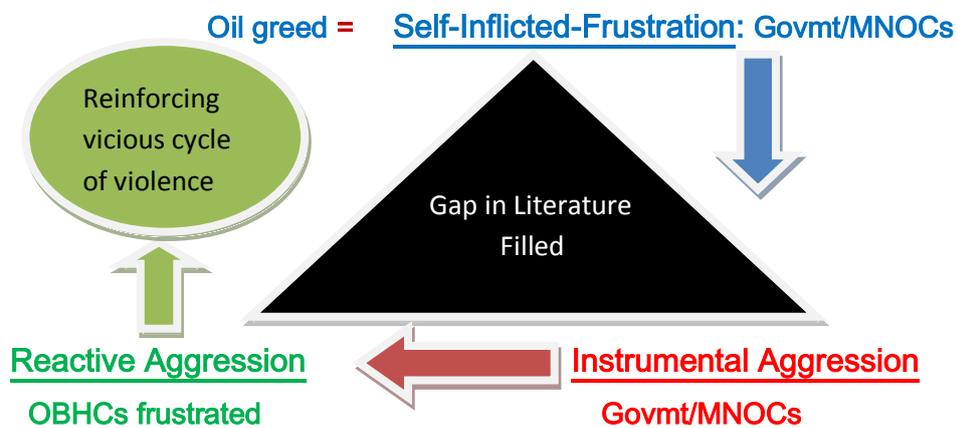


# Interrogating Frustration-Aggression from Environmental Degradation in the Niger Delta Conflict



*By*

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## ABSTRACT

This study interrogates what motivates the major beneficiaries of the Bayelsa State (Niger Delta) environment – the multinational oil corporations (MNOCs) and the Nigerian government (NG) to degrade that environment – their benefactor. The special interest of this thesis lies in understanding why the degradation continued even with the knowledge that their actions threaten the existence of the indigenous oil-bearing host communities (OBHCs) of Bayelsa State (Niger Delta). Irrespective of the fact that the Niger Delta conflict has been a favourite subject for scholars over the years, this particular aspect of the conflict has not been found amongst the literature consulted for this study. To fill this gap, this thesis interrogates this phenomenon.

To address this phenomenon, this study reviewed relevant literature to understand the dynamics of environmental degradation through the application of instrumental aggression by the major beneficiaries, and the reactive aggression employed by the OBHCs, as a response to the former. Employing ethnographic tools for data collection involving in-depth interviews, participant observation and focus group discussions, the frustration-aggression theory deployed here emphasises that an individual or a group that has experienced severe deprivations, marginalisation or obstructions in reaching its goal, may transform from a frustrated group to an aggressive one. With the use of this theoretical framework and the proposed theoretical model: Self-Inflicted-Frustration-Aggression-Theory (SIFAT), this study found that the Niger Delta's connection with the defunct Republic of Biafra was responsible for their neglect, marginalization, violation and the despoliation of its environment. The thesis found that the obstructions to OBHCs' constitutional means of resolving the problem was the major factor transforming frustrations into aggression and violent conflict in Bayelsa state (Niger Delta).

These findings help to fill a gap in the International Relations literature on the Niger Delta conflict. The findings have equally provided a clear knowledge about why the Niger Delta crisis has refused to go away.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This is to express my heartfelt gratitude to my wonderful team of supervisors whose invaluable wealth of knowledge and experience made this thesis possible. Dr. Chris Farrands' fatherly role is a bundle of inspiration towards this completed work of art. Dr. Roy Smith's uncommon academic wisdom and advice as the Independent Assessor charted a motivational course for this investigation. The Graduate School I thank for its resourcefulness.

I thank also my humble family for its steadfastness, patience, and understanding throughout the study time. All my respondents, I thank you for your time, shared experiences and knowledge. If you had not contributed your quota by participating in this study, this scholarship may not have been contributed towards understanding how frustrations from your environmental degradation drive the cross accusations that culminate in aggression and violent conflict in the Niger Delta.

# DEDICATION

To the ever-green loving Memory of my Father and Mother:  
*Mr & Mrs Chibunine & Chinahaeghe AkahaluOnyionu*  
Who despite all odds had the prudence to send me to school.

