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**THE POLITICS OF NATURAL  
RESOURCES GOVERNANCE IN  
AFRICA: ENVIRONMENT, CONFLICT  
AND SECURITY NEXUS IN NIGERIA'S  
NIGER DELTA REGION**

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of London South Bank  
University for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

July 2018

## Candidate's Declaration

This thesis is the result of the author's original research. It is composed by the author and has not been previously submitted for examination, which has led to the award of a degree.

I would like to present this thesis to London South Bank University (School of Law and Social Sciences) in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Doctor of Philosophy Degree (Ph.D.) in Social Sciences. I have fully acknowledged and referenced all the academic contributions of others in my thesis.

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Parts of this thesis have been presented at a conference as follows:

Hurso Adam (2017) 'The role of natural resource in conflict, environmental destruction and peace-building in the Ogoniland of Nigeria', In: Proceedings of International Conference on Sustainable Development (ICSD), Columbia University, USA. Available at: <http://unsdsn.org/icsd/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2017/08/170830-ICSD-Abstract-Book.pdf> accessed 12 February 2018.

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## Supervisory Team Declaration

We/I hereby certify that the candidate has fulfilled the conditions of the regulations appropriate for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.), in the London South Bank University and that the candidate is qualified to submit this thesis in application for that degree.

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(Director of Studies)

Dr Oluwaseun Kolade  
(Supervisor)



.....  
Signature/Date

.....  
Signature/Date

## **Dedication**

I dedicate this thesis to the loving memory of my father Alhaji Kaka Adam Mustapha and my mother Hajia Zainab Muhammad.

## Acknowledgement

"The best form of worship is the pursuit of knowledge." – Prophet Muhammad

I will ascribe all the glory and adoration to Almighty Allah, for His mercies throughout my journey of life. From the formative stage to the eventual completion of this research. I owe an immense debt of gratitude to my Director of Studies (DoS), Professor Gaim Kibreab and my supervisor, Dr Oluwaseun Kolade for giving me such strong support and guidance. I gained immensely from my supervisory team a wealth of research experience without which I would not have been able to conclude this study in a good time.

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## **Abstract**

This research examined the nexus between the environment, conflict and security in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria as well as the factors that led to the conflict. Since the discovery of oil in 1956, the Niger Delta has been entrapped in environmental degradation as a result of oil mining, spurring a wide range of developmental challenges. Subsequently, by the 1990s, deepening poverty and underdevelopment, exacerbated by ecological problems, opened the space for the emergence of youth restiveness and a violent arms struggle. This violent struggle by the Niger-Delta youth seeks to challenge the legitimacy of the Nigerian state and the perceived corporate irresponsibility of Multinational Oil Companies (MNCs). Thus, the region faces security challenges triggered by neglect on the part of international and local oil companies and the failure of Nigeria's central government to meet the developmental, environmental and security demands of local communities.

Given this background, the research questions are: (1) In what ways do natural resources contribute to conflicts and environmental despoliation in Nigeria's Niger Delta region? (2) Do the federal government and oil companies meet the demands of the community regarding environmental protection and the development and security of inhabitants? (3) Who are the actors in the resource conflict? To address these questions, the research used a triangulation approach, using primarily qualitative primary data sourced through 28 in-depth interviews and three focus group discussions of 5-7 people per group. The data obtained were coded and analysed thematically, and secondary quantitative data was used to supplement primary data.

The original contribution of this research is in three main aspects: First, my research reveals a complex relationship between the local oil servicing contractors and the militant groups. There is strategic destructive alliance between these two actors underpinned by moral hazard. The oil servicing contractors employ the services of the local people to vandalise the

oil pipelines in order for the MNCs to award contract to them for repair of the vandalised pipelines.

Second, the Presidential Amnesty granted to the militants appear to have produced unintended outcomes in undermining productive economic activity and exacerbating insecurity in the region. The monthly payments of allowances to former militants under the amnesty programme incentivised the otherwise peaceful youths to join militancy to benefit from amnesty benefits. This intervention gives credence to the view that the federal and state governments only listen to those who take up arms against the state.

Third, this research proposes a revised theoretical model that integrates two previous frameworks to illuminate the nature and context of resources curse. This integrated model brings together the rentier model and Dutch disease/resource curse to explain the characteristics and complexities of natural resource governance issues in Nigeria. It can be applied to other regions with similar challenges and profiles.

Overall, the research has elicited significant theoretical and empirical insights into different views of the oil extraction, security and development. Recommendations are provided for future research and policy interventions.



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## **List of Acronym**

CAQDAS	Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software
CFRN	Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria
DDR	Disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration
DPR	Department of petroleum resources
The DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
EBA	Egbesu Boys of Africa
FGD	Focus group discussion
GDP	Gross domestic product
GEO	Global Environment Outlook
GNP	Gross National Product
HI	Horizontal Inequalities
IDP	Internally Displaced People
IOC	International oil companies
IPE	International Political Economy
IYC	Ijaw Youth Congress
JIV	Joint Investigation Visits
JV	Joint Venture
LFA	Limited Factor Approaches
MEND	Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta
MNC	Multinational corporations
MNDA	Ministry of Niger Delta Affairs
MNOC	Multinational oil companies
MOPOL	Mobile Police
NBS	National Bureau of Statistics

NDA	Niger Delta Avengers
NDDB	Niger Delta Development Board
NDDC	Niger Delta Development Commission
NDFF	Niger Delta Freedom Fighters
NDPVF	Niger Delta Peoples Volunteer Force
NDRF	Niger Delta Reconstruction Fund
NDV	Niger Delta Vigilante
NDVF	Niger Delta Volunteer Force
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisations
NNPC	Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation
NOSCP	National Oil Spill Contingency Plan
NOSDRA	National Oil Spill Detection Response Agency
NPE	National Policy on the Environment
NRC	Natural resources charter
NSB	National Statistical Bureau
OBR	Ogoni Bill of Rights
OMPADEC	Oil and Mineral Producing Area Development Commission
OPRC	Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Cooperation
PTDF	Petroleum Technology Development Fund
PHCF	Petroleum Host Community Fund
PIGB	Petroleum Industry Governance Bill
RAF	Risk Assessment Form
RGI	Resource Governance Index
SEA	Supreme Egbesu Assembly
SPDC	Shell Petroleum Development Company

SSZ	South geopolitical zone
TAB	The Atangbala Boys
UEC	University Ethics Committee
UN	United Nations
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
VMJ	Violent Militant Jihadis

## **Definition of the key terms**

**Natural resource** refers to any substances or natural assets which can be exploited for economic gain or used for economic production or consumption. In this case, natural resource is the crude oil in the Niger Delta region.

**Oil revenues** payment obligation owed by any company or person to the government and people of the federal republic of Nigeria in respect of crude oil or refined oil sales anywhere in the world. The oil revenue shall be deposited only into the consolidated federation accounts with the Central Bank of Nigeria.

**Royalties:** liquidated from the sales of crude oil or natural gas.

**State officials:** an individual occupying a position of authority in the government of Nigeria.

**Oil resources:** a deposit of hydrocarbons within the territory of the federal republic of Nigeria.

**Oil license:** an approval granted by the government of Nigeria to companies to explore petroleum, only the federal government (state and local government have no rights to grant the license) through the Ministry of Petroleum resources that have the powers to issue the permit.

**Oil block:** is an area of land awarded to **oil** drilling and exploration firms by the Department of Petroleum Resources. The federal government auctioned oil block to both local and international firms for a specified period.

**Acreage** amount of an area in an offshore field under oil production sharing contract between the government and the oil extracting companies.

**Conflict:** for the purpose of this research, conflict refers to a severe disagreement between the oil companies supported by the federal government and the resources bearing communities in the Niger Delta over the ownership of the oil resources. See civil war

**Civil war** a war between citizens of the same country most triggered by ethnicity, religion, or resources ownership issues. The Nigerian civil war was fought between the predominantly Hausa Fulani dominated Muslim North and the Igbo majority Christian Southeastern region, respectively.

**Paradox of plenty** see resource curse

**Environment** the surroundings in which a human being, animal, or plant lives. For the purpose of this research, context refers to the area occupied by the people (including plant, animals, and water) in the Delta region.

**Environment vanguard** armed youth group in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria challenging the sovereignty of the oil companies and Nigerian state that destroyed their environment. The youth vanguards are demanding for the environmental mediation in the area.

**Environment security** the examination of the threats melted by the environmental activities with more significant impacts on the ecosystem and communities.

**Militant** an armed militant group in the Niger Delta. See environmental vanguard.

**Oil Spills** contamination of sea or water by escaped oil due to the bursting of oil pipelines as a result of corroded pipes or destruction by the communities.

**Gas flaring** it is a waste gas generated during the production at the oil and gas plants which is supposed to be controlled in a manner that would not harm the environment. It takes place at the oil and gas drill sites as well as refineries and landfills.

**Grabber friendly** a weak institution in a country that allows corruption and mismanagement of the natural resources wealth for the benefits of the few elites.

**Corruption** dishonest or fraudulent conduct by the people in the position of authority to accumulate wealth through bribery and inflation of contract.

**Ecological (derivation) fund** a special allocation of money by the federal government to the oil-producing states in the Niger Delta region to provide development to the communities.

**Rentier model** a situation in which a country derives all or a significant percentage of her national revenues from the rent of natural resources mortgaged to outside firms or clients.

**Resource curse** it is present in abundant natural resources like oil, diamond and other minerals which tend to have less economic growth and worse development outcomes than the countries with fewer resources.

**Dutch Disease** is the negative impact on the economy of a country that gives rise to a sharp inflow of foreign currency, due to the dependency on the oil and the neglects of the industrial and agricultural sectors of the country. For instance, since the discovery of oil in commercial quantity in Nigeria the traditional source of revenues (other products) become less price competitive on the international export market.

**Greed:** it refers to an argument that combatants in conflicts are motivated by a desire to better their economic situation if the rewards of joining armed groups are greater than not participating. Greed is pursuing one's own personal interest by any means necessary. The

case of Nigeria where the elites in charge of the state affairs are primitively wealthy through corruption. Also, the Niger Delta militants

**Oil bunkering is** stealing crude oil from the criminal network groups in Nigeria in partnership with the international oil business people.

**Clean up programme** it a project by the federal government to clean the Niger Delta environment destroyed by the oil activities.

**Amnesty** a programme announced by the federal government of Nigeria in 2008 for the Niger Delta militants. It is complete disarmament of the armed youth in order to bring peace and security to the region. The amnesty programme involves training of the ex-militants and a monthly payment of allowances.

**Focus group session** an interview involving about 5-7 in a group.

**In-depth interviews** in-depth interviews on a one-to-one basis, i.e. between the researcher and the respondent.

**NVivo** software a computer-assisted software for thematic coding and analysis of qualitative interviews transcript.

**Governance** a method or system of government or management of the people by the legitimate authority.

**Federal Government** is the highest tier with full authority to regulate Nigeria's foreign policies, provision of domestic security and protection of the sovereignty as well as the citizens of Nigeria. President is the Head and Commander-in-Chief.

**State** a second tier of government in Nigeria. There are 36 states which are led by an elected governor.

**Local government** it is the third tier of government in Nigeria. There are 774 local government councils in Nigeria.

**Subvention** it is monthly share of oil revenue and other incomes among the federal, states and local governments.

**Grievance** bitter reactions that will lead to conflict over issues of identity, religion or ethnicity, ethnic or regional interest rather than over collective national economic interest. In Niger Delta, the grievance was influenced by the developmental issues as regards to the environment and security.

**Horizontal inequality** is inequality among culturally defined groups, defined by either their ethnicity, race, or religion or all. See vertical inequality.

**Vertical inequality** is a difference between individuals or households. In contrast, see horizontal inequality.

**South-south** is one of the six geopolitical zone of Nigeria with six states; Rivers, Bayelsa, Akwa Ibom, Delta, Edo and Cross River. Almost all the oil exploration and exploitation takes place in the region.

**Niger Delta** is Nigeria's oil-producing region comprising of nine states, of which six are from Niger Delta (see South-South). The additional three states include; Ondo (South-West); Imo and Abia (South-East).

**Prebendalism** a belief by politicians and elected representatives that those in power have every right to support, share and benefit their tribal people, religion and party loyalists with an appointment and contracts against the established legal procedure

## **Chapter 1**

### **An Overview of Nigeria's Niger Delta Region**

#### **1.1 Introduction**

This research critically investigated the factors that led the oil triggered environmental based conflict and security in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. Additionally, the research examined the institutional and military response of the state as well as the environmental pollution meted out by the international oil companies (IOCs) with the support of the Nigerian State.

Nigeria's oil-rich Niger Delta region is situated in the south of the country and centres on the natural delta of the Niger River. It comprises nine states, which are Abia, Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Rivers, Edo, Ondo, Imo and Delta (Oyefusi, 2010; Francis et al., 2008).

The Niger Delta region has a surface area of 112,000 km<sup>2</sup> (12% of Nigeria's total surface area), living in 3,000 communities. The Niger Delta has a varied culture and heritage and the region is based on the presence of about 40 different ethnic groups speaking 250 languages and dialects representing one of the most densely populated regions of Africa<sup>1</sup> (Zabbey and Olsson 2017; NDDC, 2004).

All of Nigeria's oil production takes place in the land or waters of the extended Delta region. It constitutes a massive oil infrastructure, including '5,779 oil wells, 9,717 kilometres of pipelines network, 126 production platforms, 16 gas plants and refineries and ten export

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<sup>1</sup> The numerous ethnic groups include Ijaws, Ogonis, Ikwerres, Etches, Ekpeyes, Ogbas, Engennes, Obolos, Isoko, Nembes, Okrikans, Kalabaris, Urhobos, Itsekiris, Igbos, Ika-Igbos, Ndoni, Oron, Ibeno, and Yorubas, Ibibios, Annangs and Efiks. Other groups include Ibibios, Anang, Efiks, Bekwarras, Binis, etc. The heritage of the people is reflected in modes of dressing, marriages, traditional culture and festivals (See Niger Delta Regional Master Plan, NDDC, 2014). The predominant settlement type in the Niger Delta is small and scattered hamlets.



terminals, and 112 flow stations as well as over 3000 rivers and creeks, marshy and thickly forested swampy landscape (Watts, 2007: 639; Essien 2017). The Niger Delta region is home to an estimated 45 million people representing about 23 per cent of Nigeria's population 2018<sup>2</sup>. It covers an area of about 70,000 square kilometres and is ranked among the top 10 coastal marine ecosystems in the world (Civil Liberties Organisation, 1996; Omotola, 2006). The Niger Delta region is a wetland of about 70,000 square kilometres spread over some ecological zones; sandy coastal ridge barriers, brackish or saline mangroves, freshwater, swamp forest, and lowland in rain forest along the Gulf of Guinea. Niger Delta is the third largest wetland in the world (Omeje, 2006: 31). The Delta is a large flood plain interspersed with a network of creeks and tributaries that drain the River Niger into the Atlantic Ocean along the Gulf of Guinea. The two other states that officially constitute the Niger Delta (Abia and Imo) are situated in the Southeastern part of Nigeria. Also, Ondo, located in the Southwest but part of economic Niger Delta as a result of geographical proximity. The remaining six states constitute the South-South geopolitical zone (SSZ) and are inhabited by the so-called minority ethnic groups. Some authors have drawn distinctions between the official Niger Delta and the geographical Niger Delta. The oil extraction devastated the Delta region and community members in oil enclaves suffered the consequences of about sixty years of environmental hazards. Allen (2012) argues that oil pollution from spills, oil well blowouts, oil ballast discharges and improper disposal of drilling mud from petroleum prospecting companies have resulted in a wide array of problems such as, damage to marine wildlife; modification of the ecosystem through species elimination and a delay in biota (fauna and flora) succession; and destruction in both fishery resources and farm yields. The Delta region has witnessed ethnic, communal and political unrest since the 1990s. In

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<sup>22</sup> Niger Delta population is calculated by the author based on the World Population Barometres 2018 estimates for Nigeria, available at: <http://www.worldometers.info/world-population/nigeria-population/> and <https://pindfoundation.org/analysis-of-conflict-trends-in-the-niger-delta/> accessed 24 April 2018.

addition, it has witnessed incessant attacks on oil installations, hostage taking and a general atmosphere of insecurity at both the communal and organisational levels.

The Niger Delta region of Nigeria has abundant natural wealth, which stands in stark contrast to its severe environmental pollution, poverty and underdevelopment. Oil and gas are the second largest contributors to Nigeria's GDP, and account for more than 80% of Nigeria's foreign exchange earnings (Buhari, 2016). Over two decades, the Delta has been mired in conflict and violence that threatens both human security and Nigeria's economy.

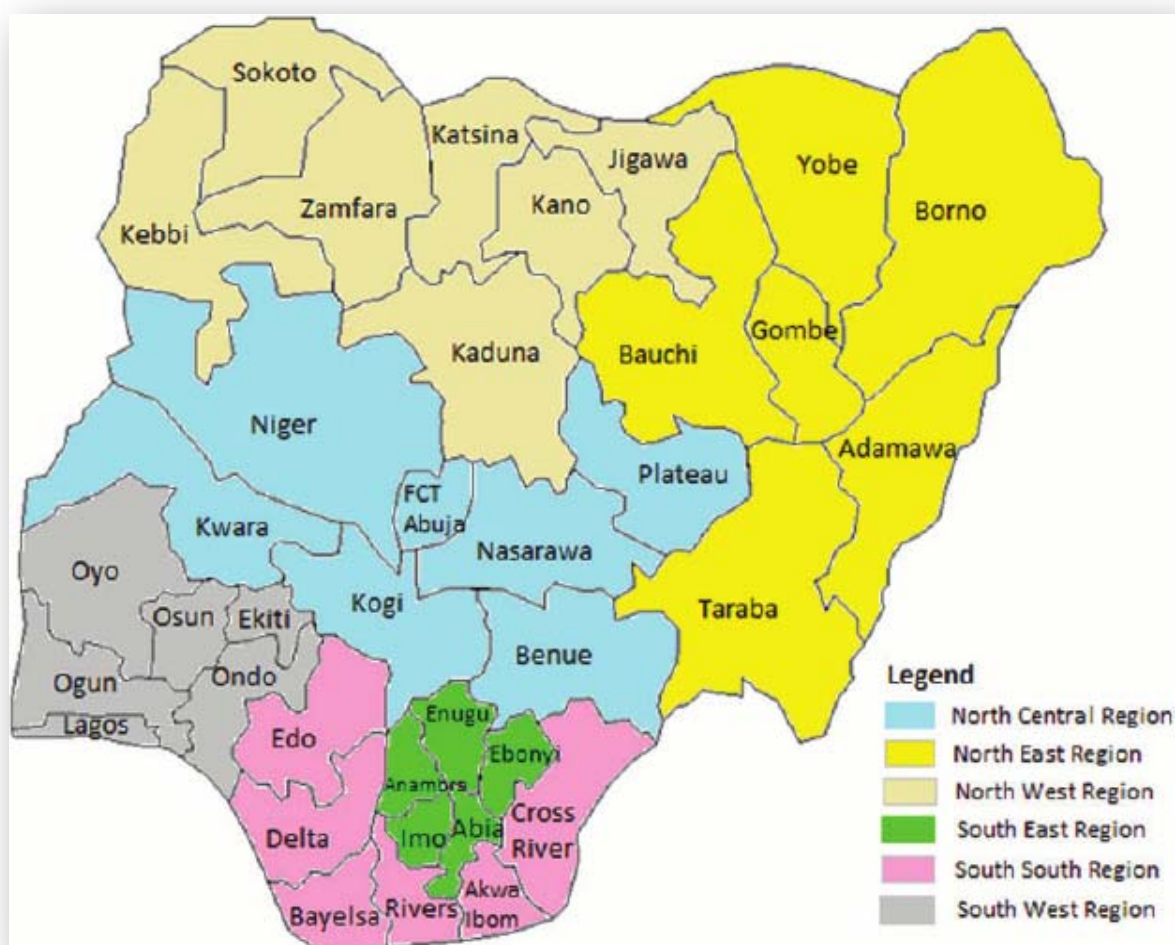


Image 1 Map of Nigeria

Source: NDDC (2006)

This study explored the politics of natural resource governance and oil-related violent conflicts in Nigeria, drawing examples from resource conflicts in other similar African countries. It will also examine the factors that cause the resource conflicts in Nigeria.

The problems in the region are generally associated with the high level of official corruption, the low level of transparency and the absence of accountability. The conflicts induced because of natural resources kill millions of people in sub-Saharan Africa because the societies are 'structurally insecure' (Bannon & Collier 2003). The conflicts related to natural resources have posed serious problems for the states in Africa and the institutions of governance are 'structurally unaccountable' (Collier, 2009: 229). Africa has seven civil wars in the 1970s, eight in the 1980s, and fourteen in the 1990s (Collier, 1998; Collier and Hoeffler, 2000; Michael Ross, 2013: 17-18). Most of these wars have been linked to natural resources in one way or another.

Nigeria's President Muhammadu Buhari, at the London anti-corruption summit in May 2016, presented a paper entitled 'My plan to fight corruption in Nigeria'. In this paper, President Buhari argues that Nigerians never cease to ask questions. At the time of independence in 1960, Nigeria's gross domestic product (GDP)<sup>3</sup> per capita was at US \$559, while that of Singapore was \$476. As of 2016, Singapore's GDP has grown to \$55,182, but Nigeria's increased to just \$3,005. The Niger Delta region holds an estimated 37 billion barrels of crude oil, 192 trillion cubic feet of natural gas (Essien 2017,<sup>4</sup> World Bank, 2016, Buhari, 2016). President Buhari asks: why is Nigeria retrogressing? The answer is high-level official corruption at all levels of the government. Many scholars, such as Richard Auty (2000), Collier (1998, 2000, 2004, 2008) and others have observed that official corruption,

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<sup>3</sup> Nigeria is Africa's largest economy, with an estimated 2017 gross domestic product (GDP) of \$ 400 billion. South Africa, the continent's next largest economy, has a GDP of \$ 317 billion. Nigeria constitutes 71 per cent of West Africa's GDP and 27 per cent of the continent's GDP. GDP per capita is \$ 2,123, compared to \$ 5,588 in South Africa, so although Nigeria is classified a lower-middle-income country by the World Bank, poverty remains a problem, as it does for many nations in this category. An estimated 36.1 per cent of the population live below the absolute poverty line of \$ 1.90 per day (Okonjo-Iweala 2018).

<sup>4</sup> The Protection of National Assets and Critical Infrastructure in Nigeria (2017) 'Policy Monitoring Dialogue II: Leadership, Governance and Security Challenges in Nigeria. Outcome Document. SCDDD, Abuja, Nigeria.

systematic in the world of the treasury, embezzlement, and fraud are all characteristics which exist everywhere, but that there is systematic looting in the case of Nigeria. In Nigeria, there is the need to tackle the cancer of corruption and bring it down to a minimum level. Successive Nigerian governments have simply been unable to do much against this scourge (Buhari, 2016).

## **1.2 An Overview of Nigerian State: Crisis in the Niger Delta Region**

Nigeria is located in West Africa, and it is Africa's most populous country 'the current population of Nigeria is 194,893,793, based on the latest United Nations (2018) estimates and Nigeria's population is equivalent to 2.57% of the total world population'<sup>5</sup>.

It has a long history, with its roots in early civilisations that sprang up along the Niger River in 3000 BC (Crowther 1960). Nigeria shares the land borders with Chad and Niger to the north and Cameroon in the east, and the Republic of Benin in the west. Its coast in the south lies on the Gulf of Guinea in the Atlantic Ocean.

The Nigerian state is a 'colonialist state' that got its independence from Great Britain on 1<sup>st</sup> October 1960 (Beckman 1982). The country is heterogeneous, with over 530 different ethnic groups; the majority ethnic group with political influence is Hausa-Fulani which constitutes 29% of the total population. The Yoruba constitutes 20%, the Igbo 18%, the Ijaw 10%, and the Ibibio and Tiv represents 3.5% and 2.5% respectively. Nigeria is a large country divided into six geopolitical zones with an area of 923,768.64 (Adunbi, 2015:33; Kolade *et. al* 2018<sup>6</sup>).

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<sup>5</sup> Available at: <http://www.worldometers.info/world-population/nigeria-population/> accessed 24 April 2018.

