respondents agree that Nigeria is been plagued with widespread corruption closely associated petro dollar industry which they think is a major obstacle to the development of the Niger Delta region ( $F = 34.315, P < .000$ ). Therefore, the overall results revealed that underdevelopment, poverty, bad governance and corruption are related to the underdevelopment of the Niger Delta region. Thus, hypothesis 3 was rejected.

In line with this result, the evidence according to Adams et al. (c.f., 2008) is immense — the inflictions imposed upon Niger Delta locals have caused disruption in individual lives and within communities. The on-going activities of oil companies, who have extracted billions of dollars from the region since they began their explorations six decades ago (c.f., Oronto & Okonta, 2003), have meant devastating consequences for the people and the educational development of the region (Ololube et al., 2013).

Table 4a: Cross Tabulation Analysis showing whether underdevelopment, poverty, bad governance & corruption related to the development of the Niger Delta region

<i>s/n</i>	<i>Variables</i>	<i>Disagree (D)</i>	<i>Agree (A)</i>
12	Unemployment	10.8%	89.2%
13	Lack of response	16%	84%
14	Government inaction	26.4%	73.6%
15	Poverty and hunger	22.4%	77.6%
16	Inability of the individual to achieve	28.9%	71.1%
17	Poverty incidence	20.1%	79.9%
18	Diseases that results from poverty	20%	80%
19	Illnesses of different kinds	8.9%	91.1%
20	Elimination of poverty	0.1%	99.9%
21	Widespread corruption	20.3%	79.7%

Table 4b: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) showing whether underdevelopment, poverty, bad governance & corruption are not related to the development of the Niger Delta region

<i>s/n</i>	<i>Variables</i>		<i>Sum of Squares</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Mean Square</i>	<i>F Ratio</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
12	Unemployment	Between Groups	362.279	1	362.279	295.878	.000
		Within Groups	1022.388	835	1.224		
		Total	1384.667	836			
13	Lack of response from government officials and oil companies	Between Groups	179.141	1	179.141	145.408	.000
		Within Groups	1028.711	835	1.232		
		Total	1207.852	836			
14	Government inaction and use of military force	Between Groups	1.934	1	15.934	11.046	.007
		Within Groups	1543.474	835	1.848		
		Total	1545.407	836			
15	Poverty and hunger	Between Groups	19.647	1	19.647	18.878	.000
		Within Groups	869.020	835	1.041		
		Total	888.667	836			
16	Inability of the individual to achieve his/her set goals	Between Groups	14.624	1	14.624	9.127	.003
		Within Groups	1337.895	835	1.602		
		Total	1352.519	836			
17	Poverty incidence, lack of educational development and unemployment	Between Groups	50.790	1	50.790	20.524	.000
		Within Groups	2066.395	835	2.475		
		Total	2117.185	836			
18	Diseases that results from poverty	Between Groups	48.343	1	48.343	31.965	.000
		Within Groups	1262.842	835	1.512		
		Total	1311.185	836			
19	Illnesses of different kinds, combined with funerals	Between Groups	258.522	1	258.522	128.001	.000
		Within Groups	1686.441	835	2.020		
		Total	1944.963	836			
20	Elimination of poverty completely	Between Groups	.000	1	558.582	528.000	.000
		Within Groups	1302.000	835	1.559		
		Total	1302.000	836			
21	Widespread corruption	Between Groups	61.184	1	61.184	34.315	.000
		Within Groups	1488.816	835	1.783		
		Total	1550.000	836			

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

While conducting this study, there were some overall objectives which the researcher aimed to achieve. In the first place, it was aimed at examining the factors that are responsible for militants' agitation in the Niger Delta region. This study examined the socio-economic and political impact of militancy in Niger Delta region. This study specifically, sought tentative answers to the research objectives in relation to the research questions and hypotheses put forward in this study.

The most immediate purpose of this research is to contribute to the knowledge base of the social sciences and the society. This research provides insight, for example, into how people think and perceive agendas, into their everyday and long term concerns, and into the contexts in which their ideas and attitudes have developed over a period of time (Barton, 2006; Ololube et al., 2013). Consequently, this study has shown that human security and development in the Niger Delta region is largely non-existent. This study revealed that environmental problems,

underdevelopment, poverty, bad governance and corruption, socio-economic and political inequity are the major problems of the region. This study has proven that the research hypotheses were rejected as evidence from this study shows that the challenges of Niger Delta are significantly related to the underdevelopment of the region. Analysis of both literature and empirical results and findings showed that:

- Environmental problems are significantly related to the crisis and underdevelopment of the Niger Delta region.
- Socio-economic and political inequity is significantly related to the crisis and underdevelopment of the Niger Delta region.
- Underdevelopment, poverty, bad governance and corruption are related to the underdevelopment of the Niger Delta region.

### **Implication of this Study to Research and Practice**

This research contributes to academic knowledge just as any other research does. It adds to our understanding of human thoughts and actions. By knowing how this research is structured, we can make better efforts in our future research actions and experiences. And by knowing how this study's interpretations are made we can build better understandings of the concepts discussed therein. With this better understanding we can begin to develop more meaningful assessments, design more effective forms of actions, and be more thoughtful about our efforts to deal with the issues encountered in the Niger Delta region.

This research produces a growing body of empirical evidence than can be used for decision making about the region. This is not to suggest that this research is an end in itself. It can, however, be applied in a purely technical manner to help solve part of the underdevelopment in the region. This research becomes most meaningful with the realization that research findings must always be filtered through the practical reality of its contexts. Moreover, in light of the conflicting ideas about the purpose of this research, the implication depends largely on our own values and assumptions (Ololube et al., 2013).

This research has another major implication, not only did it provide a new knowledge base for our research endeavours, but it also a means by which we can come to understand such attempts. That is, we can use the process of this research effort and not just its intellectual contents to improve the Niger Delta experiences of those discussed within this academic work.

### **Recommendations**

This study recommends that:

- The environmental problems of the Niger Delta should be addressed without wasting time in order to significantly reduce the crisis and underdevelopment in the region, which will go a long way to impact on the post amnesty program.
- The socio-economic and political inequity in the region should in fact be stopped so that the crisis and underdevelopment of the post amnesty program in the Niger Delta region will foster.

- The underdevelopment, poverty, bad governance and corruption in the region should be reduced to the minimum so that the development and the post amnesty program will be strengthened.

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