*EQUALLY,*

To my One and Only True Love: *Mrs NkeUche AkahaluOnyionu*

And To Him that is He:

*Master Marvellous Ibuchim Manna AkahaluOnyionu*

*For their fervent effervescence.*

# ACRONYMS

ACLED - The Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project

AG – Associated Gas

BALGA – Brass Local Government Area

Bonga FPSO –Floating Production, Storage and offloading facilities in Bonga

BSc – Bachelor of Science degree

CIA - The American Central Intelligence Agency

CLO – Civil Liberties Organisation

C2C – Cradle to Career

CORDIS – Community Research and Development Information Service

COSEEDECS – Council on Social and Economic Development of Coastal States

DFRRI – Directorate for Food, Road, and Rural Infrastructures

DPR – Department of Petroleum Resources

ECCR – The Ecumenical Council for Corporate Responsibility

ED – Environmental Degradation

EGASPIN - Environmental Guidelines and Standards for the Petroleum Industries in Nigeria

EIA – Environmental Impact Assessment

ENMOD – Environmental Modification

ERA – Environmental Rights Action

FAO – Food and Agricultural Organisation

FAT – Frustration-Aggression Theory

FADT - Frustration–Aggression–Displacement Theory.

FD – Frustration Displacement

FEPA – Federal Environmental Protection Agency

FGDs – Focus Group Discussions

GMoU – Global Memorandum of Understanding

GWP – Global Water Partnership

HND – Higher National Diploma

HPT – Hypothesis

ICESCR – The United Nations International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

ICG - International Crisis Group

IDIs – In-Depth Interviews

OBHCs – Oil-Bearing Host Communities

IOGP – Integrated Oil and Gas Project

IYC – Ijaw Youth Council

JIV – Joint Inspection Visit

JTF – Joint Military Task Force composed of the army, the navy and the police

KD – Kaiama Declaration

LGAs – Local Government Areas

LPG – Liquefied Petroleum Gas (Cooking Gas)

MEND – Movement for the Emancipation of Niger Delta

MNOCs – Multinational Oil Corporations

MORETO – Movement for Reparation to Ogbia

MOSOP – Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People

NAFDAC – National Agency for Food, Drug Administration and Control

NAPE – Nigerian Association of Petroleum Explorationists

NDDDB – Niger Delta Development Board

NDDC – Niger Delta Development Commission

NDE – The Niger Delta’s Environment

NDPVF – Niger Delta Peoples Volunteer Force

NDRDMP - Niger Delta Regional Development Master Plan

NDR – The Niger Delta Republic

NG – Nigerian Government

NGO – Non-Governmental Organisation

NLNG – Nigerian Liquefied Natural Gas

NNPC – Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation

NOSDRA – National Oil Spill Detection and Response Agency

OMPADEC – Oil Mineral Producing Area Development Commission

PIB – Petroleum Industry Bill

PO – Participant Observation

RNC – Royal Niger Company

RRs – Research Respondents

RQ Research Questions

SALGA – Sagbama Local Government Area

SIFAT – Self-Inflicted-Frustration-Aggression Theory

SNEPCo – Shell Nigeria Exploration and Production company

SPDC – Shell Petroleum Development Company

TA - Transferred Aggression

TEEB – The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity

UNDP – United Nations Development Programme

UNEP – United Nations Environmental Programme

USDA – United States Department of Agriculture

USEPA - United States Environmental Protection Agency

USIP - The United States Institute of Peace

WHO – World Health Organization

YELGA – Yenagoa Local Government area

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# CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

## 1.0 Overview

To ensure the existence of stable international relations between Nigeria and the foreign capital represented by the multinational oil corporations (MNOCs), this study has elected to interrogate why the MNOCs and the Nigerian government (NG) who benefit hugely from the Bayelsa State (Niger Delta) environment, are degrading the environment. This is because the extant literature on the Niger Delta conflict leaves a huge gap in knowledge by way of its reluctance to interrogate this phenomenon. The ripple effects of the environmental degradation engender frustrations orchestrated by food, economic, health, water and socio-political insecurities that trigger aggression and violent conflict. Besides employing the Frustration-Aggression theoretical framework (FAT) from Dollard et al (1939) to analyse this conflict, the thesis has also proposed a theoretical model called the Self-Inflicted-Frustration-Aggression Theory (SIFAT) to support the FAT and to primarily explain that the Petroleum Decree of 1969, Land Use Decree of 1978, Abrogation of revenue derivation formula of 50% and the degradation of the environment are all premeditated, proactive and instrumental aggression triggered by frustration. To understand the full mechanism of the frustration-aggression dynamics, it will be noted that the application of the instrumental aggression group, ostensibly, triggers retaliation from the reactive aggression group.