<sup>6</sup> Nigeria is also one of Africa's biggest economies. Furthermore, it is also a window to Africa's ethnic and cultural diversity, with more than 300 language groups spread across the country's various geo-political zones, see Kolade, O., Obembe, D. and Salia, S., (2018) "Technological constraints to firm performance: The moderating effects of firm linkages and cooperation", *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development*, Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1108/JSBED-01-2018-0029> accessed 14 June 2018.

Natural resource wealth mismanagement among other factors has been established as the source of most of the conflicts in Africa (Collier 2002). Conflicts over property have always existed in human societies (Baechler, 2011). However, in Africa, civil conflict or civil war is both a tragedy and an impediment to development, affecting most of the resource's rich countries. In line with the resource conflict theory, Collier & Hoeffler (2009) argue that many rebellions appear to be linked to the capture of natural resources: diamonds, gold and oil in Angola, Liberia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sierra Leone and Nigeria respectively. A rebellion is somewhat analogous to three other types of organisation: protest movements, armies, and organised crime which is the manifest of the resources-rich African countries since 1990. In the Niger Delta, Ukeje (2004) argue, Since the 1990s, the Niger Delta became a hotbed of communal rivalries and violent protests by deprived oil communities against the alliance of the Nigerian State and multinational oil companies.

In the Niger Delta region of Nigeria, oil has indirectly aggravated the risk of violent conflicts through a further distortion of the national economy. The federal government spending more on defence in order to stabilize the Niger Delta region during the peak of the crisis to protect the critical national infrastructure and concurrently costing the human capital development projects, see Figure 1.

The available evidence from Nigeria's National Oil Spill Monitor<sup>7</sup> suggests that there were incidences of vandalism with huge losses, for instance Nigeria used to produce over 2.3 million barrels of crude oil per day which dropped to 1.9 million barrels in 2016 see Figure 3 and 4 at pages 34-35. The Nigerian transition to democratic rule in 1999 decisively increased the opportunities for violent struggle in the South-South region, in a twofold manner: first, through the easing of political repression and, second, through the spread of armed youth groups, which have been fostered by corrupt politicians.

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<sup>7</sup> Up-to-date oil spill details Oil Spill Incidence is available at: <https://oilspillmonitor.ng/> accessed 03 June 2018

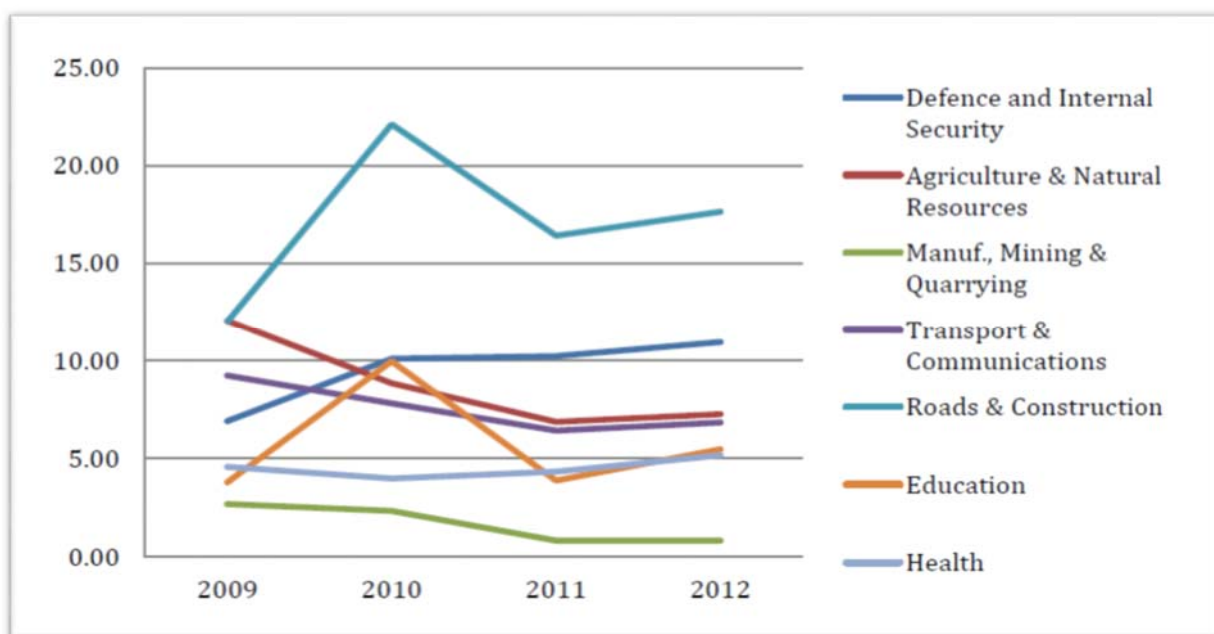


Figure 1 Capital Expenditure

Source: Source: Central Bank of Nigeria in Ikpe, 2017

These incidents imply that violence in the Niger Delta is increasingly driven by the autonomous dynamics of an economy of violence: the involvement of security forces, politicians and businesspersons in illegal oil theft help to explain the perpetuation of the violent conflicts at a low level of intensity (Mähler 2010; Katsouris and Sayne 2013).

Instead of using the oil revenues to eradicate poverty and provides quality life, oil has turned out to be a curse to the Niger Delta region of Nigeria since it was first discovered in the region (Oviasuyi and Uwadiae, 2010: 2). Amnesty International, in its 2009 report, opined that the Niger Delta is a location that has massive oil deposits. In the region, the oil and gas have been extracted for decades by the government of Nigeria and its partners - the multinational oil companies (Amnesty International, 2009). In 1956 a new financial future for Nigeria began to present itself through the discovery of crude oil. Its first export took place in 1958 (Tamuno, 2011). The end of the Cold War witnessed a proliferation of conflicts in the world from ethno-religious clashes to the struggle for the control of natural resources, to human rights abuses and movements for self-determination. Africa in the post-Cold War era has witnessed violence and civil wars and inter-ethnic rivalries. The politics of

controlling natural resources is ‘one of the several explosive phenomena that define many extractive economies of the global South’ (Tar, 2008:31). Natural resources can be said to ‘constitute a direct or remote cause of conflict; [they] sustain conflicts’ (Alao, 2007:4). Most of the conflicts in Africa are triggered by the sharing, ownership and use of land and resources. The World Bank research carried out by Elbadawi and Sambanis (2000), indicates that developing countries are more prone to violence, civil wars and bad governance. According to ACLED (2018) report:

Nigeria has high levels of political violence and protest when compared to the continent at large. As of 2017, Nigeria is the second most violent state in Africa, accounting for 10% of all weekly political conflict events across the continent.<sup>8</sup>

The World Development Report, a publication by the World Bank described West Africa as one of the poorest, neglected and least stable regions in the world—a result of poor leadership. At present, 80 per cent (38 of the 48) of the least developed countries (LDCs) are African. Of the 16 countries in West Africa, the following 11 countries are classified as LDCs; Benin, Burkina Faso, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo<sup>9</sup>.

All but three of its 16 countries are on the United Nations (UN) list of “least developed countries” which are Since independence, countries in the region have experienced at least 58 military coups, attempted coups, and many resource-induced civil wars. Many rebel groups have remained active since the end of the Cold War. Where conflicts have ended, recovery and the creation of resilient institutions take time, and the weakness of governance

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<sup>8</sup> ACLED asserts: The most dangerous areas in Nigeria include Borno, where Boko Haram typically operates and the Niger River Delta region, where political violence often occurs centered around oil. Finally, protests and riots challenging local and national governance practices are frequent in the south and west of the state. Available at: <https://www.acleddata.com/dashboard/> accessed on 09 July 2018.

<sup>9</sup> See ‘Eleven West African Countries have Least Developed Countries (LDC) status’ available at: <http://www.thewomenstorch.com/2016/12/16/eleven-west-african-countries-have-least-developed-countries-ldc-status/> accessed 09 July 2018.

in post-conflict environments attracts transnational criminal networks. International drug traffickers began in 2004 to use the Niger Delta as a base for shipping cocaine from South America to Europe (World Development Report, 2011).

In Nigeria, conflicts over oil resources generally arise over issues such as; who should have access to and control over resources; who can influence decisions regarding their allocation, the sharing of benefits, their management and their rate of use. It is pertinent to note that disputes and grievances over natural resources are rarely, if ever, the sole cause of violent conflict. The drivers of violence are most often multi-faceted. Disputes and grievances over natural resources can contribute to violent conflict when they overlap with other factors, such as ethnic polarisation, high levels of inequality, poverty, injustice and poor governance (UN Framework Team, 2012<sup>10</sup>, Steward, 1998). In the context of Nigeria, the government policies, institutions, structures and processes at all levels governing the access, use, ownership and management of natural resources can be critical drivers of conflict, especially in the resource-abundant regions. The UN Framework Team (2012) argues that in many cases, an abundance of natural resources as well as grievances associated with political exclusion, corruption, and an unequal distribution of oil wealth are primarily responsible for the militarization of the resource-rich region particularly in Africa and more especially in Nigeria.

Byart *et. al* (1999) have described the period from the 1990s onward in a title of a book as the “criminalization of the state in Africa”. The escalation of militancy and violence in the Niger Delta region because of the presence of oil in the area has created a high level of insecurity in Nigeria. The area has become a locus for the easy proliferation of small arms and light weapons into the wrong hands. Armed resistance, armed conflicts, intensive hostilities, militancy and criminality have become characteristic of the Nigerian state, threatening the security of individuals and the economic structure of the country. In Africa,

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<sup>10</sup> UN Framework Team, 2012 available at: <http://unfccc.int/2860.php> accessed 28th November 2017



the implications of some of these conflicts have been profound, sometimes resulting in the collapse of state structures, massive human rights abuses, sectarian and ethnic violence, the weakening of civil society, the further depression of the economy, and the disintegration of traditional legitimate institutions. Natural resources have gained a new strategic importance because of the new paradigm shift in the economics of war in the post-Cold War world. Foreign military assistance is again on the rise due to the “war on terror,” and the withdrawal of Cold War foreign sponsorship in the late 1980s made the extractive economy “loot-able”: natural resources were the mainstay of many war economies throughout the 1990s (Le Billon, 2005). Ross (2012) observed that resource-related conflicts pose unique problems for social and economic development in sub-Saharan Africa. Of the seventeen resource-related conflicts in the world in the early 2000s, nine were in Africa. And, Africa has a population of 1,281,705,367 as of Tuesday, April 24, 2018, equivalent to 16.64% of the total world population<sup>11</sup>. However, it accounts for over 60 per cent of the world's violent resource conflict. The African conflicts also show very worrisome trends. For instance, during the period from 1992 to 2001, the number of armed conflicts outside Africa dropped by half, but the number of conflicts in Africa stayed roughly the same (Ross, 2012).

In the context of the Niger Delta, it has been argued that the conflict over oil is between two distinct actors: those clamouring for local ownership of the oil-rich environment and the state; and its allies who struggle to maintain the national ownership of the natural resources. The local communities in the oil-bearing region are posing threats to state legitimacy through the formation of militant organisations in the name of freedom and environmental protection. Oyefusi (2010) argues that oil has a corrupting disposition, inciting civil unrest and the emergence of the civil militia among the youth in Nigeria's Delta region.

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<sup>11</sup>Africa Population Live (2018) available at: <http://www.worldometers.info/world-population/africa-population/> accessed 24 April 2018.

Traditionally, most of the people in this region are dependent on fishing and agriculture as a means of income-generation and living. Nigeria's National Policy on the Environment (NPE) clearly stipulates environmental ethics of practice. Nigeria is "committed to a national policy that ensures sustainable development based on proper management of the environment in order to meet the needs of the present and future generations" (FEPA, 1989 in Ajayi and Afolabi 2002:5). As confirmed by the UNEP (2011) report on the Ogoniland in the Niger Delta region, the environment has been vastly abused by local and international oil firms. The situation in the Niger Delta region has worsened due to the lack of political leadership to address the problem effectively. The Nigerian state appears too weak to enforce pertinent laws related to business, environment and development. The oil companies operating in Nigeria have a responsibility to manage and maintain pipelines properly, but they hardly do this because of the corrupt nature of the Nigerian state. By any standard, even if it is the youth militants that destroyed the pipelines, it is the responsibility of the oil companies to ensure that their pipes do not leak and pollute the environment (Allen, 2012). No matter who caused the leaks, the environment must be protected, but the reverse is the case in the Niger Delta region.

### **1.3 The Aims and Objectives of the Study**

The aim of this study is to examine the nexus between environmental degradation and violent conflict in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria.

The specific objectives of this research project are:

- To examine the causes of resource-based conflicts in Nigeria's Niger Delta;
- To examine the extent to which the nexus between the environment, conflict and security in the Niger Delta have defined the issues of national and local development and their concerns to the Nigerian public;

- To discuss the responses of the government and oil companies (MNCs) to the demands of community with regard to environmental protection, development and the social security of the inhabitants of the Niger Delta.

#### **1.4 Research Questions**

The major questions that the research project will come to grips are:

1. Is the natural resource endowment in the Niger Delta a curse or blessing?
2. Why conflicts over local and national ownership have raised in the politics of resource control and management in Nigeria?
3. To what extent can the violent conflicts in the Niger Delta be attributed to Nigerian elite's greed; host communities' grievance and multi-national corporations' (MNCs) exploitation of the environment in fuelling crisis in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria?
4. Does the Nigerian case support the theory of natural resource curse? Moreover, is the curse the natural resources themselves, or just the poor management?

#### **1.5 Statement of the research objectives**

Nigeria, like most of the resource-rich developing countries, faces a myriad of challenges in the 21st century. The oil-rich Niger Delta region of Nigeria affected by resource-wars where peace, if it does occur, can be tenuous, full of unresolved rivalries, chaos, and tensions. The aim of this study is to examine the nexus between environmental degradation and violent conflict in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. The specific objectives of this research project are: a) to examine the causes of resource-based conflicts in Nigeria's Niger Delta. (b) to examine the extent to which the nexus between the environment, conflict and security in the Niger Delta have defined the issues of national and local development and their concerns to the Nigerian public. (c) to discuss the responses of the government and oil companies (MNCs) to the demands of community with regard to environmental protection, development and the social security of the inhabitants of the Niger Delta.

In May 2000, the front page of *The Economist* depicted an armed rebel embossed on a map of Africa; the caption asked: ‘The Hopeless Continent?’ African countries have witnessed prolonged civil wars and violent conflicts, mostly related to the local ownership of natural resources instead of collective national ownership. At the end of the Cold War, African countries were faced with security problems and the lowest GNP per capita. Most of the resource-rich developing countries are often presented as war-ridden, poverty-ravaged and ecologically devastated (Okonta and Douglas 2003). The frequency of natural resources conflicts in the Niger Delta region has declined dramatically since the declaration of Presidential Amnesty to the youth militants and also in the 2015 new militant group “Niger Delta Avengers” engaged in oil pipelines destruction and hostage-taking.

Africa south of the Sahara (sub-Saharan Africa) is widely recognised as the most conflict-prone region in the world. Between 1980 and 1994, nearly half of the world’s war-affected countries were located in Africa, and in the year 2000, two-thirds of the 100,000 people killed directly in armed conflicts worldwide were in Africa (Jackson, 2006). Since 1960, over eight million people have died either directly or indirectly because of Africa’s wars, more than 5.5 million of whom were civilians (Jackson 2006:16).

Since Nigeria’s independence in October 1960, the country continued on a path of regional, ethnic, and resource-based conflict. Nigeria fought a tragic civil war between 1967 to 1970. Presently, in Nigeria, the conflict between armed civilian militias and government and corporate paramilitary forces in the oil-rich Niger Delta (South-South region), has been estimated at reducing the country’s oil production output to about 60%, plummeted to a near 30-year low of 1.1 million mid-2016, which was just over 2 million barrels per day in the just past few months (Gupte 2018). This reduction is due to persistent bombing and disruption of oil pipelines and installations in many instances’ militants claimed responsibility for it. The crisis in the Niger Delta started off as a quarrel between the local host community and Shell Petroleum Development Company. As Kukah (2011:89) notes,

Shell has been involved in oil explorations in the Niger Delta for over fifty years. The Ogoni struggle went beyond Shell to the federal government of Nigeria. The oil bearing communities considered Nigerian government as the landlords of Shell Petroleum Development Company (SPDC) and other multinational and local oil companies operating in Nigeria. Additionally, in the North-eastern region, there is an insurgency by a violent militant jihadist (VMJ) group called Boko Haram. Since independence, Nigeria has been a fragile and volatile country bedevilled by ethnic, religious and political violence and instability (Hill 2013).

The violent conflict in the oil-rich Niger Delta region is often between rival groups, scrambling for their share of the proceeds of the limited oil revenues. The nature of the Nigerian state has, so far, blocked any attempt at unifying in a common goal toward national economic development and prosperity for the good of the populace.

Nigeria is a large, complex, and heterogeneous country that combines incredible dynamism and promise with serious governance challenges – endemic corruption. It is by far the most populous country in Africa, with a population that speaks more than 500 languages (World Bank, 2015).

Nigeria is vulnerable to violent conflict due to the prevalence of ethnic disunity, or what Barry Buzan (1999:135) calls ‘negative group unity’, environmental destruction by the oil companies and the persistent underdevelopment of the oil host communities. Also, the minority groups always complain of political domination by the majority ethnic groups. The different sizes of groups relative to the national arena, and the extent to which different identities (ethnic, regional, religious, class, among other things) overlap with, or crosscut, each other (see Fearon and Laitin 1996; Horowitz 1985; Posner 2004; Weingast 1997).

Prebendalism and ethnic jingoism are caused by the members of the dominant ethnic groups (Hausa/Fulani, Yoruba and Igbo); Hausa/Fulani is accused of dominating Nigerian politics and marginalising other ethnic groups from key positions since independence. The

domination of politics by the Hausa/Fulani is due to their numerical strength. Political power is used to obstruct policy and economic reforms that could interfere with the dominant ethnic group's control over the country's natural resources. This has manifested itself in the everyday politics of Nigeria. At any given time, the ethnic group that controls the national leadership uses political or military means to foster divisions within and between minority ethnic groups. Competition for limited resources between these ethnic groups has also led to a divisive political landscape. For example, the Ogoni, a minority ethnic group in their famous declaration tagged 'Ogoni Bill of Rights (OBR), worth quoting at length, affirm:

In the past years (since independence in 1960) the majority ethnic groups of Nigeria. They have not only been usurped; they have been misused and abused, turning Nigeria into a hell on earth for the Ogoni and similar ethnic minorities. (Since) Nigerian independence has done no more than outline the wretched quality of the leadership of the Nigerian majority ethnic groups and their cruelty as they have plunged the nation into ethnic strife, carnage, war, dictatorship, retrogression and the greatest waste of national resources ever witnessed in world history, turning generations of Nigerians, born and unborn into perpetual debtors (Ogoni Bill of Rights, 1990:6).

Added to the despoliation of the environment is the claims over the local ownership of natural resources in Niger Delta that led to the formation of militant groups that ensued fighting between the state and non-state actors. According to Kukah 'the Ogoni Bill of Rights (OBR), was a declaration of war by other means, a non-violent war against the injustice of the Nigerian state' against the local people (Kukah 2011:112). Also, corruption and lack of political structures and functioning institutions in Nigeria among other things contributed to the crisis in the Niger Delta. The amalgamation of North and South protectorates in 1914 to form a single colony named Nigeria created resentment among marginalised minority ethnic groups, which are dominated by the majority. However, Fearon and Laitin (2003:75) argue that 'a greater degree of ethnic or religious diversity by itself' is not 'a major and direct cause' of violent conflict. The violent conflict is associated mostly with 'conditions that favour insurgency,' including 'poverty, which marks financially and bureaucratically weak states' (Fearon and Laitin 2003, 75). The communities of the oil-rich Niger Delta always complain of the chronic poverty resulting from the pollution of their

farmland by the oil companies' activities which makes them incapable of meeting their daily livelihood.

In the Niger Delta, the Ogoni and Ijaw people for many years experienced marginalisation and turned to non-violence campaign for the return of their territory, land and resources to be owned by the local communities against the national ownership as outlined in the Kaiama Declarations and Ogoni Bill of Rights proclamations respectively. On 3rd of November 1992, under the leadership of Ken Saro-Wiwa, the Movement for Survival of the Ogoni People (henceforth, MOSOP), the MOSOP organized the Ogoni people peacefully demonstrated and issued a notice to the oil companies operating in the region. If the Ogonis are peaceful why did they give notice to the oil companies to suspend their activities? Ogoni people, in particular, and the Niger Delta people, in general, have struggled against the degradation of their lands by Shell and its subsidiaries in Nigeria. The MOSOP demanded the oil companies pay rents, royalties, and compensation for the devastated land, or leave the Ogoni land where about 40% of Nigeria's current natural resources are exploited and extracted. The Ogoni protest drew the attention of international human rights and environmental organizations. The protest and the subsequent shutdown of the oil companies' activities seemingly signalled the starting point of protest and grievance against the government and the oil companies in Nigeria. The MOSOP well-coordinated and organized protest has led to a lack of trust between the oil host communities and the multinational oil companies backed by the federal government of Nigeria. This situation puts each ethnic group at risk and makes it difficult to agree on policies that foster economic development. Most Nigerians do not view their government from a democratic standpoint. In Nigeria, to most people, the act of governance has been seen or defined by sentiments based on tribal, regional and religious loyalty 'my loyalty to my tribe and region not to the Nigerian state' because some Nigerians view the national government as unrepresentative and

undemocratic. The crisis in the Niger Delta is rooted in regional loyalty and natural resources nationalism.

The primary source of revenue for the Nigerian government is from oil rent. This income maintains the power base of the country, and the state can use coercive force to retain the ownership of the natural resources by the government, not an individual, region or tribes.

Since the discovery of oil in commercial quantities in 1958, Nigeria's traditional sources of revenue, including agriculture and industrial activities, have collapsed. The presence of natural resource wealth coexisting with poor levels of economic growth is a recognized pattern among economists. It is called the 'Dutch Disease' after an early manifestation; the argument is that paradoxically natural resource wealth leads to economic problems as the focus on general economic development is lost (Collier 2011). Nigeria's leadership has resisted or not pursued diversification of the economy. In turn, economic stagnation and division have hindered the country from being able to deliver good governance. The elite views economic reform as not needed because the country is earning enough money from oil royalties. In the opinion, Okonjo-Iweala Nigeria's former finance minister said: "Nigeria's oil and gas sector is yet to witness effective reforms to enhance its global competitiveness and reflect the current realities in world energy dynamics". Nigeria's economy is highly dependent on oil, accounting for over 90 per cent of exports and 70 per cent of government revenues. The country, a member of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), was the fifteenth-largest oil producer in the world in 2016. It has the eleventh-largest oil reserves and ninth-largest natural gas reserves. Nigeria's natural resource wealth has not served its population as well as it should because certain key institutions remain weak or non-existent and a small kleptocratic ruling elite has perpetuated and taken advantage of this vacuum. But the country has had periods of good growth and reasonable economic performance (Okonjo-Iweala 2018).



Instead, attempts have never been made to address economic reform and the difficult problems that would come with it, that is, to invest the windfall gains of oil revenue and instead have been happy to squander the revenue on patronage, wastage, ‘white elephant’ projects, and other unproductive activities to control power. The majority of the citizens do not pay tax, and as a result, the citizens are not demanding accountability from their leaders. Based on extensive fieldwork in Nigeria, this research makes the case that bad governance and negative group’s unity within the Nigerian federation has contributed to the resource-based conflict. The Niger Delta oil host communities are complaining about the way the oil-mining license or what is popularly called in Nigeria “oil block” have been allocated by people in power to their cronies, relatives and business partners (Field interviews, Eleme, December 2016). Both the armed militants and environmental youth vanguards, the elders and the traditional community leaders, are unhappy that people from the Northern region of the country owned most of the oil blocks.

The Niger Delta communities complain of marginalisation and injustice and made prisoners of out-siders interests in their own lands. The leaders at the state and local government levels are not helping; they are benefiting themselves instead of creating collective public goods for social and economic development aimed at ending poverty and destitution in the region. The Niger Delta people and Nigerian people, in general, would not be poor if there were good governance and social justice to allocate the scarce resources evenly “governance has become both a private and a communal enterprise in Nigeria” (Adunbi 2015:63). The Dutch problems suggest that there is no simple way to fix this. The aim of this study is to examine the nexus between environmental degradation and violent conflict in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria.