To achieve this, this chapter starts with discussion on setting the stage in section 1.1. This is followed with the presentation of the research problem in section 1.2, and the discussion of the research aim of this study in section 1.3. Others are the presentation of the research questions in section 1.4, followed by the presentation of the research hypotheses in section 1.5, and the examination of the significance of this research in section 1.6. The rest are the presentation of the limitations of this research in section 1.7; the presentation of the proposed theoretical model: SIFAT in section 1.8; the discussion of the major areas of research contributions in section 1.9 and the examination of the thesis structure in section 1.10.

## 1.1 ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION: ITS NEXUS WITH FRUSTRATION & AGGRESSION IN THE NIGER DELTA CONFLICT

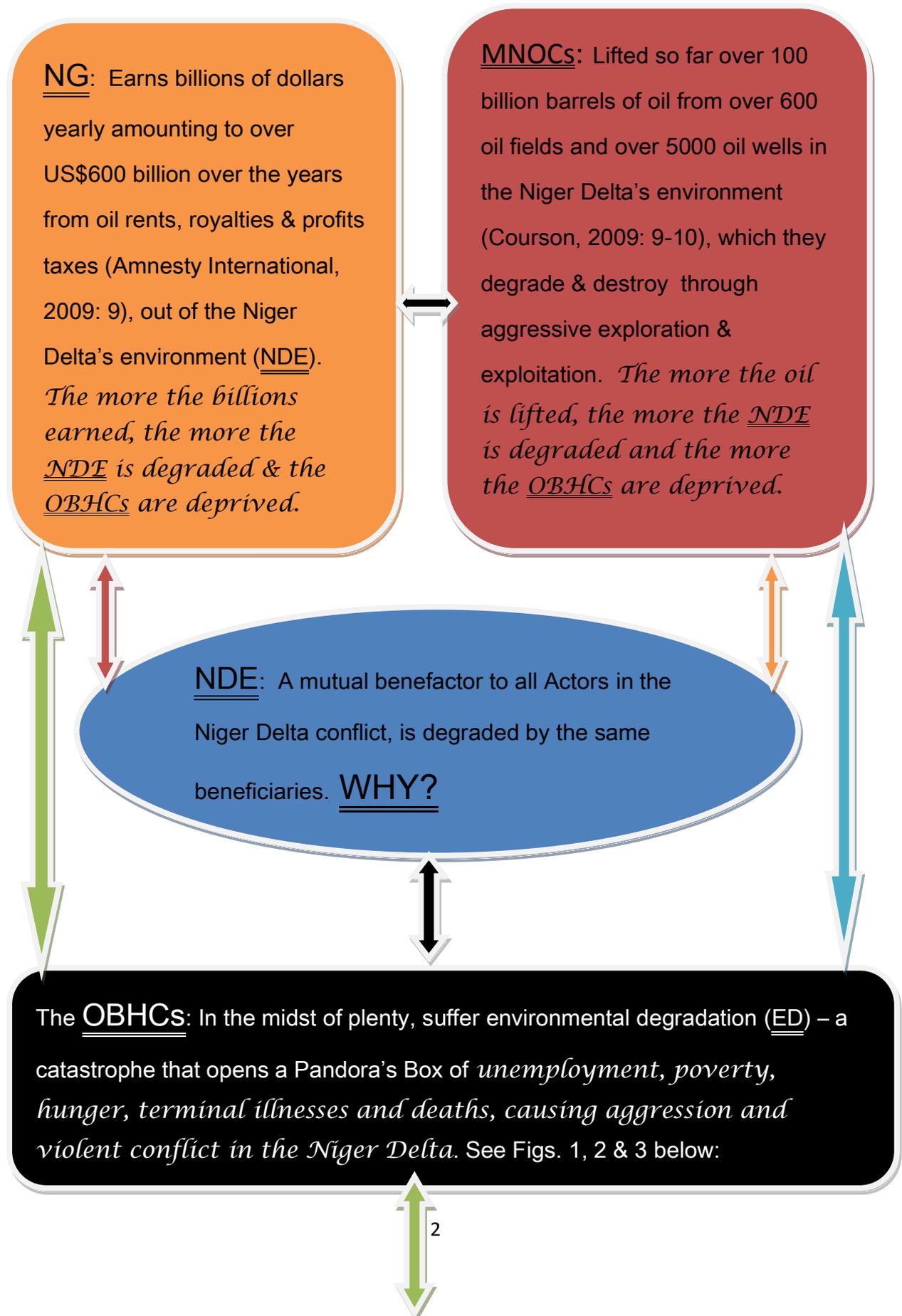




Figure 1: **No Infrastructure: Poverty amidst plenty**



Source: <http://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2013-04-23-letter-from-nigeria-the-niger-river-delta-looks-at-life-after-oil/>



Figure 2: **Air & Water Pollution: Triggering unemployment, poverty, hunger etc**



Source: Ed Kashi in <http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/2007/02/nigerian-oil/oneill-text>



Figure 3: **Farmlands' Degradation: Triggering unemployment, poverty, hunger etc**



Source: UNEP (2011) Environmental Assessment of Ogoniland. Nairobi, Kenya. [www.Unep\\_oea.pdf\(Niger delta byUN\).pdf](http://www.unep.org/oea/pdf/Niger_delta_byUN.pdf).

## 1.2 SETTING THE STAGE

Globalization-induced inordinate desire for what nature bountifully endowed the hitherto peaceful countryside known as the Niger Delta, has transformed it into a dreadful region of chaos as a result of massive environmental catastrophe. The gravity of this catastrophe can be imagined from the postulation of Spillman (2006: IX) in which he avers that “In this super industrial-techno society, it simply means that, if there is no oil, there is no economy; no oil means no defence; in short, if there is no oil, there is no nation”. The message in Spillman’s postulation is clear. It means that oil must be found at all costs, but it does not mean that the environment that bears the crude oil should be destroyed in the process. In mathematical terms, Esche (2009: 9) successfully converted Spillman’s postulation into statistics to make the message more comprehensible by arguing that, “Currently, the world consumes over 84 million barrels of oil a day, and estimates that by 2018, we will be consuming more than 120 million barrels a