The aim of this research is to examine the causes of resource-based conflicts in Nigeria’s Niger Delta. The primary research question is in what ways do natural resources contribute to conflicts in Nigeria’s Niger Delta region?

The question has established an increased understanding of the nature of resource conflict in Nigeria by examining the nexus between the central government, oil companies and communities. The findings of the research suggest that the destruction of the environment due to oil exploration and exploitation generates conflict in the oil-rich region of Nigeria.

### **1.6 Justification for this Study**

The politics of the environment, conflict, and security nexus are the primary determinant factors that can propel the future prospects of Africa's most populous nation – Nigeria. In Nigeria, climbing to political power is inextricably linked to accessing the country's cheap money or lucrative oil revenue for a get rich-quick scheme. Politics, both local and international, are constructed in terms of power. Although the term 'power politics' has unsavoury connotations for some, such a definition implies that the term is redundant<sup>12</sup> (Baldwin, 2012). From the perspective of the realist school of thought, all politics are power politics in the sense that all politics involve power. This is not to say that politics are exclusively about power. It is imperative that the access to political power is one of the main subjects of research in political science and international relations. Violent conflict and instability in Nigeria, or in any given society, can be succinctly explained with political science and international relations theories. In the context of the Niger Delta region, the violent-conflict of interest, propelled by greed regarding how the distribution of oil wealth should be shared between the oil producing states and non-oil producing states, results in insecurity in the region. The Niger Delta conflict is all about who gets what, when and how in politics<sup>13</sup>. Oil and gas extractions in the Niger Delta contribute to insecurity and environmental destruction due to the following reasons.

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<sup>12</sup> Baldwin, D. (2012) Power and International Relations, Available at: [http://www.princeton.edu/~dbaldwin/selected%20articles/Baldwin%20\(2012\)%20Power%20and%20International%20Relations.pdf](http://www.princeton.edu/~dbaldwin/selected%20articles/Baldwin%20(2012)%20Power%20and%20International%20Relations.pdf) Accessed 06 March 2017

<sup>13</sup> Harold Lasswell (1994) defines politics as 'who get what, when and how'. "Politics" as a term should not be limited to any one set of activities, but should be applied to a class of human behaviours that have a common purpose.

First, the exploitation and extraction of oil and gas, from an economic development and security perspective, indicates that there are contradictions and inconsistencies that this research seeks to explore within the framework of development discourse. Second, this research aims to explore and examine the thoughts of people in the Niger Delta, especially the communities in which oil and gas has been discovered, as well as communities without natural resources in their immediate environment, by conducting in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. The interviews were not only held with the host communities, but also with the policy makers and the actors in the oil and gas industry to find out the exact cause of conflict in the Niger Delta. Thirdly, this research aims to contribute to the debates on what has prompted the militancy, as well as clarify the reason why, despite the oil producing states having more access to the natural resource wealth and special development agencies, there are still grievances from the oil host communities. This research makes a review of literature from similar conflicts prompted by the natural resources in the developing countries.

This research considered the following factors to answer what the causes of the natural resource conflict in the Niger Delta region are.

First, one of the causes for violent armed militia and conflict is the issue of poor natural resource governance as the result of institutional failures ‘Nigeria has been less than fortunate in its leadership’ (Achebe 1983) ‘forever-fragile’ since independence (Hills 2013). The poor management of the Niger Delta environment is due to neglectful environmental pollution laws, rules, and sub-standard inspection techniques posed by the federal government<sup>14</sup>. This has led to the destruction of the environment, turning the oil producing land uninhabitable, with a greater degree of danger to human life due to the chemicals and

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<sup>14</sup> Field interviews with George Chama, Ministry of Environment, Rivers State, Nigeria on 13 February 2017

waste. The oil companies pollute, and corrupt government officials hide<sup>15</sup>. This research reveals that the federal government and the multinational oil companies did not do well in protecting the environment and ecology from degradation, as such committing environmental terrorism in the Niger Delta, especially to Ogoni people. Shell Petroleum Company is referred to as 'hell' because its presence in the region destroyed the ecosystem with greater impact on human health (UNEP 2011).

Second, this research reveals the issue of uncontrolled waste, corruption, and mismanagement of the natural resources hugely contributed to the conflict in the Niger Delta. Nigeria depends on oil and gas as a source of profit. Despite Nigeria's wealth, more than 80% of the population lives on less than two dollars a day with poor life quality<sup>16</sup>. Since independence in 1960, Nigeria has earned billions of United States dollars from crude oil export. Global Witness (2017) argue that an estimated US \$400 billion in oil revenues has gone missing from Nigerian state coffers as the result of corruption and poor failed institutions.

Accordingly, Collier (2004) argues, there is a link between natural resources and conflict due to greed. Collier also notes that corruption and poor governance raises the risk of conflict in resource rich developing countries. Thus, there is a link between a country's natural resources and risk of conflict, which results in poor economic growth, finance, victory honey pots, and poor governance (see Collier 2009, 2002; 2008; 2004; 2011). The World Bank also notes: "economic mismanagement, corruption, and excessive dependence on oil have been the main reasons for the poor economic performance and rising poverty" (World Bank,

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<sup>15</sup> Nkojoko field interviews on the 26 January 2017, at the traditional ruler's Palace, Rivers State

<sup>16</sup> Global Witness (2017) 'Nigeria'. In 2011, Global Witness revealed how two of the world's biggest companies, Shell and Italy's Eni, paid \$1.1 billion for Nigerian oil block "OPL 245" to the government. The money ended up with a front company owned by former Nigerian oil minister, Dan Etete. Etete had effectively awarded the block to himself when in power and was cashing in on his corruption. The US \$1.1 billion can help a lot of people in Nigeria. But, the Nigerian people saw none of this money, as it was diverted to Etete and a string of middlemen and anonymous companies. Available at: <https://www.globalwitness.org/en/countries/nigeria/#more> 08 May 2017.

2015). The oil-producing areas in the Niger Delta have deteriorated since the early 1990s. The government has routinely ignored concerns by local communities that are not benefiting from oil wealth and withstand the worst of the industry's environmental damage, or what Saro-Wiwa (1995) describes as the emerging 'ecological war'.

Third, there is lack of transparency and accountability in Nigeria, both the private and public sectors are not sincere enough. In Nigeria, the government deals with all matters of public expenditure secretly. The public are not allowed to know how much oil revenue is allocated at local and state levels. People in power are operating in a personalized way. Oil-funded governments are not financed by public taxes. There is also secrecy surrounding petroleum revenues, whereby governments conceal transactions, and use their own national oil companies to hide both revenues and expenditure.

Lastly, agencies such as the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) and the 13% special allocation to the oil producing states of the Niger Delta region have failed to meet the host communities' developmental demands. The agencies were created to provide infrastructural development projects such as; roads, electricity, schools, clinics/health care facilities, clean drinking water, as well as skill acquisition centres, and youth and women empowerment, but nothing has transpired. In Nigeria, not only has the government failed in its responsibilities, but also the multinational oil companies have failed to undertake their corporate social responsibilities, especially in the Niger Delta region.

### **1.7 Ethical Issues**

In order to explore the reality in the Niger Delta, my research was guided by the principle of anonymity and impartiality. The interviews were conducted through reliable sources (traditional rulers, serving government officials, activist and former political leaders). In other words, they were genuine people who had witnessed the environmental impact of oil exploration, militancy, and government security reactions in the Niger Delta region, and could give an accurate account of what really happened during 2010 to 2017.

I was able to interview two ex-militants, but the Nigerian Army refused to respond to my questions and asked me to receive approval from the Defence Headquarters in Abuja - Nigeria's seat of power. I interviewed six traditional rulers and some community chiefs in the Ogoniland, which helped me to understand the origins of the violent conflict in the Niger Delta. One of the aims of this research is to explore the factors for the environment exploitation, conflict, and security in the Niger Delta into empirical material. This study aims to show that the research is not as complicated, either or ethically, as it is politically sensitive. Both for in-depth and focus group interviews, the following categories of people were selected and interviewed; government officials; community/NGOs leaders; oil companies' officials; traditional rulers, youth activists and student union leaders.

The ethical issues involved in qualitative research in a conflict environment are many. Most of the problems were overcome by protecting the participants. The research was guided by the research ethics code of conduct, or what Orb et. al described thus:

The difficulties inherent in qualitative research can be alleviated by awareness and use of well-established ethical principles; specifically, autonomy, beneficence, and justice. Ethical issues that surround conducting research in conflict settings and sensitive political environments are numerous (Orb and Wynaden, 2000).<sup>17</sup>.

Niger Delta is potentially a dangerous region for research and the issues of personal safety were of paramount importance throughout my stay in the region while conducting my fieldwork research. I did most of the interviews with government officials at their offices. Also, the interviews were in a public place such as the local government secretariat, traditional palaces and meeting a working person during the lunch break rather than at home in the evening. Interestingly, most of the interviewees invited me to their office to do the interviews.

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<sup>17</sup> Orb, E.L. and Wynaden, D (2000) Ethics in Qualitative Research. Available at: <http://www.columbia.edu/~mvp19/RMC/M5/QualEthics.pdf> accessed 27 March 2017.

I also reflected carefully on the fact that I am from northern Nigeria and knowing that the Niger Delta people (some) have grievances against the North as a region. Therefore, as a northerner, I refused to engage in any regional or tribal conversations. I also avoided engaging in discussing the local political issues; I acted neutrally as a researcher in line with the ethical practice code for doing research in a potentially sensitive region.

I was aware of the complex nature of the Niger Delta security issues, reflecting my experience during my National Service in 2006 - 2007 in Rivers State. During the period, I have witnessed the most challenging insecurity of my life such as the Boko Haram insurgency activities in my home state of Borno. The first day, I arrived at Port Harcourt City in the Niger Delta, I reported to the State Commissioner of Police and explained my mission; that I was a researcher and wanted to do fieldwork on the nexus between the environment, conflict and security in the Niger Delta region. I was accorded all necessary support. The Acting Commissioner of Police always monitored my movements and advised me of where to go and where not to go. On one occasion, the Niger Delta youth in Bori and Eleme towns were asking me to visit some communities to see the level of environmental pollution and destruction meted on the environment by oil companies' activities. As usual, I contacted the Police Commissioner for security advice as to whether I should travel to creeks or not, the police chief advised me not to travel to the riverine areas. I respectfully obliged. I always shared my location live (using smart phone share location) with my family members and the police officer during my stays in the Niger Delta region.

Knowing the volatile nature of Nigeria's Niger Delta region for research, personal safety was of paramount importance throughout my stay in the region while conducting the fieldwork interviews. The University Risk Assessment Form (RAF) and the ethics Code of Practice of LSBU clearly indicated how to carry out research in the volatile areas, I employed all strategies for handling risk situations in the risky environment, such as; Port Harcourt

City, Eleme, Bori, Khana and Okrika in the Niger Delta region. I considered the appropriate venues safe for the interviews.

Accordingly, before I travelled to Nigeria's Niger Delta region I applied to the University Ethics Committee (UEC) for approval and I was granted approval to conduct research on the 14<sup>th</sup> September 2016, refer to the attached 'Ethics approval letter' (appendix 1).

### **1.8 The Importance of this Study**

This study examined, identified and analysed factors responsible for instability and violent conflict in Nigeria, with a particular focus on the Niger Delta region. This study differs from previous research because it argues that the resource curse alone cannot explain the conflict in Nigeria's Niger Delta.

The study also looks at the issues of environmental destruction, armed youth militant groups, and struggles over the local ownership of the oil-rich environment in the Niger Delta. Temuno (2011) calls this 'communities, corporations and country,' while I call it, communities, companies and conflict in the Niger Delta. The findings of this research will address the issues of natural resource governance in Nigeria and could be applicable to other resource-rich countries in the developing regions of the world. Second, this study aims to take a critical look at the on-going environmental remediation and the presidential amnesty programme in the Niger Delta. Third, an attempt has been made to reconcile the overarching issues of environment, conflict, and security in the Niger Delta. Fourth, the thesis will critically examine the presidential amnesty programme to the repentant militants in order to bring peace to the restive Niger Delta. In order to make oil exploration flow unhindered, some of the oil companies hired local groups to protect pipelines and oil wells through what is called 'youth president' once the payments stopped, militancy would probably resume overnight (*The Economist* 2015).

Countries rich in natural resources, especially oil and gas, if socially and politically well constituted society, would have used the wealth judiciously for social and economic



development; however, the natural resources have been a curse in Nigeria. The export of crude oil has brought significant insecurity and environmental liabilities to the Niger Delta environment. In the region, the impacts and consequences of oil necessitate a comparison of economic gains and related social, economic, security, and environmental costs. The comparison becomes more meaningful and appropriate at the local community level where the problems of poverty, unemployment, and lack of public infrastructure fuel insurgency in the midst of massive wealth. The environment, conflict, and security have significant impacts on biodiversity and food security in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. Oil exploration and extraction in the Niger Delta has resulted in the destruction of the environment due to oil spillage. This poses a serious threat to the survival of many species and the well-being of people in Nigeria. The study becomes vital to address the multifaceted environmental, development and security challenges in which most resources-endowed states in Africa are entrapped. The study will give us an insight into the implications of environmental pollution, conflict and security at regional and national contexts. My research investigated and identified the missing knowledge or gaps in understanding the linkages between environment and security in Nigeria. The research also presented criticism some of the baseline theories that have defined African conflicts for so many years without meaningful suggestions on how to address the intractable menace. This research proffered a model to address the conflicts in the resource-rich countries, especially in Africa from an African perspective.

## **1.9 Conclusion**

This chapter discussed the politics of natural resources conflict in Nigeria at the introductory level and delved into detailed discussion of oil conflict in the Niger Delta. The chapter also identified and analysed factors responsible for instability and violent conflict in Nigeria's Niger Delta region with similar examples from the resources endowed nations of the developing world. The study differs from previous research because it argues that the

resource curse alone cannot explain the conflict in Nigeria's Niger Delta; which has been presented in the subsequent chapters.

### **1.10 Thesis Outline**

The thesis has been broken down into seven chapters.

In chapter 1, I presented an over overview of the research topic and the discussed the factors that led the oil triggered environmental based conflict and security in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. The chapter also examined natural resource and violent conflicts in Nigeria, drawing examples from resource conflicts in other similar African countries.

The chapter also presented the research aim, research question, important and justification of the research.

Chapter 2 examines the roles of various stakeholders in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. The chapter also analyses three perspectives in understanding the Niger Delta, the Federal Government, the multinational oil companies and the armed militants in the oil conflict including the federal government amnesty to the militants. I explored the way oil host communities cooperate with the militant groups and NGOs to claim the ownership of the oil-rich environment and subsequent responses of the Nigerian government to grant presidential amnesty to the militants challenging the state legitimacy over ownership and control of the oil exploitation and exploration.

Chapter 3 identified and discussed relevant scholarly arguments, and attempts has been made to establish a relationship between the extractive economies, (oil and gas), and conflicts, and the environment and security in the developing world with particular reference to the Niger Delta case study. Who are the main actors in the Niger Delta environmental and oil conflicts? In what ways do oil trigger conflict and insecurity in the Niger Delta? To address the research questions, the chapter presented reviewed scholarly work on natural resources, environment and conflict. The chapter traces the antecedents of the resource conflicts debates from a global, regional, and local context. After reviewing various theories of natural resources and

development. The chapter further considered some scholarly criticism on some of the famous theories (greed versus grievance) and seeks to establish which of the theory or theories that best explain the Nigeria resources conflict experience.

Chapter 4 discusses the methodological aspect of the thesis from ethics approval to the journey in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria for data collection. In details, the chapter presented all the processes involves in the course of gathering data and the methods used in the recording, transcription, as well as coding and analysis of the data. The chapter also highlighted the difficulties faced in securing interviews in the potentially sensitive topic in the Niger Delta region. Ethical issues also addressed.

Chapter 5 presented the analysis from the field. The chapter examines and evaluates the politics surrounding the oil and gas industry in Nigeria. The section analysed some interesting results on the following themes; oil spill and degradation of the environment; the efforts of Niger Delta environmental vanguards; the performances of the Niger Delta Development Commission and the ministry of Niger Delta Affairs. Also, the chapter presents a thorough analysis of the current situation in the oil-rich Niger Delta region, especially the long-awaited cleaning of the devastated environment.

Chapter 6 discusses the research findings, relates the findings with the research questions, and examined some scholarly knowledge in the field.

Chapter 7 the chapter also examined the existing knowledge in the field of environment, conflict, security and development and supported the data from the field. summarized the research findings and the thesis contributions to the knowledge of understanding the Niger Delta crisis. The chapter also traces the role of the international oil companies and the government of Nigeria's special agencies that mostly failed in addressing the developmental needs and demands of the Niger Delta people.

Chapter also presented the summary of the research work and its contributions to the knowledge of understanding the natural resource conflict in Nigeria. The chapter presented

a three main areas which the research might have contributed to knowledge; theory, empirical data and policy aspect. These form the basis of recommendations for further researchers

## Chapter 2

### The Environment, Conflict and Security in the Niger Delta

#### 2.1 Introduction

You can never, never defeat Shell in a Nigerian court. A case can go on for very many years. You can hardly get a judgment against [an oil company] in Nigeria. Shell is Nigeria and Nigeria is Shell.

His Royal Highness Emere Godwin Bebe Okpabi<sup>18</sup>, December 2016.

This chapter is divided into two sections. Section 1 examines the roles of various stakeholders in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. The chapter also analyses three perspectives in understanding the Niger Delta, viz; the Federal Government, the multinational oil companies and the armed militants in the oil conflict including the federal government amnesty to the militants. I explored the way oil host communities cooperate with the militant groups and NGOs to claim the ownership of the oil rich environment and subsequent responses of the Nigerian government to grant presidential amnesty to the militants challenging the state legitimacy over ownership and control of the oil exploitation and exploration.

#### 2.2 Major Actors in the Niger Delta Conflicts

Understanding the actors in the Niger Delta conflict is a crucial factor for the better understanding of different narratives that run through the Nigerian State and its allies (MNCs) and the armed militants supported by the host communities or the inhabitants of the Niger Delta region<sup>19</sup>.

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<sup>18</sup> His Royal Highness Emere Godwin Bebe Okpabi is the paramount ruler and hereditary king of the Ogale community in the oil-rich Niger delta. See: 'Ogoni king: Shell oil is killing my people' available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/dec/03/ogoni-king-shell-oil-is-killing-my-people> retrieved 05 April 2017.

<sup>19</sup> Conflict in the Niger Delta region is primarily an oil-related conflict due to either the greed or grievances, and or both which this thesis will hope to investigate.

This chapter aims to identify and discuss the actors that determine the politics of natural resources governance and conflicts in the Niger Delta. Who are the actors in the conflict? There are three major actors in the conflict. First, is the federal government and its coercive force struggling to maintain national ownership of the oil, environment and the ecosystem? Second are the multinational oil companies (commercial exploiters), supported by the federal government of Nigeria to extract oil in the region. Third are the Niger Delta armed youth groups referred to as the Niger Delta militants, supported by the inhabitants of the region struggling for the local ownership of the oil rich environment. The militants are challenging the nature of how the MNCs polluted the environment, 'eco-terrorism' and the politics of the sharing of natural resource wealth among the tiers of government in Nigeria. During the field interviews, the traditional ruler, Mr MX2, said 'the local oil companies in the Niger Delta conspire with unemployed youths to vandalise the oil pipelines so that the MNOC will award the contract to the indigenous oil servicing companies to repairs the vandalized pipes'<sup>20</sup>.

The people of the Niger Delta are not happy with how the oil wealth or oil money have been shared across the states and local governments in the country. The conflict between resource exploitation and the environment constitutes some of the key causative factors for conflict between the state and community, and security therefore becomes a major problem (Porto, 2002). This chapter examines the perspectives of different stakeholders and actors involved in the Niger Delta conflict and security management. The actors whose perspective will be critically examined are: (1) The Federal Government of Nigeria Perspective (2) The multinational oil companies (MNCs) Perspective (3) The armed militants Perspective. Finally, the chapter will discuss the reflection from the fieldwork in chapters 5 and 6. I proposes the following typology showing the actors in the Nigeria's oil conflict.

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<sup>20</sup> Mr MX2 is a traditional ruler in the Niger Delta, I had conducted series of interviews in his Palace. In fact, Chief Nkpe awarded me with an honorary citizenship of Eleme which I mentioned earlier.

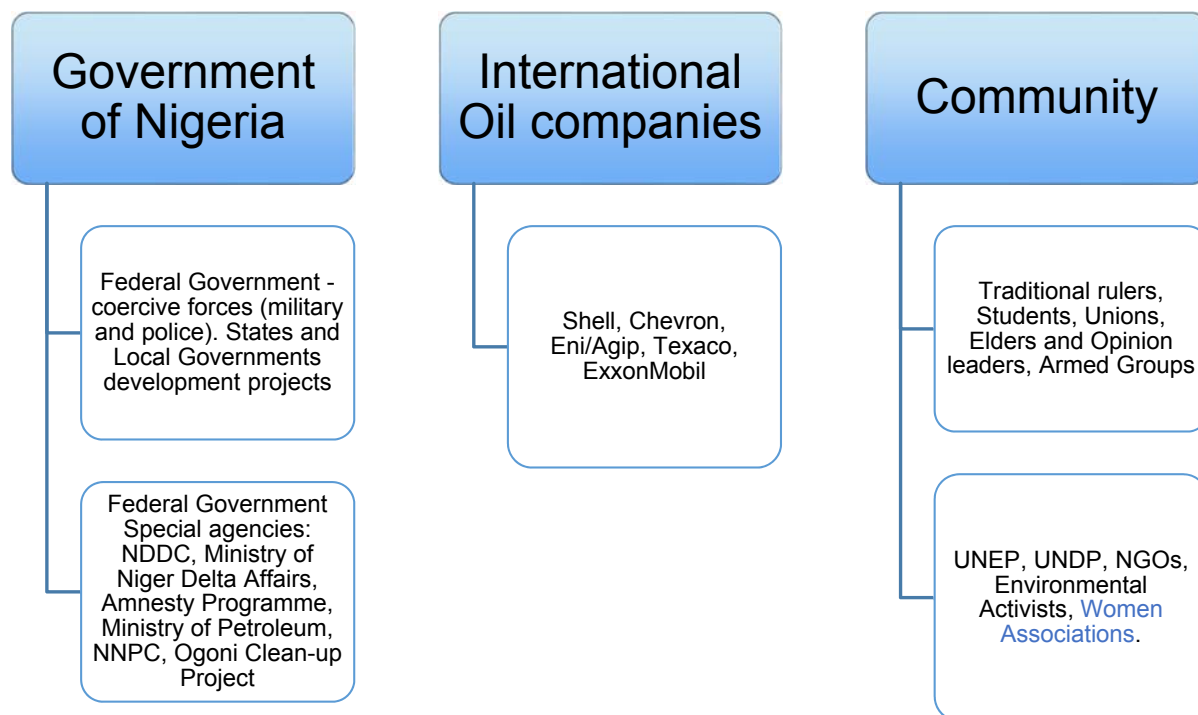


Figure 2 Actors in the Niger Delta conflict

### 2.3 The Oil Companies in the Niger Delta

Since the discovery of oil in commercial quantities in the Niger Delta region by Shell D'Archy in 1956 (Tamuno 2011; Adunbi 2015), the region became a new darling for the international oil investors and companies for the exploration and export of the oil. The oil companies are paying royalties to the consolidated federation account under the supervision of Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC); oil is one of the lucrative businesses in Nigeria. Since the conflict started, the country witnessed mass proliferation of the multinational oil companies' investors into the Niger Delta region for Joint Venture (JV)<sup>21</sup> business between the federal government of Nigeria and the commercial oil exploiters.

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<sup>21</sup>Joint Venture (JV) is a business enterprise created and or managed by two or more parties. The federal government of Nigeria through the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation and MNCs are managing the exploration of the country's oil through joint venture based on the allocated shares.

Following Nigeria's return to democratic governance in 1999, the country generated a revenue of over one trillion US Dollars from the Niger Delta crude oil extraction. See table of figures 3, 4 and 5, adopted from the United States Energy Information Administration, December 2017.

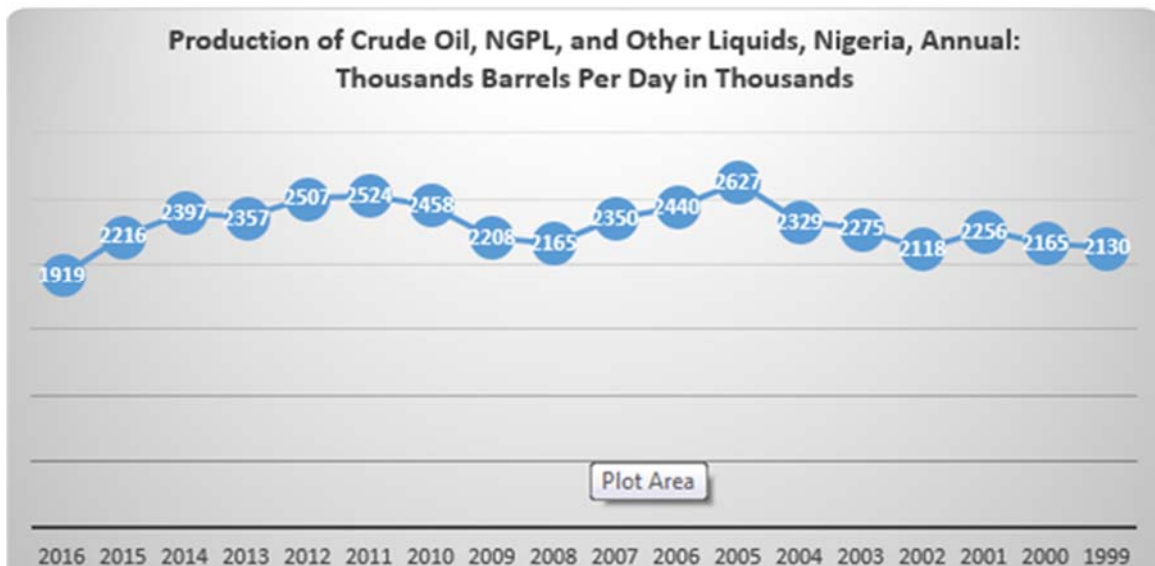


Figure 3 Crude oil production volume

Adapted from OPEC and US EIA 2017

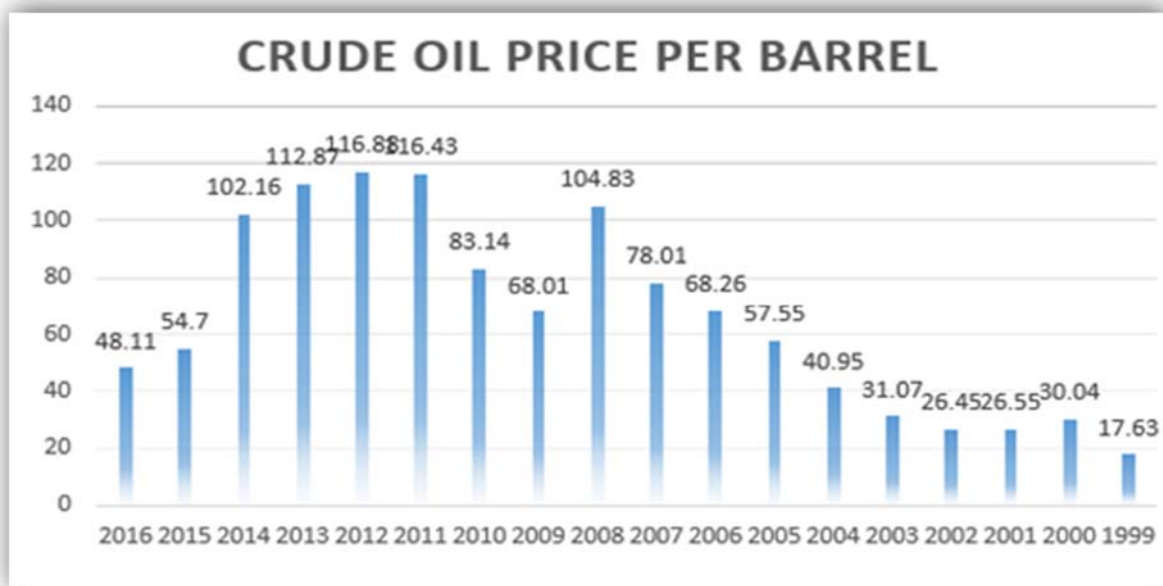


Figure 4 Crude oil prices 1999 - 2016

Adapted from OPEC and US EIA 2017



Table of figures 3 and 4 above, presented Nigeria's crude oil revenues year and prices time series. Nigeria generated a huge revenue between 2011 – 2014 the prices of crude oil reached its peak US \$102 – \$116 per barrel. Accordingly, in the year 2015 and 2016 a barrel of crude oil stands at the rate of US \$48 – \$58.

Table 5 below also showing the time series, volume of crude oil exported and the total revenues Nigeria generated from the export of crude oil. Over the period of 16 years the country generated US \$1.0141 billion US dollars (excluding locally refined oil and gas and other taxes), 'yet the country borrowed abroad unwisely and unsustainably, accumulating up to US \$70.92 billion, there is US \$18.9 billion in external debt as of March 2018<sup>22</sup>. A prime example is provided by the Ajaokuta Steel Mills, where an investment of more than US \$ 5 billion yielded no returns to the economy' (Okonjo-Iweala 2012:11). A significant part of the resources disappeared into the hands of top-level and middle-level public officials and politicians, most of it ending up outside Nigeria, deposited in foreign bank accounts or used to buy or invest in foreign assets in Europe and North America (see Giuliani 2015, Global Witness 2017, and Okonjo-Iweala 2012).

The oil revenue and borrowed money most of it were wasted on "white elephant" projects. If these monies were invested in much-needed infrastructure, education, and health services it would go in long way making life better for millions of Nigerian people, these are some of the reasons why Nigeria's president described corruption as a 'cancer' (Buhari 2016:1).

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<sup>22</sup> Debt Management Office (2018) 'Nigeria's External Debt Stock' available at: <http://www.dmo.gov.ng/debt-profile/external-debts/external-debt-stock/2375-nigeria-s-external-debt-stock-as-at-december-31-2017/file> accessed 29 April 2018.

Year	Price Per Barrel	Barrel Per Day	Total Barrel Per Year	Revenue in US Dollars
2016	48.11	1,919,000	700,465,000	33,697,927,850
2015	54.7	2,216,000	808,840,000	44,243,548,000
2014	102.16	2,397,000	874,905,000	89,380,294,800
2013	112.87	2,357,000	860,305,000	97,102,625,350
2012	116.88	2,507,000	915,055,000	106,951,628,400
2011	116.43	2,524,000	921,260,000	107,262,301,800
2010	83.14	2,458,000	897,170,000	74,590,713,800
2009	68.01	2,208,000	805,920,000	54,810,619,200
2008	104.83	2,165,000	790,225,000	82,839,286,750
2007	78.01	2,350,000	857,750,000	66,913,077,500
2006	68.26	2,440,000	890,600,000	60,792,356,000
2005	57.55	2,627,000	958,855,000	55,182,105,250
2004	40.95	2,329,000	850,085,000	34,810,980,750
2003	31.07	2,275,000	830,375,000	25,799,751,250
2002	26.45	2,118,000	773,070,000	20,447,701,500
2001	26.55	2,256,000	823,440,000	21,862,332,000
2000	30.04	2,165,000	790,225,000	23,738,359,000
1999	17.63	2,130,000	777,450,000	13,706,443,500
<b>Total</b>			<b>15,125,995,000</b>	<b>1,0141,321,000:00</b>

Figure 5 Crude oil revenue 1999 - 2016

Note: adapted from OPEC and US EIA

### ***2.3.1 The Environment***

This section will discuss the environmental despoliation meted on the environment resulted in the destruction of farmland (gas flaring and oil spills) and the ecosystem due to the increased activities of oil exploration. The oil companies' activities has vastly affected the Niger Delta environment, since the beginning of oil exploration in commercial quantities in 1958. The Niger Delta environment, especially the Ogoniland and Oloibiri, are presented as one of the most devastated and exploited environments on the planet (see Okonta and Douglas 2003). The chapter also analyses the United Nation's Environment Programme special report on the Ogoniland, published in 2011 and the subsequent efforts by the federal

government of Nigeria and the multinational oil companies to mediate or clean up the Ogoniland. The federal government of Nigeria has employed several environmental friendly techniques in the Niger Delta to address hydrocarbon contamination with little or no success due to the non-implementation associated with official corruption and misplacement of priorities as well as trained manpower. The (UNEP, 2011) report observed that it will take thirty years to clean-up the Ogoniland. Only Ogoniland! The Ogoniland clean-up necessitated by the reality on the ground which I shall discuss in chapters 5 and 6 respectively.

The Niger Delta environment has suffered damage during the militants' violent conflict with the Nigerian security forces, especially from the recent destabilization and the setting fire to the oil pipelines. The Niger Delta's new militant group, "Avengers", blew up the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) crude and gas pipelines. The militants destroyed Well D25 in Abiteye, a major gas well belonging to Chevron and blew up major pipelines that effectively put the Abiteye, Alero, Dibi, Otunana and Makaraba flow stations that feed the Chevron tank farm out of operation. They also blew up the Brass to Tebidaba Crude oil line in Bayelsa State. The Avengers militants reduced the operations of the oil giant company Chevron in the Niger Delta to zero. The Niger Delta Avengers issued a strong warning to international oil companies that they would make them suffer, as they have made the people of Niger Delta suffer over the years from environmental degradation and environment pollution. The Avengers demanded that the United Nations free the people of the Niger Delta from environmental pollution, slavery, and oppression. The exploration of oil in the region by the MNCs has had a deleterious effect on the well-being of the oil-bearing communities. The Niger Delta people have been forced to live with the highly polluted environment; the result of practices that would not be allowed anywhere in Europe, Canada or United States.

### ***2.3:2 Oil Spills Threatened Environment***

The Niger Delta is the world's most threatened human ecosystem (Okonta and Douglas, 2003, UNEP, 2011). As the result of the popular demand and protest by the oil communities over the oil spills in the Niger Delta, due to neglect and careless handling of the oil wealth by the oil extracting companies, the federal government of Nigeria established a special agency to monitor, report oil spills and take clean-up measures.

The National Oil Spill Detection Response Agency (NOSDRA) was established in 2006 as a government institutional framework to co-ordinate the implementation of the National Oil Spill Contingency Plan (NOSCP) for Nigeria in accordance with the global practice. Nigeria's NOSCP was established in-line with the principles guiding and regulating the International Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Cooperation (OPRC) to which Nigeria is a signatory<sup>23</sup>. Since the organization's establishment, it has been intensely occupied, in strict compliance with environmental legislation in Nigeria and the United Environment Programme and other international environmental treaties and pacts, with saving Mother Earth. The Agency embarked on Joint Investigation Visits (JIV) to the polluted areas to ensure the remediation of impacted sites, to monitor oil spill drill exercises and facilities inspection and to make recommendations for immediate clean-up.

Gas flaring aside, oil spillage is another primary cause of environmental pollution in the Niger Delta. The UNDP (2006:20) studies found that 'a total of 1,100,000 barrels of oil was spilled in the Niger Delta between 1979 and 2005'. Information analysis undertaken at Amnesty International (2015) indicates that the Royal Dutch Shell and the Italian multinational oil giant ENI, operating in Nigeria, have both admitted to more than 550 oil spills in the Niger Delta in 2014 alone. The Amnesty International analysis compared the Shell and ENI roles in polluting and destroying the African environment, due to negligence,

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<sup>23</sup> NOSRA, Available at <http://nosdra.gov.ng/> accessed 9<sup>th</sup> January 2017.

to the whole of the Europe where there were only 10 spills a year between the period of 1971 and 2011<sup>24</sup>.

This excludes unreported oil spills. Repeated oil spillage is partly responsible for the soaring rate of unemployment in the region (Omotola 2009), since the majority of Niger Delta inhabitants were historically farmers and anglers. In addition, owing to the continual pollution of streams and creeks, fish can only be caught in deeper offshore waters, for which the Niger Deltans are ill-equipped (Na'Allah 1998). Also, Wiwa (1992:44) aver that 'in 1972, an incidence of oil spillage (by Shell) that occurred at Dere – a small village in the Niger Delta – was so devastating that 20,000 people lost their means of livelihood. Acid rain fell on the area for months following this and both children and adults coughed blood'. Worse still, a High Court, presided over by a British-born judge, awarded damages against Shell [in the paltry sum of] £168,468, thus pre-empting the imposition of fines of tens of millions of dollars agreed upon by a special governmental committee set up to investigate the matter' (Ibid.; Na'Allah 1998).

In many of the oil-bearing communities, the net effects of oil production have been devastating, severely impacting on the environment and human health. In the last two decades or so the popular campaigns by local people and environmental activists, supported by their allies abroad like Amnesty International, have done a great job by identifying the double standards roles of the oil companies. Amnesty International observed that the oil companies are far more likely to demand environmental and social mitigation efforts in, say, the North Sea or Alaska than in a more remote district of a developing country far away'.

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<sup>24</sup>Nigeria: Hundreds of oil spills continue to blight Niger Delta (2015) available at: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2015/03/hundreds-of-oil-spills-continue-to-blight-niger-delta/> accessed 10<sup>th</sup> January 2017.

### ***2.3:3 Shell in the Niger Delta Region***

Nigeria's first commercial oil discovery was in June 1956 at (Otuabagi/Otuogadi) in the Oloibiri<sup>25</sup> district, by Shell Darcy. Oloibiri was the first West African oil well. It is interesting to note that Nigeria exported its first crude oil in February 1958 from the Oloibiri oil field.

The Ogoniland refers to the Ogoni speaking people in Gokana, Khana, Eleme and Tai local governments of Rivers State. The people of Ogale - Eleme, Ogoni had been drinking water containing benzene 900 times above World Health Organisation (WHO) permissible limits (UNEP, 2011; Zabbey et. al 2017). Can Nigeria achieve complete environmental cleaning of the Ogoniland in good time?

The UNEP (2011) report represents the best available report so far for the understanding as to what has happened to the Niger Delta environment. The UNEP thoroughly investigated the level of pollution in the Niger Delta, with particular reference to the Ogoniland, and the corresponding implications for the neglected communities over the years of oil industry operations in the region. The report comprehensively provides the government, stakeholders and the international community with invaluable, baseline information on the scale of the challenge and priorities for action in terms of the environmental clean-up and in the Niger Delta to make life better for the devastated oil producing communities.

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<sup>25</sup> The Oloibiri communities, today, lack the basic necessities of life as the black gold, an exhaustible asset, which then made the area to be called Bioforoama, nicknamed "Eastern Congo", due to its booming social life, has since dried up and Shell moved to another location regardless of the dislocation caused to the locals. The people still face basic development challenges and environmental pollution caused by oil spills. "In spite of our peaceful disposition that led to uninterrupted oil production for several decades, development has eluded our community even as Shell which struck oil in the area has also abandoned the well". See Oyadonga, S. and Idio, E. (2016) '60 Years after Nigeria's first crude: Oloibiri Oil dries up, Natives wallows in abject poverty' Vanguard 13 March 2016, available at the following link: Read more at: <http://www.vanguardngr.com/2016/03/60-years-after-nigerias-first-crude-oloibiri-oil-dries-up-natives-wallow-in-abject-poverty/> Read more at: <http://www.vanguardngr.com/2016/03/60-years-after-nigerias-first-crude-oloibiri-oil-dries-up-natives-wallow-in-abject-poverty/> accessed 12 April 2017. Shell D' Archy did never conduct Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) see Okonta, I. and Douglas, O. (2003) 'Where Vultures Feast – Shell Human Rights and Oil' page 65. Verso, London.

At the request of the federal government of Nigeria, the UNEP team of researchers examined:

... more than 200 locations surveyed 122 kilometres of petroleum and gas pipelines. The team reviewed more than 5,000 medical records of the host communities and engaged discussions with over 23,000 people at local community meetings. The team of experts also carried out detailed examinations of the contaminated soil investigations at 69 sites in the Niger Delta's most polluted areas. Altogether more than 4,000 samples were analysed, water taken from 142 ground water monitoring wells drilled specifically for the study and soil extracted from 780 boreholes (UNEP, 2011:6).

The UNEP (2011) report findings reveal that there are, in a significant number of villages and locations, serious threats to human health from contaminated drinking water and concerns over the viability and productivity of ecosystems. The pollution and destruction of the environment by oil companies has perhaps gone further and penetrated deeper than many may have previously projected, the population is experiencing severe health risks.

#### **2.4 The Niger Delta People Perspective**

The oil abundant Delta region is agitating for the local ownership of the oil and gas resources, which led to the formation of militant groups. The activities of the militants include destruction and vandalization of critical national assets (oil and gas) pipeline networks and kidnapping for ransom.

The conflict in the Niger Delta by the oil bearing communities is waged fundamentally to challenge the national ownership of the oil by Nigeria because the oil economy is structured to exclude the resource rich communities (Ojaborotu and Gilbert 2010; Adunbi 2015). The oil bearing communities, as a result of their exclusion or greed, (they themselves might argue that it is not greed—their people are starving to death and have few medical services, and the wealth of their land is being taken away by kleptocrats in Abuja; they might argue that this is fundamentally unjust and they are interested in justice as opposed to personal enrichment) want local ownership of the oil-rich environment. The Nigerian constitution does not allow local, regional or tribal ownership of mineral resources anywhere in the

country. On the absolute ownership, control and management of the natural resources and hydrocarbon, the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 (as amended) section 44 (3) and item 39 Schedule II of the Exclusive Legislative List, states:

Notwithstanding the foregoing provision of this section, the entire property in and control of all minerals, mineral oils and natural gas in, under or upon any land in Nigeria or in, under or upon territorial waters and the Economic Zone of Nigeria shall vest in the Government of the Federation and shall be managed in such manner as may be prescribed by the National Assembly.<sup>26</sup>

This power is firmly provided for in Section 44 (3) of the Constitution of Nigeria, the entire extractive resources under or upon any land in Nigeria or in, under or upon territorial waters and the Economic Zone of Nigeria shall vest in the Government of the Federation and shall be managed in such manner as may be prescribed by the National Assembly. Kenneth Omeje (2006) argues that the contending issues underpinning oil conflict in Nigeria's Niger Delta can be reduced to a nexus of institutional, ecological and social factors. The militarization of the region had begun to gradually elicit a response in the shift in local resistance from a non-violent to a violent form. The new groups included MEND, Egbesu Boys of Africa (EBA), Supreme Egbesu Assembly (SEA), The Atangbala Boys (TAB), Niger Delta Vigilante (NDV), Niger Delta Peoples Volunteer Force (NDPVF), Niger Delta Freedom Fighters (NDFF) and the recently formed Niger Delta Avengers (NDA) amongst others. Most resource rich developing countries, especially African countries such as Liberia, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Sierra Leone, witnessed protracted, extractive, economic induced (diamond and gold) conflicts. There are multiple stakeholders involved in the conflict. Firstly, the domestic actors (represented by the warlords); and, secondly, the international actors (European and American mercenaries). Africa is the location of the Western countries most mercenary operations<sup>27</sup>.

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<sup>26</sup> Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 (amended), Abuja, Nigeria.

<sup>27</sup> Bruce Blain, writes on the roles of the developed world in prolonging conflicts in the resource rich countries as thus: "mercenaries are as old as war itself. Nevertheless, the modern mercenary traces its origins back to the



The Niger Delta militants are getting almost all the weapons illegally from the mercenaries and to some extent the Nigerian army too, sell weapons to the Niger Delta militants<sup>28</sup>.

In the Niger Delta region of Nigeria, too, there are multiple actors involved in the politics of natural resources conflicts; management, security and development. In the case of the Niger Delta, Ukoha has argued that there is a conflict between two distinct actors: (a) those clamouring for the local ownership of the oil-rich environment and ecosystem and (b) the state and its allies who struggle to maintain the status quo – the national ownership of the environment and security structures. In Nigeria, the oil bearing communities are posing a threat to the state's legitimacy through the formation of many militant organizations in the name of environmental and social justice.

The communities in the Niger Delta region, in collaboration with rebel groups with the capacity to produce violence, generate the capacity to obstruct. In the recent conflict in the Delta region, the umbrella militant group MEND is claimed to have had a membership of between 5,000 and 10,000 at its height (Imai and Blaire 2012).

In the Ogoniland, the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP) was founded in the early 1990s. MOSOP instantly became an articulate rallying point for the people. The *raison d'être* of MOSOP was primarily to enable the Ogonis – the largest ethnic minority group in the Niger Delta – to press for reprieve, to gain a degree of autonomy, and to draw international attention through the 1990 Ogoni Bill of Rights (OBR). With its origins

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Congo (now the Democratic Republic of the Congo) Crisis which was fought between 1960 and 1965, following that country's independence from Belgium. The presence of European and American mercenaries, often supporting a particular ideological faction, was a common trend throughout Cold War conflicts in Africa. Over the course of innumerable conflicts during and after the Cold War, mercenaries have proven to be a valuable tool for governments that are seeking to preserve their power base, as well as insurgent groups that have sought to overthrow existing regimes. Although it is not the only continent to be plagued by mercenaries, Africa is the location of most mercenary operations. Most recently, the ongoing conflicts in Angola, Sierra Leone, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, have all been prolonged in large part due to the continued presence and employment of mercenary forces by both governments and rebel groups. Traditional mercenaries give little thought to allegiance to a particular side or cause, save for their own material gain". Available at: <http://www.informationclearinghouse.info/article3396.htm> accessed 29th October 2016.

<sup>28</sup> For details, see 'Army Officers Who Sold Weapons to Militants'. Available at: <http://www.nairaland.com/105920/army-officers-sold-weapons-militants> accessed 13 January 2017.

in the Ijaw ethnic minority group dispersed across the coastal states of the Niger Delta, MEND is the largest and most dangerous of all resistance groups to have emerged from the Niger Delta. According to MEND and its supporters, the Niger Delta people have suffered from decades of environmental degradation due largely to unregulated pollution produced by oil companies operating in the area (Watts 2014). This is facilitated by national state policies that continue to deprive local communities of their land in favour of foreign oil interests and capitalist expansion (Omotola 2006). *The Economist* (18 September 2008) describes MEND as a political organisation that wants a greater share of Nigeria's oil revenues to go to the impoverished region that sits atop the oil. In fact, it is more of an umbrella organisation for several armed groups, which it sometimes pays in cash or guns to launch attacks. This description resonates with a statement made by Jomo Gbomo, a spokesperson for one of MEND's factions: 'MEND is an amalgam of all arm bearing groups in the Niger Delta fighting for the control of oil revenue by indigenes of the Niger Delta who have had relatively no benefits from the exploitation of our mineral resources by the Nigerian government and oil companies over the last fifty years' (cited in Obi 2009, 123). Ike Okonta, author of 'Behind the Mask': explaining the emergence of the MEND militia in Nigeria's oil-bearing Niger Delta, interviewed some of MEND's declared members directly and describes the group as not so much an 'organisation' but 'an idea in which many civic, communal, and political groups, each with its own specificity and grievances, have bought into' (Okonta 2006, 4). Membership in MEND is reputed to be fluid, with militants involved with several groups simultaneously or concurrently Jomo Gbomo indicates that the group's members are 'volunteers' (Daily Trust, 23 May 2009)<sup>29</sup>.

Since late 2005, the resistance against the state and multinational oil corporations operating in the Niger Delta region has taken a more violent and sophisticated turn with the emergence

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<sup>29</sup> Daily Trust, available at: <https://www.dailytrust.com.ng/news/general/> accessed 15 July 2015

of the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) militants (Courson 2009). In November and December of 2005, two bombs were detonated in the creeks of Rivers State, destroying two Shell Petroleum Development Company (SPDC) pipelines located in the Okrika and Andoni axis with no person or group(s) claiming responsibility.

On January 11, 2006 an SPDC oil-field located about 20 kilometres offshore was attacked and damaged, and four expatriates were abducted by militants after a fierce gun duel with the military guarding the oil-field. The dust had barely settled when on Sunday January 15, 2006, MEND militants 'attacked and destroyed one flow station and two military house-boats belonging to SPDC in Benisede, Bayelsa State' (Courson, 2011:14).

Just like the newly-formed Niger Delta Avengers, MEND's objective, according to the spokesperson of MEND Jomo Gbomo, "is to totally destroy the capacity of the Nigerian government to export oil". These attacks and the reduction in oil production of 400,000 barrels per day led to a hike in the price of oil on the international market and subsequently reduced Nigeria's oil output.

The Niger Delta Avengers (NDA), a new violent militant group, emerged in 2015 after Nigeria's general election. Nigeria's oil-rich Niger Delta region is currently mired in a major insurgency by Niger Delta Avengers (NDA) militants attacking oil pipelines of the multinationals, oil installations and federal government security forces. The newly formed (2015) NDA insurgency appears to be a fantastic example of the "resource curse" thesis that seeks to establish strong connections between natural resource abundance, the paradox of plenty and violent environmental conflict in the resource rich countries.

Niger Delta Avengers further worsened the environmental degradation confronting the region. The bombing of oil pipelines, which results in oil spills affects the means of livelihood of the people as well as their health. Not only the armed and non-armed activists protested against the destruction of the environment by the MNCs supported by the Nigerian.

The Niger Delta women have played an important role, I shall discuss the role of women or women's movements in the Niger Delta under 2.4.1, below.

#### **2.4.1 Women's Resistance to State Violence**

The women in the Niger Delta grievances mostly revolved around issues of the degradation of the environment, unemployment and absent of essential social amenities. The people in the Niger Delta have paid the supreme price fighting for environmental, developmental and social justice. Nigerian state used of brute force resulted in the death of over 1,800 including women and children, over 30,000 population made homeless, and countless others imprisoned, raped, tortured and beaten up (Rowell 2017).

The women protesters 'grassroots environmentalism' (Ukeje 2004) gathered momentum under the Federation of Ogoni Women's Associations (FOWA)<sup>30</sup> and resolved that Shell Petroleum Company to quit the Niger Delta region. The women declaration stated "Shell cannot and must not be allowed in Ogoni...we say no to Shell as it remains *Persona non grata* in Ogoni". The declaration was endorsed by over 300 women leaders that represented 57,000 active FOWA's registered members, all were rural women seeking for justice and dignity (Barikor-Wiwa 1997). The women's well organised and sophisticated non-violent struggles for environmental, developmental and social justice has drawn the attention of the international community and solidarity to the deprived women. All attempts by the Nigerian state to subvert the women environmental movements have not succeeded. Hence, the women resistance opened a new chapter in the Niger Delta struggle for the environmental justice.

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<sup>30</sup> It was on April 25, 1997 the Federation of Ogoni Women's Association (FOWA) an umbrella organization for all women's groups in Ogoni, the oil rich Niger Delta region of Nigeria. The era of the most intense protests began on January 4th, 1993, when the Ogoni people took their future into their hands and peacefully protested nearly four decades of environmental devastation by the Shell oil company. Over 300,000 people participated from a total Ogoni population of 500,000 and not a single stone was thrown (Barikor-Wiwa 1997).

## 2.4.2 Global Action on the Environment

Not only the growing demands of the local people and domestic environmentalists and organised women protests against the environmentally irresponsible oil extraction in the Niger Delta. The demands for the preservation of the environment has received global attention and has been incorporated into political context within the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)<sup>31</sup> and the Paris Climate Agreement's<sup>32</sup> with the central aim to strengthen the global response to the threat to the global environment. The UN SDGs has 17 goals and goal number 13 specifically called for 'Climate Action' and has the following targets:

- Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries.
- Integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning.
- Improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning.
- Implement the commitment undertaken by developed-country parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to a goal of mobilizing jointly \$100 billion annually by 2020 from all sources to address the needs of developing countries in the context of meaningful mitigation actions and transparency on implementation and fully operationalize the Green Climate Fund through its capitalization as soon as possible.

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<sup>31</sup> SDGs was has 17 sustainable development goals (SDGs) to transform our world. Available at: <https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/envision2030-goal13.html>

<sup>32</sup> The Paris Agreement (was signed 12<sup>th</sup> December 2015) builds upon the Convention for the first time – brings all nations into a common cause to undertake take ambitious efforts to combat climate change and adapt to its effects, with enhanced support to assist developing countries to do so. As such, it charts a new course in the global climate effort. Available at: <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-paris-agreement/what-is-the-paris-agreement>

- Promote mechanisms for raising capacity for effective climate change-related planning and management in least developed countries and small island developing States, including focusing on women, youth and local and marginalized communities.

Nigeria is a signatory to both ‘The Paris Climate Agreement and SDGs ‘to achieve the above-mentioned targets before the year 2030.

## **2.5 Federal Government of Nigeria’s Responses to Niger Delta Challenges**

The federal republic of Nigeria consists of thirty-six states, seven hundred and seventy-four local government areas and the federal capital territory Abuja – the seat of power.

The federal government has power or exclusive rights over any natural resources found anywhere in Nigeria, as enshrined in the ‘Land Use Act Decree No. 6 of 1978<sup>33</sup>’. In addition, the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 as Amended; Nigerian Minerals and Mining Act, 2007, and the Petroleum Act 1969 Cap P 10, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria 2004 all vested the ownership of natural resources on the people of Nigeria. The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (CFRN) of 1999, as amended, confers exclusive power on the Nigerian State to own, control and regulate the activities of minerals, mineral oils and by-products.

Similarly, the Petroleum Act of 1969 also empowered the federal government of Nigeria to handle all minerals exploration and exploitation as succinctly put forward in the preamble thus:

An Act to provide for the exploration of petroleum from the territorial waters and the continental shelf of Nigeria and to vest the ownership of, and all on-shore and off-shore revenue from petroleum resources derivable therefrom in the Federal Government and for all other matters incidental thereto.

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<sup>33</sup> The Land Use Use Act of 1978: vested the entire ownership and control of all petroleum in, under, or upon any land in Nigeria, or under the territorial waters shall be vested in the Nigerian State not an individual possession. available at: <http://www.nigerialaw.org/Land%20Use%20Act.htm> accessed 28 April 2017.

The oil host communities' voice out their grievances against the Nigerian government through protest and rally for not developing the rural communities in the oil producing areas (Ogoni Bill of Rights 1993). This chapter examines the various special agencies established by the federal government in order to meet the developmental yearning of the oil rich communities. What has the federal government done or is doing in addressing the developmental needs of the host communities? The section analyses the federal government's special programme and agencies, specifically meant to address the Niger Delta Developmental issues. The special agencies include among others; Ministry of Niger Delta Affairs, the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC), special intervention funds (13 per cent derivation funds to the oil producing states), the amnesty Programme to the militants as well as the development projects and special scholarships exclusively to the indigenes of the oil producing states of the Niger Delta region.

To address the myriad of developmental and security challenges as well as neglect, the federal government established various agencies since the discovery of oil in the region. There have been various attempts and many development agencies and regional master plans made in the past to improve the well-being and living conditions of the oil producing communities in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria. In view of all the efforts made, each of the special agencies and plans ended with little or nothing to show for the time and resources spent, the oil producing communities are still wallowing in abject poverty or thirsty in the middle of water<sup>34</sup>. What are the problems that retard development in the Niger Delta, is it greed or grievance or both? There were different types of development approaches and agencies applied to develop the Niger Delta region but most of the agencies were characterised by corruption and preceded by another similar agency.

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<sup>34</sup> Field interviews with the Paramount ruler in Eleme, Nkpe on the 26<sup>th</sup> January 2017.

It is pertinent to name some of the special agencies formed by the federal government of Nigeria in the last decades and in recent times purposely to address developmental needs and security challenges in the Niger Delta, which includes:

### ***2.5.1 The Niger Delta Development Board (NDDDB)***

The NDDDB was established in 1961 by the Niger Delta Development Act (1961), as recommended by The Sir Henry Willink Commission (1958). The Willink's commission recommended that the Niger Delta area deserved special development attention by the Federal Government of Nigeria. The Commission recommendations were made even before crude oil became a mono-economy for Nigeria revenue generations. In the 1950s about 70 per cent of Nigeria's population derived their livelihood from agriculture<sup>35</sup>.

The Federal Government, in response to the Commission recommendations, established the Niger Delta Development Board (NDDDB) in 1960 to plan and manage the developmental needs of the people of the Niger Delta region. The special area earmarked was referred to as 'Yenagoa Province', 'Degema Province', 'the Ogoni Division of Port Harcourt and the Western Ijaw Division' of Delta province in the present day (Delta State). The NDDDB in its seven years of existence had done a little until it was scrapped by the military regime in 1966 and the Biafran civil war of 1967<sup>36</sup>. Unfortunately, or fortunately, like most of Nigeria's development master plans and programmes of action, the NDDDB has not achieved any of the purposes for which it was established.

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<sup>35</sup> The economy of Nigeria historically was based on agriculture, and about 70% of the workforce is still engaged in farming (largely of a subsistence type). The chief crops are cocoa, peanuts, palm oil, corn, rice, sorghum, millet, soybeans, cassava, yams, and rubber. In addition, cattle, sheep, goats, and pigs are raised. Details available at: <http://www.infoplease.com/encyclopedia/world/nigeria-economy.html> Accessed on 30 December 2016.

<sup>36</sup> See Niger Delta Regional Master Plan, 2007. Federal Republic of Nigeria.



### ***2.5.2 Oil and Mineral Producing Area Development Commission***

The OMPADEC, established by Decree No. 23 of 1992 as the result of discontent and restiveness by the oil producing communities, mandated the military ruler Ibrahim Babangida regime to set up the Oil Mineral Producing Areas Commission (OMPADEC).

The law establishing the OMPADEC allocated three per cent of federal oil revenue to the Niger Delta region to address developmental needs of the areas. With the formation of the OMPADEC, communities in the oil rich region were so happy that the developmental challenges in the region would be addressed but unfortunately it was a disappointment just like the NDDDB. There was massive corruption, mismanagement and inefficiency in the management of the three per cent allocation. Throughout its existence, from 1992 to 1999, it has done little and the majority of the communities in the creeks and rural areas did not benefit from its so-called developmental activities, just like its predecessor organization. In reality OMPADEC failed abjectly to address the grievances of the Niger Delta people. Nigeria's former President Obasanjo, in May 1999, after realising that the OMPADEC had failed in executing its principal mandate, submitted a Bill to the National Assembly for the establishment of the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) to replace OMPADEC (NDDC, 2004).

### ***2.5.3 Ministry of Niger Delta Affairs***

The Ministry of Niger Delta was established in September 2008 by the late president Umaru Musa Ya'adua with the aim of addressing the grievances and developmental challenges in the region. The Ministry of Niger Delta Affairs commenced operations in April, 2009. The Ministry was saddled with the responsibility of coordinating the activities of stakeholders, communities and donors (collaborating with UNDP and World Bank) involved in the development and environmental sustainability of the region's development.

The functions of the Ministry are as follows:

- (1) Oversee the implementation of Government policies on the development and security of the Niger Delta.

- (2) Coordinate the formulation of the development plan for the region.
- (2) Formulate policies and programme for Youth mobilization, empowerment and development.
- (3) Facilitate private sector involvement in the region's short, medium and long-term development.
- (4) Liaise with oil companies in the region, to ensure environmental protection; oil spillage and pollution are controlled.
- (5) organize human capacity development as well as skills acquisition, apprenticeship training and scholarships programme for the unemployed youth.
- (6) Take adequate measures to ensure durable and stable peace and security with a view to enhancing the socio-economic potentials of the region in particular and Nigeria in general.
- (7) To supervise the activities of the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) activities (NDDC 2000)<sup>37</sup>.

#### ***2.5.4 Niger Delta Development Commission***

The Niger Development Commission was established by Act No. 6 of 2000, under the leadership of former president Olusegun Obasanjo (1999–2007), to address the neglect and suffering (chronic poverty and unemployment) and to develop the region economically. The Commission was officially inaugurated on the 21 December 2000 with a primary vision and mission to "... offer a lasting solution to the socio-economic difficulties of the Niger Delta region" and "to facilitate the rapid, even and sustainable development of the Niger Delta into a region that is economically prosperous, socially stable, ecologically regenerative and politically peaceful" (NDDC, 2004). The function of the NDDC as enshrined in the establishment Act 2000<sup>38</sup> includes:

- (a) Formulation policies and guidelines for the development of the Niger- Delta, area,
- (b) conceive, plan and implement, in accordance with set rules and regulations, projects and programmes for the sustainable development of the Niger Delta area in the field of transportation,

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<sup>37</sup> See Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) Establishment Act (2000) available at: <https://docs.google.com/gview?url=http://www.nddc.gov.ng/theNDDCACT.pdf&embedded=true> accessed 14 February 2017.

<sup>38</sup>NDDC Establishment Act 2000, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria. The Federal Ministry of Justice, 12 July 2000. Federal Government contribution, which was to be equivalent to 15% of the monthly statutory allocation due to member States of the Commission from the Federation Account. Oil and gas processing companies' contribution of 3% of their total budget. 50% of the Ecological Fund Allocations due to the member States. Proceeds from NDDC Assets and miscellaneous sources, including grants-in-aid, gifts, loans and donations (NDDC, 'Regional Development Effort' 2004) Available at: <http://nddc.gov.ng/masterplan.html> Accessed 11 April 2017.

including roads, jetties and waterways, health, education, employment, industrialization, agriculture and fisheries, housing and urban development, water supply, electricity and telecommunications;

- (c) Cause the Niger-Delta area to be surveyed in order to ascertain measures which are necessary to promote its physical and socio-economic development,
- (d) prepare master plans and schemes designed to promote the physical development of the Niger-Delta area and the estimates of the costs of implementing such master plans and schemes;
- (e) implement all the measures approved for the development of the Niger- Delta area by the Federal Government and the member States of the Commission;
- (f) identify factors inhibiting the development of the Niger-Delta area and assist the member States in the formulation and implementation of policies to ensure sound and efficient management of the resources of the Niger-Delta area,
- (g) assess and report on any project being funded or carried out in the Niger-Delta area by oil and gas producing companies and any other company including non-governmental organisations and ensure that funds released for such projects are properly utilized;
- (h) Tackle ecological and environmental problems that arise from the exploration of oil mineral in the Niger-Delta area and advise the Federal Government and the member States on the prevention and control of oil spillages, gas flaring and environmental pollution-,
- (i) Liaise and work with the various oil, mineral and gas prospecting and producing companies on all matters of pollution prevention, mediation and control.
- (j) To carry out other functions, which in the opinion of the Commission, are required for the sustainable development of the Niger Delta region, environment and its communities.

The petroleum minister, Mr Ibe Kachikwu calls for the audit of the NNDC, in his words:

I think we need an audit because it will not be wise to have agitation of this kind in the circle after each agitation comes back again to demand for the same thing when intervention funds had made no impact on the lives of the ordinary people. Kachikwu, *This Day Newspaper* 27 August 2016<sup>39</sup>.

### ***2.5.5 Special Intervention/Ecological Funds***

In view of the significant amount of money channelled into the Niger Delta development agencies in the last five decades or so, to meet the desires and aspirations of the host communities of the oil-rich environment for infrastructural development and poverty

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<sup>39</sup> Kachikwu, I (2016) \$40bn Spent on Niger Delta in 12 Years without Result, available at: <https://www.thisdaylive.com/index.php/2016/08/27/kachikwu-40bn-spent-on-niger-delta-in-12-years-without-result/> accessed 14 January 2017.

alleviation, there is very little to show commensurate to the money spent. It is fantastically clear that the money goes into the pockets of a few elite (greed), mostly government officials and contractors and people are protesting against the state (grievance). The oil producing communities are not feeling the impact of the funds, as much needed infrastructure is not being provided by the NDDC or state governments in the region. Why is the Niger Delta so complex? What can be done about it? Oil and gas communities in the Niger Delta have revealed that from 2007 to 2014, a total of seven years, not less than one trillion, seventy-four billion, fifteen million, five hundred and eighty-two thousand Nigerian Naira (N 1,074,015,582,000.00) have been remitted to the oil and gas producing communities in the Niger Delta from the 13 per cent derivation funds (Oyibode 2017)<sup>40</sup>.

Apart from the special agency of the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) and Ministry for Niger Delta Affairs with estimated annual budgets of over \$2 billion dollars. The federal government, from the consolidated oil revenue, has given the Niger Delta states (state government) an additional 13 per cent ecological derivation funds.

### ***2.5.6 The Niger Delta Regional Master Plan***

The Master Plan for Niger Delta is a comprehensive regional Master Plan that is hailed as a tool that the millions of people of the Niger Delta region can use to actualize their plan and common vision to build their future to the standard they desire for a better life. The Niger Delta Master Plan was designed to offer stakeholders, at local and state levels, individuals, groups and traditional institutions the opportunity to participate in the planning process. This was the first time Nigeria's government had come-up with the bottom-up approach in addressing the Niger Delta developmental and security challenges. The Master Plan was designed based on what the people wanted in the next 15 years. It is a departure from the

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<sup>40</sup> Oyibode, A. (2017) Oil producing communities: Niger Delta governors are embezzling our 13 per cent derivation fund. Available at: <https://www.naij.com/1098868-oil-producing-communities-niger-delta-governors-embezzling-13-percent-deriva.html> accessed 10 May 2017.

previous development approaches. President Buhari recently launched a \$10 billion Niger Delta Reconstruction Fund (NDRF) to implement the regional master plan<sup>41</sup>.

### ***2.5.7 The Amnesty Programme***

According to Ndutimi Alaibe, National Coordinator and Chief Accounting Officer of the Federal Government, the federal government of Nigeria declared amnesty to the militants in 2009 to stabilize the restive Niger Delta region. It was a response to the security challenges by the then President to reduce fundamentally the violence that was taking place. After consultation with stakeholders, it was decided that there was a need to get the militants to lay down their weapons. That was the basis of the amnesty which was meant to stabilize, consolidate and sustain the security conditions in the Niger Delta region, as a requisite for promoting economic development in the area. (Daily Independent, 3 June 2012) The late President Yar'Adua announced the amnesty policy on the 25 June 2009. The amnesty policy stated that militants who freely surrender their arms within 60 days (6 August 2009 to 4 October 2009) will not be prosecuted for the crimes committed in the process of disrupting the Nigerian oil industry. I shall discuss the details on the amnesty programme from the field interviews see page 206.

With the declaration of amnesty in 2007 by President Umaru Musa Yar'adua, the Niger Delta witnessed about seven years of relative peace. Amnesty is one of the concrete actions that the federal government has taken for militants who turn in their weapons and commit to abandoning violence. In May 2016, the region once again came under siege by militants called “the Niger Delta Avengers”. They are in the business of destroying oil infrastructure — working in teams, carrying small arms and explosives, blowing up pipelines and sabotaging facilities — taking advantage of the Delta's complex, creek-filled terrain to stay one step ahead of the Nigerian soldiers chasing them. Resources may be targeted for

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<sup>41</sup> ‘Buhari to Launch \$10bn Niger Delta Reconstruction Fund’ (2016) Available at: <http://economicconfidential.com/2016/10/buhari-10bn-niger-delta/> Accessed on 30 December 2016.

destruction or damaged by bombs and other ordinance; war may displace populations into fragile environments where the struggle to survive degrades the resource base; the institutions designed to manage natural resources may be disrupted or shut down by war.

As part of the amnesty process, a jailed and prominent militant leader, Henry Okah, has been released from prison and granted amnesty, though presently in prison in South Africa, Mr Okah was alleged to be the mastermind of the 1st October 2010 bomb explosion in Abuja. Many questions surround the amnesty process. First, for “disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration” (DDR<sup>42</sup>) to be effective, all three components of the process must be integrated and implemented. The existing process in the Niger Delta makes no carefully planned provision for reintegration, which should include resettlement, training, alternative employment, etc. One potential resource that has remained untapped is the preparedness of some oil companies to assist with technical training to enhance the employability of those given amnesty. Second, as with most DDR programs around the world, probably only a fraction of existing weapons is being surrendered, and it is not even clear that the weapons being turned in were those used by the militants. Third, for a DDR process to be entirely successful, it needs to be part of a comprehensive peace process. Without addressing the grievances of the militants and others in the Delta, it is unlikely that DDR can succeed. Fourth, many militants would have greater confidence in the disarmament process if international monitors were invited as witnesses with the assurance that the weapons turned in are put beyond use. Nevertheless, the government has resisted international observers. Fifth, some militants understand the purpose of the amnesty process to be a means of dividing the militants against each other. The question arises; what is the government’s plan at the end of the amnesty programme? Will there be genuine peace negotiations with the

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<sup>42</sup> In his brilliant article, David Smock (2009) ‘Crisis in the Niger Delta’ had discussed extensively on how the disarmament, available at: [https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/niger\\_delta\\_crisis.pdf](https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/niger_delta_crisis.pdf) accessed 14 January 2017.

militants who have been demobilized? What if the principal leaders of the insurrection fail to accept the amnesty? The views and opinions of Niger Delta communities on amnesty programme has been presented in chapter five under the theme of ‘amnesty programme’ reflections from the fieldwork interviews.

## **2.6 Conclusion**

The federal government under the leadership of President Muhammadu Buhari embarks on the Niger Delta environmental clean-up programme. The clean-up programme was officially launched on the 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2016 in Bodo, Rivers State. The Ogoniland, in Rivers State, has been the area most ravaged and devastated by oil spills in the last 10 years as revealed by the UNEP report (2011). The spills have destroyed the farmlands and aquatic life, and unleashed serious and multiple forms of land, air and water pollutions in the process<sup>43</sup>. Most of the development plans proposed for the region are similar compared to other projects from the central government, and there is no clear devolution of funding.

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<sup>43</sup> Ogoniland Clean-up and Remediation by the Nigeria’s Federal Ministry of Environment. Available at: <http://environment.gov.ng/ogoni.html> accessed 10th January 2017.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Literature Review and Theoretical Framework**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents scholarly literature on the natural resources and violent conflicts. The following are the theories; greed versus grievance, resource curse, Dutch Disease, Horizontal Inequalities, Environmental security, Resource Governance Index and Resource abundance and scarcity. These are the baselines scholars of international development and conflict propounded to explain the phenomenon of natural resources conflict.

#### **3.2 Natural Resources, Governance and Conflicts: Review of Literature**

Since the days of decolonization, there has been a burgeoning body of work on natural resources governance and conflict in the developing countries. African states have been trapped in multifaceted and multidimensional civil violence, or what Mary Kaldor (2012) and Le Billion (2004) calls 'resource war' or 'oil war' which is the classic example of the on-going strategic oil and environmental conflict in Nigeria. Since 1994, Nigeria's Delta region has been a site of oil conflict. It has been noted by several scholars that natural resources have played a distinct role in the history of armed conflict, especially in Africa. In Nigeria, oil wealth has constituted a problem, rather than a boon; for economic development and social security for many years (Oyefusi, 2010; Alao, 2007; Le Billion 2001). The themes of resource conflict, the environment and security all occupy a crucial place in the political agenda, especially among the resource-endowed countries of the world (Yates, 1996). Consciousness is increasingly developing among states, communities and grassroots organizations which have an impact on actual and potential effects of human activities on ecosystems (Ross, 2004: 35). The complex realities of resource politics are most often manifested in Africa, the Caribbean-Pacific and Latin America; where there is a conflict between multiple stakeholders, especially between host communities and international oil companies (IOCs) supported by the state.



Resource-bearing communities, supported by civil society organisations and international environmental activists, are challenging the federal government of Nigeria over the question of environmental protection and sustainable development in the resource-extracting regions. Local communities and environmental Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) are becoming nervous of the damages caused by commercial exploiters of the Delta environment (largely IOCs backed by the state). These have led to a pattern of protests, ranging from street demonstrations to hostage taking. Meanwhile, many countries constructed in the traditional 'custodian' paradigm are becoming more authoritarian in meeting the demands of the communities. Paradoxically, heavy-handed state interventions are often justified in the name of national security, economic stability and democracy (Omeje, 2008; Watts, 2005; Alao, 2007). Given Nigeria's position as one of the world's leading oil producers and exporters since 2006, petro-violence has for strategic, economic and political reasons brought the Niger Delta to the forefront of energy, security, developmental and environmental concerns internationally and locally respectively (Obi and Rustad, 2011: 1). Conflicts are very prevalent not only in those countries that are built on the traditional custodian paradigm, but also which have fragile social structures that were originally imposed by the colonizers and inherited at independence. The greed of the 'inheritance elites' or the intellectual elite who took over the political leadership at independence and the desire to ensure the state's survival in a world that had become dangerously competitive were among the factors that combined to heighten the propensity for conflict over natural resources (Alao, 2007).

In addition, Bannon and Collier (2003) assert that 'violent secessionist movements are statistically much more likely if the country has valuable natural resources, with oil being especially dangerous. Examples include Aceh and West Papua (Indonesia), Biafra (Nigeria), Cabinda (Angola), Katanga (Democratic Republic of Congo).

Accordingly, Collier and Hoeffler (2001) who came up with a new set of data using civil wars and conflict during 1960-99 and concluded that natural resources are the major causative factor in conflict. This can be explained by a typically severe grievance; such as high inequality, a lack of political rights, and ethnic and religious divisions in society. In the context of Africa and other developing societies, Klare (2002, 2012) provides a good discussion of natural resource extortion, such as diamonds in Liberia and Sierra Leone, timber in Cambodia, cocaine in Colombia and oil in Nigeria (Zack-Williams 1999; Klare in Collier and Hoeffler 2001:3). Resource conflict is one of the several explosive phenomena that have defined many extractive economies in Africa since the end of the Cold War. Most such countries have been coping ever since with problems such as ‘intractable conflict’ (Vallacher *et al.*, 2010), ‘new wars’ (Kaldor, 2005), ‘resource wars’ (Klare, 2002), a state of ‘complex political emergency’ (Duffield, 1994; Collier, 2007), ‘resource securitization’, ‘petro-violence’ and ‘blood diamonds’ (Tar, 2008: 32). Scholars to describe Africa’s conflict over valuable resources use all these negative terms.

The consensus is that the abundant natural resource endowments on the African continent and the mismanagement of them remains the primary source of conflict—from the blood diamond conflict in Sierra Leone and Liberia, to the Niger Delta oil conflict in Nigeria, to the rebellion in the Northern part of Niger Republic over uranium, to the problems in Angola and the Democratic Republic of Congo, which are nations both very rich in resources but which never seem to witness peace. It seems that in Africa, whenever or wherever extractable natural resource wealth is discovered, conflict over ownership emerges between the state and the host communities. Tar (2008) further opined that the majority of conflict-prone and war-ravaged states in the global south are rich in resources. These include those recently emerging from years of violent conflict: extractive economies which are endowed with strategic mineral and natural resources, yet could not avert declining into debilitating violence and war, a phenomenon known as the ‘paradox of plenty’ (Auty, 1993).

Moreover, in Africa, violent resource-related conflicts result in poverty, underdevelopment and human displacement, despair and disease. This is completely the opposite of using natural resources to eradicate poverty for sound social and economic development. Nigeria's oil constitutes the primary source of the country's underdevelopment. Nigeria is one of Africa's most powerful country, but the crisis in the Niger Delta region is a threat to its unity and stability. In Nigeria, substantial oil production and exploration for more than fifty years have not resulted in sustainable socioeconomic development in the country. In the Delta region of Nigeria, oil exploitation pollutes the environment and the spillages in most cases are not immediately attended to; oil spills often lead to a fire, causing the total or partial destruction of vegetation that trickled down to abject poverty in most of the rural areas (UNEP, 2011).

Similarly, on September 25, 2013, Lamido Sanusi<sup>44</sup>, the then governor of Nigeria's Central Bank, wrote a frantic and unusual memo to President Goodluck Jonathan. In the memo, Mr Sanusi detailed how the government-owned oil firm, the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), had systematically diverted a vast sum of money from crude oil sales between January 2012 and July 2013. Unfortunately, instead of investigating the allegations, Nigeria's President Jonathan suspended Mr Sanusi's from his appointment. The allegation of the diversion of petroleum revenues into federal accounts supported by the world acclaimed forensic auditing firm<sup>45</sup> engaged by the Office of the Auditor General of Nigeria. Of all crude oil sales within the period, the NNPC paid only 24 per cent of proceeds into federal accounts. Mr Sanusi, asserts that the remaining 76 percent, totalling about eight trillion Nigerian Naira had either been diverted somewhere or stolen by Nigeria's corrupt

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<sup>44</sup> Sanusi Lamido's Governor of Nigeria's Central Bank, letter to President Jonathan over non remittance of oil revenue, available at: <http://www.premiumtimesng.com/resources/151244-download-sanusis-letter-to-president-jonathan-on-nigerias-stolen-n8-trillion.html> Accessed on 31st March 2016.

<sup>45</sup> Investigative Forensic Audit into the Allegations of Unremitted Funds into the Federation Accounts by the NNPC (2015) Available at: <file:///E:/Full%20report20billion%20dollars%20missing%20oil%20money.pdf> Accessed on 12 March 2016.

government officials – under the watch of President Jonathan. Also, Nigeria’s former petroleum resources minister Mrs Dieziani Alison-Madueke was arrested in London on 3rd October 2015 and is presently facing corruption and money laundering charges in a London court. Mrs Alison-Madueke was one of the most senior ministers during President Jonathan’s tenure as Nigeria’s president. She previously denied to Reuters any wrongdoing when questioned about missing public funds and fraud allegations (Payne, 2015). Mr Jonathan’s former national security advisor, Mr Sambo Dasuki, is presently in prison and facing trial for misappropriation of \$2.2 billion of Nigeria’s money<sup>46</sup>. In recent times, oil-rich Nigeria has become one of most corrupt nations in the world. The Transparency International Corruption Perception Index ranked Nigeria as 139th out of 175 in 2012, and 144th out of 177 in 2013 (Transparency International, 2016).

From the statistics published by the World Bank indicate that the level of poverty has risen in Nigeria, with almost 100 million people living on less than a \$1 (£0.63) a day, despite economic growth. The World Bank (2015) and Nigeria’s National Bureau of Statistics reported that 75 per cent of Nigerians are living below \$1.90 per day and about 75 million people are living below poverty level. In fact, the current poverty rate exceeded that of the period before the first oil boom in the 1970s, which was 35 per cent ‘poverty rate has been put at 64.2% in 2013/2014, increasing from 62% in 2010’ (World Bank 2013 cited in Kolade *et al* 2018). The national social and transport infrastructure is in a desolate condition, and the country is marked by chronic internal instability and periodic flare-ups of violent conflict, ranging from ethno-religious conflict to the Boko Haram insurgency, to post-election violence, to the Niger Delta crisis. One of the leading expert, Abiodun Alao believes that ‘the widespread belief that the central government unfairly appropriated the wealth that

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<sup>46</sup> Alleged \$2.2billion Arms Deal: EFCC pressuring SSS to hand over Sambo Dasuki for questioning. Available at: <http://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/headlines/194286-alleged-2-2billion-arms-deal-efcc-pressuring-sss-to-hand-over-sambo-dasuki-for-questioning.html> Accessed 20th February 2016

belonged to them and that they would be richer if they were a separate state' (2003: 16) is the major cause of the conflict.

In Nigeria, there is no distinction between state resources and the personal possessions of officials, thanks to corrupt and personalized leadership since independence, especially during the era of military rule and the dictatorial regime. The Hobbesian-Lockean social contract has been damaged or destroyed, and Nigeria's leaders are not accountable to the people. Like many states in Africa, Nigeria is not functioning well because of the culture of consumption, master-servant relationships and dualism in governance. By dualism, I mean that the government is so divided that it serves as a mediating force for receiving oil wealth and distributing it through consumption.

Since the first discovery of oil in commercial quantities in the Delta region in 1956, and especially from the 1990s onwards, oil disorder in the Niger Delta region has been a festering problem for the Nigerian state. The conflict is primarily between the Multinational Oil Companies, the Niger Delta communities and the central-state apparatus. Youth militants in the Niger Delta supported by the local communities (host communities) are waging war and challenging the collective national ownership of the oil revenue by the Nigerian State (Ojabor and Gilbert, 2010). The Niger Delta people over the years have been toughened by the anguish, or what Kibreab (2017) term as 'internal deprivation' and chronic poverty imposed on them by different oil mining companies, and has become increasingly restive. Their youth has drawn both local and international attention to their deplorable situation through their protests. Oil exploring organisations can be said to be operating in a hostile and insecure environment. The responses of the government and the oil companies to the issues in the Niger Delta have been called into question by observers of events and by the Niger Delta people themselves. The oil-bearing communities want total control and ownership of the oil-rich environment and the ecosystem, but the Nigerian constitution does not allow the local, regional or tribal ownership of mineral resources anywhere in the

country. Omeje (2006) argues that the contending issues underpinning oil conflict in Nigeria's Niger Delta can be reduced to a nexus of institutional, ecological and social factors. At the institutional level, oil-related legislation and policies remain a primary source of conflict. For instance, before Nigeria's independence in 1960, colonial legislation like the Oil Minerals Ordinance of 1937 vested the ownership of oil and mineral resources in the British Crown. The post-colonial Petroleum Act (1969) and Nigeria's Land Use Act (1978) removed the control and management of lands by the individual family, the community and the traditional chiefs, one elder-statesman I interviewed in the Niger Delta described the Nigeria's Land Use Act' as 'forceful decree or act against the owners of the land and resources'<sup>47</sup>. The laws vested the governors of each state of the federation (in the case of urban lands allocations) and the appropriate local government council (in the case of rural lands allocation) with the power over the land. The oil-bearing communities in the Niger Delta states see the post-colonial Petroleum Act and the Land Use Act as favouring the MNOCs to the detriment of the poor whose environment is degraded and exploited. On the environmental disaster in the Niger Delta, the United Nations Environment Programme (2011) findings reveal that there are serious threats to human health from contaminated drinking water, which concerns the viability and productivity of ecosystems (UNEP, 2011:6). The people have protested against the government and the oil companies, seeking local ownership of the peninsula and environmentally friendly oil companies' extraction of the oil. The Nigerian Mobile Police (MOPOL) has clamped down on the protests, and many protesters have been killed. On 31 October 2000, the Mobile Police (MOPOL) attacked aggrieved youths at Umuechem in Rivers State, who were protesting against the Shell Petroleum Company. Coercive force was used, and the protesters were dispersed. Ojaborotu

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<sup>47</sup> Internals\Chief TB-2\_interview> - § 10 references coded [19.77% Coverage] Field interview with former Legal Adviser to Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People, in Bori Town, February 2017.

*et al.* (2010) write that over 80 people were killed and about 500 houses were levelled, thus triggering an unprecedented number of Internally Displaced People (IDP) in the history of that community (Ojakorotu and Gilbert, 2010). The Niger Delta 'violent conflicts also weakened Nigerian state by eroding its capacity to provide social services and relief, as well as to regulate access to resources and to mediate conflict (Kibreab 1998).

What insights, if any, do current conceptualizations about rentier politics provide for understanding resource conflicts in the Niger Delta crisis? Do nascent narratives such as 'resource curse' and 'paradox of plenty' provide appropriate explanations for understanding the nature of rent-related (greed versus grievance) and environmental conflicts in Nigeria? Alao (2007) is of the view that the link between natural resources and conflict is probably as old as human settlement. There are strong links between oil theft and the violence and insecurity in the Niger Delta region. Katsouris and Sayne (2013) argue that oil theft is both a symptom and a cause of violent conflict in the region. The illegal trade in stolen oil weakens public institutions and aggravates known conflict drivers. It deepens corruption, funds political violence and damages the environment. The criminal oil theft networks rely solely on violent conflict to hold onto their turf and secrecy in the Delta region. Some communities fight for the right to steal oil-weakened local power structures, mainly when the battle lines are drawn between ethnic groups or generations.

The oil theft networks of local Niger Delta militants and multinational oil marketers (arms suppliers) have also settled in some of the Niger Delta's most violent corners and are threatening the Nigerian state's legitimacy. Over time, the illegal oil trade has become part of a larger Niger Delta oil conflict, since it is a lucrative business for the militants and their allies.

Since Nigeria was returned to democratic governance in May 1999, various gangs, cults and militia groups, with support from powerful backers, have manipulated inter-communal tensions to gain control of illegal oil. In some cases, wars over oil bunkering have awakened

old land and chieftaincy disputes among neighbours, sparking fresh violence. By the late 2006-07, some gangs were also turning to kidnapping and bank robbery, thus increasing insecurity in the area. A few militant commanders eventually outgrew their masters and assumed roles in politics and the local economy akin, at least superficially, to self-sustaining 'warlords'. Some now receive lucrative government contracts to guard the same oil infrastructure they once attacked.

The people in the Niger Delta depend on the natural environment for their livelihood. The destruction of the environment through oil spills and gas flaring has made the poorest communities vulnerable and has direct deleterious impacts on their environment, which in turn has gravely affected agriculture, fishing, farming and health. The Rivers State Internal Security Task Force was formed by the government as a well-armed military outfit, directly under the control of the then Military Administrator of Rivers State, explicitly to deal with protesters in the Niger Delta region. The first radical organisation involved in organising the protests was the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP) and its supporters. Between 1993 and 1996, they led a campaign against Shell and for self-determination in Ogoniland. The environmental activist and the founder of MOSOP, Ken Saro-Wiwa, who challenged the Nigerian state and oil companies' activities in the Niger Delta, was unconstitutionally and brutally hanged on 10 November 1995, under the directive of the military tribunal constituted under late Head of State, General Sani Abacha. Ken Saro-Wiwa, along with the eight Ogoni compatriots; Baribor Bera, Saturday Doobee, Nordu Eawo, Daniel Gbokoo, Barinem Kiobel, John Kpuinen, Paul Levura and Felix Nuate, were known as the 'Ogoni Nine' (Amnesty International, 2009). In 1999, a protest by the Choba ethnic group community against WILBROS (a foreign oil servicing firm) was suppressed, an incident in which the Nigerian army killed ten people and several communities were temporarily displaced and deserted. On 4th January 1999, conflict erupted between the Nigerian Army and the Ijaw Youth Congress (IYC) in Bayelsa State, and as many as 240



people were killed in clashes between protesting Ijaw youths and government troops in the Niger Delta state of Bayelsa. In reaction to the Nigerian army killing of the Ijaws, Delta militants slaughtered nine Nigerian soldiers in a town called Odi in November 1999. In retaliation, the army killed over 1000 people as revenge<sup>48</sup>.

Bannon and Collier (2003) assert that rebel movements in resource-rich developing countries, particularly those seeking to secede on the back of natural resources, are significantly bolstered by the presence of corrupt elite. The elite syphons off the revenues and invests in the developed countries rather than in a government that uses them transparently to raise living standards across the board.

Beckman (1982) argues that the Nigerian state is ideologically serving and protecting the interest of the capitalist countries, to the extent that the Nigerian elite can be described as their agent. Many states in developing countries, including Nigeria, are protecting, defending and maintaining the interest of their metropolitan masters in the Northern Hemisphere. The First/Global North or the minority world, are engaged in criminal shady businesses to protect those interests. The oil companies of the developed world, especially belonging to the United Kingdom, United States, France and the Netherlands are ignoring human life and environmental considerations in resource-abundant countries; the reality is more manifest in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. The Chatham House (2013) report tentatively pointed to the United States, Singapore, Brazil, China, Thailand, Indonesia, several West African countries and the Balkans as possible destinations of the stolen oil from Nigeria. Apart from the pollution of the environment and involvement in the networks of oil stealing, Nigerian oil theft networks use foreign banks and other channels to store and launder their earnings. The United States, the United Kingdom and Switzerland are the possible money-laundering hotspots (Chatham House, 2013; UNEP, 2011). For example, during the 1997 civil war in

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<sup>48</sup> Research and Action for Peace (2016) Nigeria (1990 – first combat deaths) Available at: [http://ploughshares.ca/pl\\_armedconflict/nigeria-1990-first-combat-deaths/#Deaths](http://ploughshares.ca/pl_armedconflict/nigeria-1990-first-combat-deaths/#Deaths) Accessed 29<sup>th</sup> March 2016.

Congo-Brazzaville, the private civil militia of former President Denis Sassou-Nguesso was funded, in part, by the sale of future exploitation rights from the Congo's extensive oil reserves. On the eve of the conflict, Sassou received substantial assistance from a French oil company, Elf-Aquitaine (now Total Fina Elf). Some reports indicate that Mr Sassou-Nguesso received \$150 million in cash; others state that Elf helped him purchase arms (Ross, 2003; Banon and Collier, 2000). For instance, the developed countries meddling in African internal affairs further prolonged conflict. Between 1989 and 1997, African countries recorded 124 natural resource-related conflicts while the rest of the world recorded 271 violent disputes (Collier and Hoeffler, 2000).

These funds enabled Nguesso to defeat the then incumbent president, Pascal Lissouba, following a four-month war that destroyed much of Brazzaville and cost the lives of over 10,000 people. These future booty swaps (selling the future right to the resources) – and similar trades in Angola, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia and Sierra Leone – in each case have helped to initiate a war or to prolong one. These are examples of just some of the roles MNCs have played in financing and prolonging resource conflicts in developing countries. Without the booty swap or future market, the rebel offensive and perhaps the violent conflict itself would have been less likely to occur. Funding of rebels from countries such as France and Britain, that is former Britain prime minister Margret Thatcher's son Mark<sup>49</sup> in Equatorial Guinea to trade in the booty, help to initiate conflicts and prolong pre-existing ones (Banon and Collier, 2000). The ongoing protests and agitations in Nigeria's south-eastern region 'Biafra' movement vindicated the role of oil extractive economies in conflict.

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<sup>49</sup> See *Thatcher's Son Held in Failed Africa Coup*, available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2004/08/26/world/thatcher-s-son-held-in-failed-africa-coup.html>, New York Times.

Although extortion and kidnapping are endemic in conflict zones, and especially have been so in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria in recent times, a major resource industry can make these activities more profitable – both for the mercenaries and the transnational companies. Extortion and kidnapping have been important features of the Colombian civil war, and they also played smaller roles in the wars in Aceh, Indonesia and Sudan. In Colombia and Sudan, the targeted resource was oil – or rather a long oil pipeline that ran through contested territory. In Aceh, it was a natural gas facility. In Colombia, the oil must be transported to the coast from the unstable interior through pipelines that are hundreds of miles long. In 2000, the pipelines were bombed ninety-eight times. Colombia's rebel groups, for instance, have used these attacks to extort an estimated \$140 million annually; this windfall has enabled one group, the National Liberation Army (ELN), to grow from fewer than 40 members to at least 3,000 (Dunning and Wirpsa, 2004). Colombia's rebel groups have also turned kidnapping into a major industry. According to a government study, between 1991 and 1999, the rebel group earned a remarkable \$1.5 billion from kidnap ransoms; many victims were associated with the oil industry. Similarly, in Nigeria, oil companies from the developed world are the ones arming the Delta militants to exploit Nigeria's oil illegally for them. Because of the marriage of convenience between the Nigerian elites and transnational oil companies, Global Issues reports that the Nigerian government has been supported and maintained by the Western governments and oil corporations, who are keen on benefiting from the fossil fuels that can be exploited. Alao (2007) maintains that the manifestations of resource conflicts in the last quarter of the twentieth century were particularly devastating, with greater implications for the social and economic development in Africa. The typology of resource conflicts, from oil in the Middle East and solid minerals in African countries such as; Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Angola, and Nigeria to the land in Asia and agricultural products in Latin America – are all resource conflicts.

In the 1990s, two-thirds of Africa's intrastate conflicts were civil wars. Africa had seven civil wars in the 1970s, eight in the 1980s and fourteen in the 1990s (Paul and Collier, 1998; Collier and Hoeffler, 2000; Ross, 2003). The escalation of violence in the Niger Delta region because of the presence of oil has created a high level of insecurity in Nigeria. The region has become a locus for the easy proliferation of small arms and light weapons into the hands of groups who are continuously threatening the security of individuals and the economic structure of Nigeria in the Niger Delta states. The destruction and vandalization of massive petroleum installations and taking hostages is mainly carried out by shadowy organizations like the Movement for the Emancipation of the Delta (MEND) and the Niger Delta Volunteer Force (NDVF) with the aims of drawing Nigerian government and global attention to the injustices meted on the Delta's people and the high prevalence of poverty in the resource-rich region (Ojakorotu and Gilbert 2010).

Tar (2008) argues that a review of the relevant literature reveals two similar but distinct approaches to study rentiers and resource conflicts in the global South. For example, the first is what could be termed as Limited Factor Approaches (LFAs). This means approaches that draw predominantly on narrow sets of factors such as rent or power with scarce attempts to appreciate their causal linkages. Another drawback of this approach is that other factors, such as the external environment of the rents and the global balance of power are either ignored or given limited attention. For instance, in the context of the Niger Delta oil conflict, different scholars emphasise different and often limited factors: the marginalization of local 'oil-bearing' communities by dominant rentier elites (Omeje, 2004, 2006a; Ukeje, 2001); youth and the fetishization of violence (Ifeka, 2006: 721); environmental degradation perpetrated by oil companies and supported by the state (Ogri, 2001; Moffat and Linden, 1995; Obi, 2001); disparities in the perception of security and the local ownership of resources by the Nigerian state and indigenous communities (Ibeanu, 2000; Obi, 1997;

Omeje, 2006a) and so on. There are risks in the tendency to cherry-pick a limited set of factors in explaining resource conflict.

Ibeanu (2000) argues that the Niger Delta conflict and resource conflicts elsewhere are caused by multiple factors and issues, so a systematic approach is needed to understand and account for conflict in a more robust way. Furthermore, it is not clear if all the factors that are said to be responsible for the conflict are causal or mediatory, or if they are all causal factors, which are principal, secondary and tertiary. It is also not clear which factors are triggered, pivotal, mobilising and aggravating (Idemudia and Ite, 2006).

Following former President Yar'Adua's declaration of amnesty to over 20,000 Niger Delta armed fighters in 2009, an uneasy quiet has settled over the area (Francis et al., 2011). Despite the amnesty and the appointment of the special Ministry for the Niger Delta by Yar'adua administration, the fundamental conditions of extreme deprivation have remained unchanged in the Delta region. This is because developmental challenges facing the Niger Delta are still shaped by its turbulent history and are closely intertwined with recurrent patterns of instability, ethnic clashes and hostage taking. With little provocation, longstanding grievances could once again erupt into another cycle of violence. In the Niger Delta, state governors and oil corporations are too corrupt to effect changes to the suffering people of the region. The region's share of monthly federal allocation is higher than that of all other states in Nigeria, yet the quality of life in the region remains one of the worst compared to the amount of money allocated to the Niger Delta region.

### **3.3 The Theories of Natural Resource Conflict**

This section will discuss the theories of natural resource conflicts as put forward by the scholars of armed conflicts and resource management. The chapter will review the following theories; greed versus grievance, resource curse and Dutch disease, 'horizontal inequalities' and 'environmental security/scarcity', natural resources charter (NRC)/resource governance

index (RGI) and resource abundance to attempt to illustrate how the theories explain the phenomenon and the problems. The critiques of the theories will also be examined. In this chapter, the theoretical framework position will also be examined to explain the current problems the oil-rich Nigeria is facing. I propose figure 6, the various theories of natural resources governance.

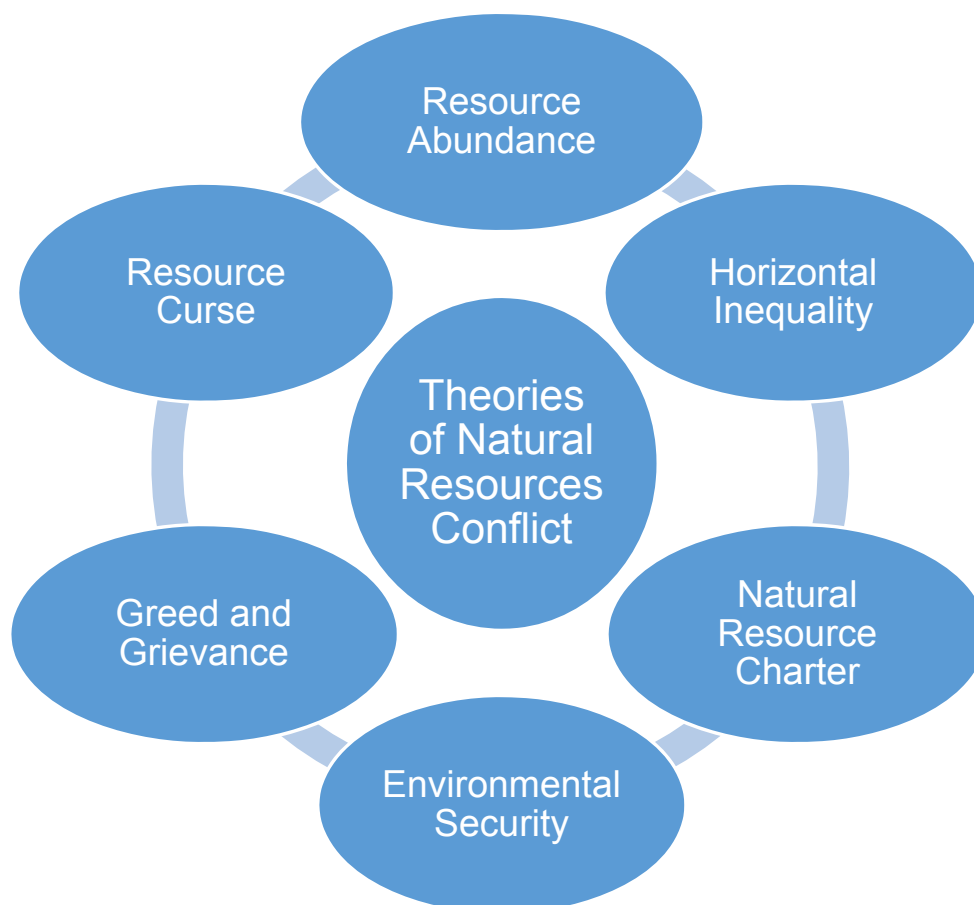


Figure 6 Theories of Natural Resource

### 3.4 Greed and Grievance Theory

The greed versus grievance is a statistical model created by economist Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler, Oxford University<sup>50</sup> researchers; to determine whether greed or grievance-based

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<sup>50</sup> See details at the following link: <https://mintehbaa.wordpress.com/2014/05/18/is-grievance-or-greed-the-main-cause-of-conflict-what-can-be-done-to-prevent-conflict/> accessed 14 June 2016

motives caused the outbreak of civil wars between 1960 and 1999 in 161 countries that were surveyed (Beswick and Jackson, 2011:41). The model had its findings premised on economic accounts which explain rebellion in terms of opportunity (or greed) as contrasted with political science literature which mainly explains the conflict in terms of motive (or grievance). Collier and Hoeffler's model made comparisons of greed and grievance by using proxy measures in making a representation of each of the concepts. With reference to proxies for opportunity, Collier and Hoeffler considered indicators of opportunity for financing rebellion which includes dependence and extortion of natural resources, donation from diasporas, subvention from hostile governments, proportion of young males in the society and the average years of schooling, weak government military capability and the favorability of the terrain as well as the extent of social cohesion (Collier and Hoeffler, 2001:3-6). In proxying objective grievances as the motive for civil conflict, the authors also considered measures of grievance such as ethnic or religious hatred, political repression, political exclusion and inequality (Collier and Hoeffler, 2001:6-7).

Greed and grievance theory has been explored in various works, including Collier (1998, 1999, 2000a and 2000b), and Collier and Hoeffler (2000, 2002 and 2004). The greed versus grievance was put forward by scholars of armed conflict in resource-rich but least developed countries. In their various studies, Collier and Hoeffler investigated the causes of civil war, using a data set of wars during the period 1960-99. They tested 'greed' theory; focusing on the ability to finance rebellion, against a 'grievance' theory; focusing on ethnic and religious divisions, political repression and inequality. They find that greed considerably outperforms grievance. Consistent with the greed theory, dependence upon primary commodity exports substantially increases the risk of conflict in the countries of the bottom billion. Apart from Collier and Hoeffler, numerous other scholars have examined the causal mechanisms linking natural resource abundance and four dimensions of civil war: onset, duration, intensity and type (Rosser 2006). The greed and grievance dichotomy, as influential as it may be, remains

shrouded in intense controversy as alluded to. While some scholars in academic and policy circles align themselves with either the greed or the grievance camp, others blame the combination of the two as the aggregate cause of the conflict. Those blaming the combination of the two argue that the presence of capturable natural resources like diamond, oil or drugs may be an indication of the supremacy of greed as a factor not only in the outbreak of conflict but prolonging it. It has been argued that “grievances can be present without greed, but it is difficult to sustain greedy motives without some grievance. Although greed and grievance are regarded as competing views, they may be complementary, as greed may lead to the grievance and vice versa” (Murshed and Tadjoeeddin 2007:24). Murshed and Tadjoeeddin are of the view that the greed or grievance or an amalgam of the two may be a precondition for the outbreak of civil war. It is either of them or sometimes combinations of both that are the main cause of conflict, although they cannot be considered comprehensively sufficient in the analysis of conflicts as there are other prospective causes of conflict that are context-specific, and some of these will be discussed here. Based on these proxy variables, Collier and Hoeffler concluded that “opportunity as an explanation of conflict risk is consistent with the economic interpretation of rebellion as greed-motivated” (Collier and Hoeffler 2001:17). By this, the conclusion reached above suggested that the motives for rebellion (i.e. grievance) were not adequate explanations for the prediction of the outbreak of civil conflict, but instead an opportunity (the ability to wage rebellion, i.e. the economic indicators) had more explanatory power (Beswick *et al.* 2013:31). The study clearly establishes a relationship between dependence on natural resources and the onset of civil wars as natural resources are a good source for the financing of rebellions. Rebellions occur when the foregone income of the combatants is lower than that which rebellions present to them, and so the need for risk-taking may become beyond greed and grievance as a cause of conflict, whereas socio-economic and political causes can be cited as causes of conflict. It may not matter whether there is agreement among scholars as to whether greed



or grievance-based explanations is central to the cause of conflict; social, economic and political factors are indeed important in explaining the cause of conflict. People who fight in most instances do so out of their own individual and private motivations, and when they do so as part of a group, they fight because of group motivation (Stewart 2011). For those who engage in conflict out of private motivation, the economic factor might be the overriding motive. This is indeed in line with the Collier and Hoeffler model. According to Stewart (2011: 9), war benefits people and the uneducated young men, mostly stand to benefit immensely by employing as soldiers and getting loot-seeking opportunities. It should be noted that the political economy of conflict does create shadow economies which benefit combatants and their endogenous and/or exogenous patrons, especially when it breaks out in the midst of an abundance of exploitable resources such as gold, diamonds, drugs and timber which are usually illegally exploited and traded. This competition for resources fuels the violence rendering it more protracted due to the economic advantages it brings to the combatants and other interested parties. A classic example of this is the civil wars of Liberia, Sierra Leone and Angola where the so-called 'blood diamonds' played a major role in sustaining the conflict as proceeds from the illegal sales of natural resources were used to purchase weapons (Beswick, 2013). In the case of Afghanistan, the Taliban continue to profit from the drug trade by way of protecting producers in return for protection fees or as middlemen that will buy from producers and funnel it into the international drug market thereby using the proceeds to fund the insurgency. Nigeria's the federal government under the administration of President Jonathan has invested in the Global West Vessel Specialist Limited, (GWVSL), a firm widely believed to be owned by fugitive ex-militant leader Mr Government Tompolo. Mr Tompolo was awarded with a contract worth \$103.4 million (over NGN15 billion) to supply 20 vessels for the use of the nation's military authorities to secure the waterways which had been running riot in the Niger Delta, perpetrating illegitimate oil

bunkering, operating illegal refineries, vandalising oil supply pipelines, engaging in expatriate and oil workers kidnapping and piracy (Odunlami, 2012).

In terms of group motivation for fighting a war, Stewart argue that the existence of a political system without relative autonomy to groups as well as political exclusion are conflict risk factors in societies where these are extant may be prone to conflict (Stewart, 2011). However, in the case of ethnic conflicts, for example, the genocide in Rwanda, it is often said “group level hatreds and fears are the products, not the producer of violence” (Fujii 2011: 102). It is the hatred and age-old rivalries and animosities based on perceived or real grievances that are translated into violent action perpetrated by one ethnic group against the other. It must be mentioned that the root cause of some ethnic or religious conflict is the legacy of colonialism. As captured in (Beswick and Jackson, 2011: 48), “Rwanda’s Belgian colonial rulers identified Tutsis as racially superior to both the Hutu and Twa and the Tutsis were regarded as being stereotypically more ‘Nilotic’ in appearance and purportedly more intelligent”. Therefore, the socio-economic division in Rwanda on ethnic lines was propagated by the colonialist which became entrenched and associated with animosity, where divisions and hatred became the hallmark of a polarised ethnic relation and deep-seated grievances began to flow. The physiological and intellectual superiority and inferiority stereotypes advanced by the colonisers were bought into by politicians on both sides of the ethnic divide in propagandas that eventually yielded the catastrophic consequence of a violent genocidal conflict. Resource wars and environmental explanations of conflict are widespread. The argument is premised on the scarcity of the world’s renewable resources due to ever-increasing human activity, population growth, and distribution problems ensuing in unequal access to available resources between groups (Beswick and Jackson, 2011). This according to Beswick and Jackson may result in scarcity, group identity and deprivation conflicts. These are the direct repercussion of environmental and population pressures that set the pace for resource competition and thus increase the

propensity for the outbreak of such conflicts (Stewart, 2011). The California water conflict serves as an example of resource conflict which resulted in a legal action and the ultimate agreement on a new legal regime and the creation of an authority to monitor the agreement (Ramsbothan et al., 2016). Considering the effects of climate change on the planet and her renewable resources, the fear of a rise in resource and environmental conflicts is genuine. While the outbreak of conflict may have a plethora of causes in terms of structure, immediate mobilising of the literature is not exhaustive. Indeed, conflict is preventable as something can always be done about it before its outbreak. “The term conflict prevention encompasses the range of activities taken to mitigate the risk of imminent conflict, as well as those activities that seek to address deep-rooted causes that can lead to conflict in the future” (Sriram *et al.*, 2010:16). Therefore, the effectiveness of conflict prevention interventions is contingent upon addressing the root causes of conflict. In an attempt to prevent conflict, especially those related to the economic causes of civil war, Collier suggested diversification of the economy away from dependence on primary commodity. The transparent use of revenue from primary commodity exports to fund effective basic social service delivery, concerted action from the international community aimed at preventing rebel groups from selling their looted commodities and addressing low income and economic growth by helping poor countries to accelerate their economic growth (Collier 2006). While economic diversification and improved economic performance both require a policy change by governments; these solutions, as well as the judicious and beneficial use of national resources for the common good of people, are all internal corrective actions that should be spearheaded by the state. While the international donor community can assist with economic reforms to ensure diversification and improvement of the growth rate of the economies of states at risk of conflict, national government should address corruption, social exclusion and misplaced government policies which should ideally be conditions attached to the foreign aid. The regulation and sanitisation of trade in resources looted by rebels such as the

'blood diamond' or 'conflict diamond' as in the case of Liberia and Sierra Leone and the 'Kimberly Process' which aims to prevent the trade in such diamonds by rebel forces serves as an example of international action (Beswick, 2013). However, there are concerns that conflict diamonds still slip through this process and continue to pose a challenge to the tackling of shadow economies.

#### ***3.4:1 Critique of the Greed versus Grievance Theory***

The greed and grievance hypothesis despite the findings by Collier and Hoeffler that grievance-based models are less powerful in explaining the conflict remains contentious as too many debates surrounding the aetiology of civil conflicts continue to be at cross-purposes. Deep-seated counter-perspectives about the main causative factor for such a complex and dynamic social phenomenon like conflict will likely remain for the time being. It seems reasonable to deduce from this debate that mathematical exactitude is not indeed to be expected in seeking to explore the main causes of conflict. While other scholars like Francis Stewart are more aligned to the grievance-based explanation of conflict, the greed and grievance dichotomy is a critical component of the toolkit for the comprehensive analysis of a country's conflict risk factor. While greed or grievance separately or an amalgam of the two can be deemed to be the main causes of conflict, they cannot be considered comprehensively sufficient in the analysis of conflicts as some conflict are context-specific. Whether the cause of conflict is found to be loot seeking or justice seeking or other prospective causes, conflict prevention interventions should at all costs seek to address the root causes of the conflict and other underlying factors that breed and sustain violent conflicts.

The 'greed and grievance' approach pioneered by Collier and Hoeffler comprises the two major contending arguments in theorising and explaining natural resources-related violence, armed conflict and civil war, especially in the resource-abundant African countries. However, the greed versus grievance explanations for the causes of conflicts in Africa fails

to analyse the roles of MNCs from rich nations that help to fuel the conflict in Africa. For example, a Global Witness (2006)<sup>51</sup> report argues that local, regional and international greed in the diamond and oil industries in Africa is the cause of a conflict too long ignored. Cramer and Hanlon (2006) criticises the ‘greed and grievance’ debate within neoclassical economics on the main sources of civil war and has crystallised around a simple dichotomy between ‘greed’ and ‘grievance’. They argued that it is questionable whether the ‘greed versus grievance’ debate is useful as a means of understanding the violent conflict. These terms are difficult to separate and, moreover, it is unlikely that there can be a clear ‘either/or’ explanation of the causes of war.

Studies on the causes of civil war have traditionally been carried out by political scientists and anthropologists. During the 1990s, however, mainstream economists came to dominate the debate and argued that economic factors were the main source of civil war and that the economic driver of civil war was the opportunity to exercise individual ‘greed’. This argument was in line with neoclassical assumptions that people’s behaviour is governed by rational choices that are made to maximise individual ‘utility’. Other economists – known as heterodox economists – challenged the mainstream orthodox neoclassical view and argued that economic grievances, rather than greed, were the driving force behind civil wars. The entry of economists into the study of civil wars forced serious consideration of the economic motivations of civil war. Nevertheless, there is a significant criticism of the neoclassical economic framework for explaining violent conflict:

First, the orthodox economists mostly led by Collier and Hoeffler, Oyefusi and others had hoped that their methods would become more objective by employing sophisticated analytical and quantitative techniques to determine the roots of conflict and predict wars. However, rather than being objective, the choice of models and data sets became subjective.

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<sup>51</sup> Global Witness (2006) ‘The Truth about Diamond’, available at the following link: [www.globalwitness.org/sites/default/files/import/the\\_truth\\_about\\_diamonds.pdf](http://www.globalwitness.org/sites/default/files/import/the_truth_about_diamonds.pdf) accessed 20 January 2016.

Second, with no precise way of defining or measuring motives for civil war, orthodox economists were forced to use alternatives that could be measured, known as proxies. However, these proxies were a poor approximation of reality.

Third, the outcome of the orthodox theories and models did not fit with any detailed observation of reality. Furthermore, the neoclassical economic framework proved unable to predict wars.

The 'greed versus grievance' debate within neoclassical economics has helped to popularise the distinction as a way of organising the analysis of policies responsible for violent conflicts. However, the debate itself is based on a distinction that is conceptually misleading and undermines the usefulness of the concept. It oversimplifies the primary causes of conflict.

The concepts of 'greed' and 'grievance' are more difficult to separate than the debate acknowledges and it is not clear whether there can be a clear 'either/or' explanation of the principal motivation for civil conflict. The stark distinction between greed and grievance has proven unhelpful. Therefore, the future of this field of study lies in probing the porous borders between these categories. Quantitative studies are important but need to be carried out with considerable caution. In particular, there is a need for more interdisciplinary, detailed and historical case studies of the sources of individual wars.

Interdisciplinary case studies should make use of political economy and economic analysis and should learn from the ideas and questions raised by orthodox economists, however, they should not become trapped by the neoclassical economic framework.

The appropriateness, measurability and categorization of the proxies used were also questioned in (Beswick and Jackson 2015). They have questioned the accuracy of the figures used in the research such as those on the primary commodity exports, lack of emphasis on the interaction between economic greed and political (grievance-based) motives in the onset of a type of conflict and whether there is a similarity of dynamics that applied to different

conflicts. According to them, it is a risky business relying on data collected in developing countries due to the propensity to access data sets that are of a narrow coverage, incomplete and inaccurate. Further compounding the problem is the fact that since some of the data were collected from countries already experiencing conflict, the risks of falsified data exist for potential reasons of lack of access to some areas. With respect to the motivations for conflict, it is contended that “there may be difference in motivation within groups themselves” (Beswick and Jackson, 2015:43) and further justifying this claim, they went on to say that the leader of a group may have a different set of objectives with foot-soldiers of his own group as an example. This brings me to wonder if all those involved in a conflict can be considered to have a set of ambitions and motivations for the outbreak and persistence of the conflict that is common to all of them. I would consider that it is almost impractical for this to happen since a group can sometimes overtly show uniformity of purpose, but innately each and every member might truthfully have a motive and ambition markedly different from that of the other.

Another critic of Collier and Hoeffler model is David Keen in his article, Greed and Grievance in Civil War; Keen poses the question, “where greed has gained a hold, what grievances have made people so violently greedy?” He highlighted that these grievances are likely going to continue to fuel violence even in a post-war era (Keen 2012: 777). According to Keen, the grievance should not be discounted especially those of government actors in-country and outside and critiques Collier and Hoeffler’s model for suggesting the apparent needlessness to investigate either rebel motivation or that of the society that produces and responds to the acts of rebellion. In contrasting their approach to that of Frances Stewart, he concluded that she “has not hesitated to convey the complexity of conflict, the importance of the state and the counterinsurgency in shaping the evolution of conflict, the diverse roles of grievances and inequality, and the factors that may prevent sharp horizontal inequalities from spilling over (in some case) into large-scale violence” (Keen, 2012:777). As lamented

by Keen, the rebel-centric nature of Collier and Hoeffler's model has been criticised as it left out the role of the state not only as an actor but also as a conflict causing and prolonging institution (Ballentine and Nitzschke 2005: 4). This according to them is an untested assumption that demonises the rebels as the cause of conflict at the exclusion of state actors making the model a pro-state bias.

It is also relevant to reflect on some of the proxies used in Collier and Hoeffler's study, some of which may simultaneously apply to greed and grievance. Considering the proxy for an opportunity in the study of greed, they used the proportion of young males in the society and the average years of schooling as one of the proxies. While it cannot be disputed that higher proportions of young males characterised by low levels of education pose a conflict risk in the face of few other viable opportunities especially where exploitable natural resources are in abundance. The research findings have failed to recognise the potential connection between grievances and lack of access to education (schooling inequality). It suggests that greed cannot be easily separated from grievance using proxies as the two can be mutually reinforcing. The greed that may have motivated ill-educated male youths to fight a war might have precipitated from the horizontal inequalities endured by their societies, which denied them basic education; a grievance they manifest by taking part in an open conflict by those deemed to be responsible for their ill fate. Collier, Collier and Hoeffler (The Washington or international financial institutions (IFIs) sponsored studies draws attention and raises the question who finances social science research in the era of Neo-liberalism?

### **3.5 Horizontal Inequalities (HI)**

Horizontal inequalities theory was based on the notion that when cultural differences between groups coincide with economic and political differences, this can cause deep resentment that may lead to violent struggles (Steward and Brown, 2007: 222). What is vertical/horizontal inequality? Vertical inequality refers to the gap between rich and poor populations. While, horizontal inequality can be conceptualized as the gap between the



mineral rich and mineral poor regions in a given country (Ross 2007:237). For instance, the gap between the resource poor in the north and the mineral rich region of the Southern Nigeria is alarming.

This theory is used to explain the complex nature of resources governance in developing countries. Horizontal Inequality (HI) is defined as ‘inequality among culturally defined (or constructed) groups, in contrast to Vertical Inequality (VI) which is inequality among households or individuals. HIs are multidimensional; they include a political, social and economic dimension, with a range of elements in each of these dimensions’ (Steward 2008a, 2008b, 2008c, 2010; Stewart and Brown 2007; Stewart and Langer, 2008; Fitzgerald and Associates, 2001). Steward (2009) takes the view that horizontal inequalities are the most critical instrument for group inequality that can be a source of violent conflict. Group inequality can be used by leaders to mobilise people to political protest, by calling on cultural markers (such as a common history or language or religion) and pointing out instances of group exploitation as in the oil producing communities in Nigeria.

In the case of the Niger Delta region, group mobilisation is especially likely to occur due to the political exclusion of the region and unequal development compared to the other parts of the country. Before the emergence of President Jonathan (2010-15), who came from that area, the people of the oil-producing region were excluded from formal political power, while most group members remain economically deprived as reported in the UNDP (2006) Niger Delta Human Development Report. The Niger Delta is a region suffering from administrative neglect, crumbling social infrastructure and services, high unemployment, social deprivation, abject poverty, filth and squalor, and endemic conflict. The results of poor development have been disillusionment, and frustration among the people about their increasing deprivation, as well as their deep-rooted mistrust of the state (UNDP 2006:36).

For instance, in the current reality in the Niger Delta, Steward (2009) argues that severely depriving communities or people of political power have all sorts of adverse effects,

including making it harder to reverse other inequalities. Horizontal inequalities can occur in four dimensions namely: political, economic, social and cultural status, and for each, there is a variety of relevant outcomes and inputs. The theorists argue that the severe horizontal inequalities (HIs) or inequalities among groups are undesirable in them and can lead to violent conflict in multi-ethnic countries. In a heterogeneous country, politically excluded communities mobilise their supporters for violent conflict along ‘cultural’ group lines. Horizontal inequalities are multidimensional, including inequalities in access to political, economic and social resources, as well as in cultural recognition and status<sup>52</sup>.

Why HIs lead to the type of violent conflict? Frances Stewart who is often associated with the grievance thesis suggests power differentials between groups and the presence of horizontal inequalities among culturally defined groups led to violent conflict. Horizontal inequality refers to “differences in groups’ access to economic, social and political resources”. She argues that horizontal inequalities are a predominant cause of civil wars and thus aligns her with the grievance camp (Keen 2012: 757). This position was predicated on the supposition that when economic, social and political power differentials exist between heterogeneous groups whether ethnic, linguistic, cultural, religious or other categories, the outbreak of conflict motivated by grievances can be predicted. According to (Stewart and Brown 2008: 222), “the horizontal inequality explanation of conflict is based on the view that when cultural differences coincide with economic and political differences between the groups, this can cause deep-rooted resentments that may lead to violent struggles”. Therefore, the lack of level playing fields among diverse groups in the economic, social and political life of social life of a polity may be a salient precursor to a conflicting relationship between the powerful and the less powerful groups premised on an exaggerated sense of grievance. It goes without saying that when severe political, economic and social horizontal

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<sup>52</sup> Langer, Mustapha and Stewart (2007) Horizontal inequalities in Nigeria, Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire: issues and policies.

inequalities exist in a society that becomes essentially polarised, the leadership and the deprived population at large will usually have the perfect motive for mobilisation (Stewart, 2012). This has the possibility to lead to group mobilisation for the righting of such wrongs which usually result in violent confrontations. The presence of massive inequalities in a society in many instances intersects with poverty (a potential underlying condition that can breed conflict) which constrains the human security imperatives and thus fails to bring a peace dividend. Acting as a metaphor, it has been recognised that “the security of states could never be assured if their isolated islands of wealth remain surrounded by a sea of extreme poverty” (Greig et al. 2007: 251).

Alastair et. al, further opined that the privileged access to resources by one group at the detriment of other groups is a form of countenance for the favoured group to wield more economic, social and political power, since the different dimensions of these inequalities usually interact in a reinforcing manner and will thus provide a recipe for the outbreak of violent conflict motivated by the grievance. While Stewart’s view of the cause of conflict sharply contrasts that of Collier and Hoeffler, other scholars too have advanced criticisms for the greed versus grievance thesis and have drawn between the two sides of the debate.

Conflicts especially those arising from horizontal inequalities can be prevented by rectifying the inequalities that exist in societies. For instance, the oil rich sub-region in the Niger Delta (Ogoni people) are complaining of marginalization by the state ruling ethnic tribes in Rivers state as well as the central government<sup>53</sup>. This requires policy options that are economical, socially and politically inclusive (Stewart and Brown 2008). It is assumed that when inequalities that exist in society are corrected, there will be a chance to defuse the associated

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<sup>53</sup> For instance, there is only one Ogoni man as member of the governing board of environmental clean-up programme in the oil polluted Ogoniland. During the field interviews, one of the respondents said the clean-up ‘to me, I think it is a sort of cover-up on the Ogoni man. The people so far selected for this environmental clean-up in Ogoniland, the Ogoni man is not at the head. I want to say the Federal Government just bought this so as to achieve their selfish end’. FGD in Bori Town, Rivers State.

grievances that provoke conflicts. Conflict prevention should be all about preventing conflict by looking at the general conditions that reduce the chances for the eruption of conflict (Ramsbothan et al., 2016). Conflict prevention undertakings should be capable of addressing the proximate cause of conflict which may at times be politically mobilised by the indigenous political leadership; the encouragement of structural stability should be a key component and potentially achievable by way of strengthening the governance capacities for sustainable peace for countries at risk of conflict. It has been contended in (Gallopín 2006 cite Wood 2001:22), that “the rule of law and good governance can keep risk factors of both greed and grievance from being converted into violent conflict, by curbing criminality and corruption and by giving confidence that grievances and exclusion, the most volatile sources of grievance can be overcome”. Conflict prevention could be an arduous task, and it should be blended into development intervention, as it requires both the recipient and development practitioners to nurture peace through good governance and participation. Apart from improving governance, development assistance should be tailored to other goals that have a significant direct impact on building peace and conflict prevention. These include economic vitality, reduction of poverty and disparities; economic and political participation and inclusion; rule of law, justice systems and respect for individual and group rights; environmental sustainability; equity and opportunity; respect for cultural rights and identity as well as maintenance of peaceful regional and international relations (Wood 2001 cited in Gallopín 2006). As can be seen, conflict prevention is a complicated process that entails a whole host of activities that at the same time tend to target a multiplicity of goals all geared towards building sustainable peace while addressing the development needs of communities.

### ***3.5:1 Horizontal and Vertical Inequalities: A Critique***

The scholarship on horizontal inequalities and conflict has mostly neglected the determinants of people’s perceptions of the prevailing inequalities.

No available data measures the inequality between groups in the Niger Delta (See Rose 2007<sup>54</sup>), for instance between urban and rural dwellers and between men and women. There is a need to do a great deal of research in the field to bridge the missing gap. Ross, argues that natural resources boom has strong effects on the labour force, but very little is known about its effects on the vertical distribution of income among the people. Since the oil in Nigeria is concentrated in the South geopolitical zone, the oil income distribution affects the other regions of Nigeria.

### **3.6 Environmental Security**

In the last two decades or so, especially in the 1990s, because of the increased human activities, analysts have argued that environmental pressures might seriously affect national and international insecurity, and the politics of environmental security dominate global politics (Homer-Dixon 2010). The conceptual development in the studies of environmental security as a new theme in international politics marks the beginning of the environmental conflict school of thought. The scholars of this school assume that the environment has the capacity to reconstruct the behaviours of societies that cause violent conflict (Hagmann, 2005). The politics of environmental security and justice received global attention following the United Nations Conference on ‘Human Environment’ held in Stockholm in 1972, those of Rio de Janeiro in 1992 named ‘Environment and Development’, the Johannesburg conference of 2002 on ‘Sustainable Development’, and the most recent in Paris tagged ‘World Environmental Summit’ in 2016, that focus on the need to overcome the pollution of the environment, economic development and preservation of the environmental quality through environmental friendly manner. Glenn et al. conceptualised environmental security as ‘the relative public safety of the environmental damages caused by natural or human processes due to ignorance, accident, mismanagement or design and originating within or

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<sup>54</sup> Data on income inequality are almost non-existent for mineral rich countries of the developing, gaining the income distribution data is critical.

across the national borders' (Glenn et al., 2002). Environmental security is the pursuit of freedom from social instability due to environmental degradation and destruction. Also, inversely, Barnett et al. argues 'environmental insecurity' captures the 'vulnerability of people to environmental degradation' (Barnett et al. 2001:8). In addition to Barnett, another leading scholar in the field defines environmental insecurity as a situation 'where rates of extraction exceed the rate of recovery of 'renewable' resources, leading them to their depletion' (Obi, 2000: 50). This may occur in cases where the operations of the oil industry run contrary to the required minimum international safety standards. The mainstream literature on environmental security opines a strong nexus between environmental degradation and the escalation of conflict (Collier, 2000; Ikelegbe, 2005; Obi, 2009; Okonta, 2006; Omeje, 2006; World Bank, 2000) as in the case of Niger Delta.

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) reported in 1997 in its first Global Environment Outlook (GEO) that the overall state of the global environment was continuing to deteriorate beyond imagination and measures must be taken for the good of mankind. This message was reinforced in the UNEP's second global report in which it pointed out that 'the global system of environmental management is moving much too slowly' (UNEP, 1999, p. xxiii). The third Outlook, published in 2002 just before the World Summit on Sustainable Development, was hardly any more comforting, observing that 'sustainable development remains largely theoretical for most of the world's population' (UNEP, 2002, p. xx). The fourth GEO, released in 2007, expressed the concern again that 'real change has been slow' and that 'environmental degradation continues to threaten human well-being, endangering health, physical security and social cohesion' (UNEP 2007, p. 34). The main message of the 2012 GEO – the fifth in the series – was that the scale, spread and rate of change of global drivers of environmental change are without precedent with the result that environmental systems are being pushed to 'destabilizing limits' (UNEP 2012:4). Environmental insecurity and human rights violations are not unrelated to the tragedy of development in the Niger

Delta. Michael Watts (2013), for example, described the conditions in the oil-producing states as bleak and by any measure of social achievement in the oil states of Nigeria are a calamity', marked by 'nestled shacks, old canoes, and children who will be lucky to reach adulthood. Similarly, Osha (2006) and Mathew (2010) contends that 'what marks out the Niger Delta region in recent years is its chronic underdevelopment, the jolting sense of neglect that engulfs the place and the general misery and violence that govern the lives of most of its inhabitants.' The insecurities faced by the Niger Delta people in the face of these environmental harms come through increased vulnerability to resource extraction, disease and health burdens, loss of livelihoods due to diminishing capacities for agricultural and fishery activities, food insecurity and disasters of nature as revealed in different findings, especially the United Nations General Assembly (2008) which prompted for the UNEP (2011). These challenges are exacerbated by poverty which is itself a function of environmental degradation; unlike the wealthy, poor people in the Delta region lacks access to alternative services. The people in the rural areas live in locations that are vulnerable to environmental threats and lack financial and institutional buffers against these dangers (Global Leadership for Climate Action, 2009)<sup>55</sup>. Those who are most immediately affected by global environmental decline are those who have contributed least (or certainly proportionately less) to the problem. In both empirical and conceptual terms, environmental security has become an inextricable component of the three pillars of human security articulated through the UN – freedom from fear, freedom from want and freedom to live in dignity – and of strategies that focus on empowerment as well as protection.

As Stephan Libiszewski (1992) asks 'what is an environmental conflict'? According to Haggmann (2011; 2014), 'environmental conflicts are, by definition, phenomena situated at the interface between the natural and social spheres' Haggmann (2011; 2014:14). ENCOP

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<sup>55</sup> Global Leadership for Climate Action, available at: <http://www.unfoundation.org/what-we-do/campaigns-and-initiatives/global-leadership-for-climate-action/> accessed 25 April 2017.

categorizes environmental conflict into seven types: ethno-political conflict, international sharing of water/river basins conflicts, demography caused conflicts, centre-periphery conflicts, regional migration/displacement, stereotypical environmental conflicts, trans-boundary migration conflicts and international conflicts as the results of neo-colonialist exploitation of the resources; most of these occur in developing countries (Baechler cited in Hagmann, 2014).

Environmental security/scarcity or conflict theorist's' concept of environmental conflict research reflects misleading assumptions and definitions (Hagmann 2005). The core concept of resource scarcity as an independent variable in many studies is misleading 'all natural resources are or can become scarce, and as scarcity by definition leads to conflicts of interest' (Gleditsch 2001 cited in Hagmann 2014). Is resource scarcity promoting violent-conflict? It is recently acknowledged in the world of academic scholarship that natural resource scarcity may also be a reason for violent conflict and anti-regime struggles as in the case of the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. Baechler (2011) further argues that the societies throughout the developing countries entrapped with natural disasters, drought, floods, pollution and chemical waste are unable to cope with environmental remediation and justice. Natural catastrophe and environmental disruption intertwined triggered internal tensions, power struggles and civil unrest. In the Niger Delta region of Nigeria as the result of environmental degradation and destructions, violent militants' insurgency launches 'eco-conflict' against the state and oil companies. Most of the international agreements and treaties on environmental security and justice are not useful when it comes to the implementation stage.

### ***3.6.1: Critique of Environmental Security***

The anti-thetical conceptual approaches, levels of analysis and methodologies make a logical and consistent presentation of the literature on environmental conflicts complicated, like most other contested concepts in international relations and development politics. The



growing interest and coloured debate in the field of environmental security<sup>56</sup> somehow led to new attempts in redefining the term security over and over again (Baechler, 1999: 21-22). Hagman and Kibreab similarly argue that environmental scarcity “rarely contributes directly to interstate conflict”. Hagman (2014) further argues that the environmental conflict is fundamentally flawed, as it relies on preconceived causalities, intermingles eco-centric with anthropocentric philosophies, and neglects the motivations and subjective perceptions of local actors.

### **3.7 Resource Governance Index (RGI)**

The Resource Governance Index (RGI) is one of the new frameworks that came into prominence in 2013 by the Natural Resources Governance Institute to measure the quality of governance in the oil, gas and mining sectors. The RGI assesses the quality of governance by examining four key governance components: the institutional and legal setting of the government, reporting practices in the revenue management, safeguards and quality controls (security) and environmental consideration. RGI also includes information on three unique mechanisms used commonly to govern oil, gas and minerals—state-owned companies, natural resource funds and sub-national revenue transfers.

The findings of the RGI reports show that there is a significant governance deficit in developing countries, and the deficit is most significant in the most resource-dependent countries such as Nigeria, where over seventy per cent of the people live in poverty despite the abundance of oil wealth. Nigeria’s performance over the past decade has been characterised by low per capita economic growth, persistent impoverishment and environmental degradation (World Bank 2003; RGI, 2013).

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<sup>56</sup> Research designs proposed by environmental conflict scholars have been challenged repeatedly. The Toronto Group, for instance, has been accused of violating important principles of research design, such as lacking control groups, offering imprecise variables, and neglecting variation on the dependent variable, all of which make the falsification of the hypotheses impossible. For details criticism see, Tobias Hagman (2015) ‘Confronting the Concept of Environmentally Induced Conflict’. Available at: <https://www.bradford.ac.uk/social-sciences/peace-conflict-and-development/issue-6/Environmental-conflict-final-version-edited.pdf> accessed 19 March 2018.

### 3.8 Resource Abundance Theory

The abundance of natural resources particularly oil weakens the state institutions in the resource-rich developing countries. The abundance of oil has weakened the social, economic and stability of the Nigerian state in the Niger Delta region. The extraction of oil without due environmental consideration has made Nigeria “vulnerable to armed disputes framed within ideas of environmental confrontation” (Bayramov 2018:74) The prominent scholarship in the resource abundance debates was represented by (Sach and Warner 1995; Collier 2003, 2008, Collier and Hoeffler 1998, 2004).

It is an abundance of natural resources (not scarcity) that led to conflict ( Le Billion, Bayramov 2018<sup>57</sup>). Also, Rodriguez and Sachs (1999) argued that resource abundant economies tend to have higher, not lower levels of GDP per capita with respect to resource-poor countries. The abundance of resources in Nigeria have not benefited the people of the Niger Delta in particular due to institutional weakness at all levels of governance ‘government failure can be rampant when institutional quality is poor’ (Polterovich 2010). The oil posed a greater danger to the peaceful coexistence of the unity of the country, low level of economic development and militarization of the Delta Niger environment (Salai-i-Martin and Subramanian 2003 and Humphreys 2013). Nigeria suffers from endemic official corruption, while resource-poor countries such as Ghana, Malawi and Burkina Faso are relatively or economically weak but more peaceful and democratic than Nigeria or the Congo.

Resource abundance in developing countries tends to generate adverse developmental outcomes, including weak economic performance, growth collapse, and high levels of

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<sup>57</sup> Bayramov, A., 2017. Dubious nexus between natural resources and conflict. *Journal of Eurasian Studies*. Available at: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S187936651730026X> accessed 14 March 2018.

corruption, ineffective governance and greater political violence. Natural resources, for most of the poor countries, are deemed to be more of a ‘curse’ than a ‘blessing’ (Di John 2009). It was evident that not all resource-rich countries failed to judiciously utilize the natural resources wealth for the well-being of its people. For example, Indonesia and Nigeria—both dependent on oil, had comparable per capita incomes during 1960. While today, Indonesia’s per capita income is the US \$3,570 and that of Nigeria stands at US 42,175 (World Bank 2018<sup>58</sup>; Polterovich 2010<sup>59</sup>). Both, Nigeria and Indonesia in the 1960s and 1970s adopted many policies targeted towards the poor populations and rural works projects, the government of Nigeria did nothing comparable (Ross 2007:242).

### **3.9 Resource Curse Theory (RCT)**

The proceeding theories discussed (greed versus grievance, resource curse, Dutch Disease, Horizontal Inequalities, Environmental security, Resource Governance Index and Resource abundance and scarcity) attempts to explain the phenomenon of natural resources conflict, but they are not entirely satisfactory.

The theoretical arguments put forward are useful but generally inadequate for this study to use all the theories for various reasons. The theoretical framework for this research will be based on the ‘resource curse or Dutch Disease’. Under the resource curse theory, there are two main explanatory models; Dutch Disease and rentier model. I will use both the Dutch disease and rentier model as a framework; both models explain the current Nigeria situation. Multiple factors and issues cause conflicts, and a systematic approach is needed to understand and account for them in a more comprehensive way. This research builds on the work of Collier, Hoeffler, Auty and Sachs to create a full study of the resource-based problems in Nigeria and outlines how this could be applicable to other countries. In this

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<sup>58</sup> World Bank ‘GDP Per Capita Current’ (2018) Available at: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.CD?end=2016&locations=NG-ID&start=2016&view=bar>

<sup>59</sup> Polterovich, V., Popov, V. and Tonis, A., 2010. Resource abundance: A curse or blessing? Available at: [https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=1814382](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1814382) accessed 22 March 2018.

chapter, the theoretical framework position is also examined to explain the current problems oil-rich Nigeria is facing.

The 'resource curse' theory was pioneered by Richard Auty and his colleagues in their various scholarly works (Auty 1993, 2004, 1994a, 1994b; Auty and Evans 1994; Sachs and Warner 1995, 2001, 1997, 1997). The so-called 'resource curse' is one of the most influential ideas in recent development discourse and policy. The term 'resource curse' is also known as the 'paradox of plenty'; Richard Auty (1993) is the one who apparently coined the term 'resource curse' in his ground-breaking book *Sustaining Development in Mineral Economies: The Resource Curse Thesis*. The natural resource curse thesis was later developed and popularised by Ross, Sachs and Warner (1995). The thesis argues that countries with an abundance of natural resources are more likely to perform worse, in terms of economic developmental and good governance, than their resource-scare counterparts. Moreover, while on the one hand, a lack of natural resources has not proven to be a fatal barrier to economic success, on the other hand, 'resource-rich countries grew less rapidly than resource-poor countries during the last quarter of the twentieth century' (Humphreys, Sachs and Stiglitz 2010). Nigeria is the most popular example of the "resource curse" cited within academia and the non-governmental sectors. The most common problems associated with the resource curse thesis include: authoritarian rule (Ross 2013), vulnerability to price volatility, economic disarray (Sachs and Warner, 1995, Ross 2013:3), poverty, inequality and short-sighted policies (Ross 2013), increased likelihood of corruption, greater likelihood of violent armed conflict (Collier and Hoeffler, 2000; Ross 2013) and extended conflict duration and weakened state institutions (Ballantine and Sharman 2003; Ross 2013). However, some countries have escaped each of these ailments and turned their natural resource wealth from curse to blessing (Ross 2013). Can Nigeria make the natural resources rent useful for the greater advantage of Nigerians just like Botswana did?

The Nigerian government raise over 80 per cent of the national revenues from oil instead of taxes. As such, the country fails to develop functioning bureaucracy that can intervene effectively in social conflicts. The result may be a heightened danger of violent civil conflict (Beblawi and Luciani 2016). Not all resource-rich countries are in such a bad situation; some have performed far better than others in the area of resource wealth management. For example, Botswana, Sierra Leone, Liberia and the Congo are all rich in diamonds, yet Botswana is the best performer in continental Africa in terms of democracy, accountability, stability, and rapid growth of income, while the countries of the Congo, Sierra Leone and Liberia are among the very worst in the world. Botswana's economic growth and political stability are regularly celebrated in the academic literature (Pegg 2010)<sup>60</sup>. The IMF (2006)<sup>61</sup> working paper on Botswana argue:

“Botswana has benefited from the coexistence of good governance and abundant diamonds to materialize growth. No clear evidence can be found that deterioration in the terms of trade would negatively affect economic development, as the Dutch disease model would hypothesize”.

As Joseph Stiglitz (2004) asserts there is cure for the Dutch disease as Botswana did it through good governance. A similar pattern holds true. Though, oil has more corruption disposition than diamond to some greater extent. There is lesson to be learn from Botswana to address resource curse in the developing countries. For example, Sierra Leone and Botswana are both diamond rich countries in Africa.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Pegg (2010) further asserts that ‘Botswana has done about as well managing its resource wealth as could realistically be expected. The country does not suffer from a classic Dutch disease. It is, however, unlikely to succeed in diversifying its economy away from diamonds anytime soon’. Also, see Joseph Stiglitz (2004) analysis ‘We can now cure Dutch disease’ *The Guardian* (Newspaper), 18<sup>th</sup> August 2004.

<sup>61</sup> For example, see Iimi, A., 2006a. Did Botswana escape from the resource curse? IMF Working Paper WP/06/138. International Monetary Fund, Washington, DC.

<sup>62</sup> See, for example UNCTAD (2017) report titled “Diamond exports from Botswana and Sierra Leone: The role of institutions in mitigating the impact of commodity dependence on human development”. The UNCTAD report further argue: Indeed, both Botswana and Sierra Leone are dependent on commodities and do not add much value to the raw materials they export. In Botswana 86 per cent of export revenues in 2014 were attributed to diamonds whereas in Sierra Leone, commodities represented 97 per cent of total merchandise exports of which 12 per cent were from diamonds (UNCTAD, 2016). While Botswana is considered to have succeeded in using its revenues derived from diamonds to develop its economy and reduce poverty, Sierra Leone has

About thirty years ago, Nigeria and Indonesia had comparable economic development and income per capita and heavy dependencies on oil extraction sales. Today, Indonesia's per capita income is four times that of Nigeria (Ross 2003, Frankel 2010 and Stiglitz 2007). What are the causes of violent oil conflict in Nigeria? Many resource-rich countries in the developing world seem to suffer from it; only a few do not. Several scholars and analysts, Auty (1993; 2013), Ross (2013) point towards rent-seeking and corruption as core elements of what causes this curse. Extractive economies provide a useful but challenging space for theorising on resource conflict. Extractive economies are societies that depend solely or partly on benefits arriving from the exploration, extraction, marketing and distribution of natural resources, commonly described as rent, rather than production and manufacturing, investment or the management of risk (Omeje 2008). One of the earliest theories developed to understand the political economy of resource-abundant states is the rentier state model. This perspective has a number of shortcomings, for instance, it is state-centred, and needs a complementary framework to capture emerging realities of poverty and bad governance in the developing countries.

The main areas of academic investigation of resource curse in the resource-rich countries like Nigeria are economic growth and stability. When examining economic growth and the experience of economic growth, strong institutions are an essential factor. To fulfil the criteria of strong institutions, good governance must exist within these institutions. A strong public voice with accountability, high government effectiveness, good regulation, and powerful anti-corruption policies are all essential for institutions to possess in order to consider themselves strong institutions with good governance. In regard to institutions and

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experienced very low levels of economic and human development in the context of a long civil war. For example, using a poverty line of \$1.90 per day in purchasing power parity (ppp), the poverty headcount ratio in Botswana dropped from 29.8 per cent in 2002 to 18.2 per cent in 2009. In Sierra Leone, it went from 58.5 per cent in 2003 to 52.3 per cent in 2011. Available at: [https://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/suc2017d9\\_en.pdf](https://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/suc2017d9_en.pdf)

the importance of well-established institutions, the article by Mehlum, Moene and Torvik “Institutions and the resource curse” argues for a link between the GDP growth of a nation and the performance of its political institutions (Mehlum, Moene and Torvik, 2006; pp.1-3). Mehlum et al., argue for a correlation between the growth of GDP and the established institutions within a state. This means that growth performance of resource-rich countries is dependent on how resource rent is distributed at the institutions (Mehlum, Moene and Torvik, 2006; p.3). Countries which to an extent experience the consequences of the resources curse often have institutions, where production and rent-seeking are competing for activities (Mehlum, Moene and Torvik, 2006:3). An element of the resource curse is, therefore, present when institutions become ‘grabber friendly’. ‘Grabber friendly’ institutions imply that being a producer in the competition for natural resources, rent is a disadvantage (Mehlum, Moene and Torvik, 2005:7). For example, since early 2015; as a result of collapsed petroleum prices in the global market, Nigeria has slipped into recession<sup>63</sup>. By having ‘grabber friendly’ institutions, the growth performance can turn negative, when “resource abundance attracts scarce entrepreneurial resources out of production and into unproductive activities” (Mehlum, Moene and Torvik, 2006:3). Therefore, when institutions are ‘grabber friendly’ rent-seeking activities tend to increase without contributing to the existing wealth. This leads to poor economic development and entrenches poverty and illiteracy among the populace. The term of ‘grabber friendly’ institutions is, therefore, important in order to understand the role of the institution. By having bad institutions without good governance and an abundance of natural resources, entrepreneurs are more easily tempted to become grabbers, which leads to undermining the

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<sup>63</sup> Nigerian economy slips into recession, Available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-37228741> accessed 15 October 2016.

incitement to undertake production (Mehlum, Moene and Torvik, 2005:11). This institution will, therefore, be defined as bad institutions, where there is a disadvantage of being a producer in the competition for natural resource rents (Mehlum, Moene and Torvik, 2005:7). The correlation between bad institutions and the resource curse are therefore relevant when examining the presence of the resource curse within Nigeria. Together with the quality of institutions, another aspect in regard to the resource curse is economic performance. As studies have argued that countries with an abundance of natural resources tend to experience a decline in international trade, which ultimately will lead to poor economic growth and development (Rosser, 2006:13). Others have argued for a problem within resource-rich nations that the instability and volatility of the international commodity market would be transferred to the domestic economies and thereby affect the incitement from private foreign investors to invest (Rosser, 2006:13). Such changes in the economy would affect countries in their future development. While examining the resource curse on the case of Nigeria, this research project is aware of the importance of the relationship between economy and the political variability in connection to this relationship. Therefore, when examining the case of Nigeria, the concept of 'Dutch Disease' is interesting. As mentioned, the research project is to analyse the different sectors such as manufacturing in order to illuminate a possible correlation between natural resources and poor growth within other sectors such as agriculture and manufacturing. By suffering from the resource curse, nations would experience larger risk to be exposed to 'Dutch Disease'. When examining such sectors, the project is able to answer whether or not 'Dutch Disease' affects the manufacturing sector in regard to the changes that might occur in exports and imports. The 'Dutch Disease', when examining Nigeria, is an interesting factor in connection with the country's large oil reserves in the Niger Delta region. Either by discovering natural resources such as oil or by an increase in the price of commodity exports, a nation will experience a lift in the value of the currency, which leads manufacturing goods to become less competitive. Such change within



the sector of manufacturing goods results in a decline in exports and leads imports to increase. The effects of 'Dutch Disease' are negative or slow performance within the non-oil export sectors because of worsening competitiveness (Ploeg, 2011:368). This worsening of competitiveness can result in a decline in the manufacturing sector (Ploeg, 2011:374).

#### Figure 7 Theoretical Model

Note: I propose above figure 7 as a revised theoretical model to explain the characteristics and complexities of natural resource governance issues in Nigeria.

Also, Nigeria's natural resource wealth has not served its population as well as it should because certain key institutions remain weak or non-existent and a small kleptocratic ruling elite has perpetuated and taken advantage of this vacuum (Okonjo-Iweala 2018). The decline in the manufacturing sector of the economy clearly manifests itself in Nigeria.