day”. In confirmation of this, a British Diplomat strongly contends that “The world runs on oil. Not on the quaint opinion of what is good or bad” (Spillman, 2006: IX). A critical analysis of this postulation indicates that the Diplomat places high premium on oil more than on the well-being of the environment and the people in it. This, points to the fact that everything, irrespective of it being ‘good or bad’, will be done to procure oil. Invariably, environmental degradation happens to be one of the things done in the process of procuring oil.

This global demand for crude oil and its associated gas (AG) has meant development for the area in question as it translates into immense construction of factories, houses, road networks, electricity to be supplied, water to be pumped and drainage systems built to modernize existence and boost the emergent oil industry. However, development translates into aggression and violent conflict when the accompanying developmental infrastructures are discriminatorily sited to benefit a few, especially the staff members of the MNOCs and as a result, disadvantage the majority – mainly the oil-bearing communities. Besides, the construction of these facilities translates into conflict, especially when their impact assessment on the

environment is neglected to the detriment of the organisms within the environment. Such actions degenerate into several tragedies with added poignancy for the living whose special attachment to the environment hinges on survival.

This explains why frustration is born by the premature termination of any enterprise from which gain is expected, while aggression is the terminal stage of frustration aimed at paying the premature terminator of the enterprise in his own coin. Thus, the MNOCs prematurely terminated the prevailing enterprise with their transformation of the hitherto peaceful Niger Delta region with industrial noise. The noisy vibrations from the sounds of the ever present cracking fires burning on a twenty-four hourly basis from gas flaring pollute the environment. As a result, the air became polluted and the water became dangerously acidic (Afinotan and Ojakorotu 2009: 195). The region equally suffers a massive vibration brought about by the sound of seismic oil exploration activities forming a huge menace in noise pollution of the region, all of which are tantamount to violation of the inhabitants' rights to a healthy existence.

Arguably, a healthy environment plays a pivotal role in a healthy global political economy. Invariably, the healthiness of the environment has a great impact on the health of the workforce that empowers the healthy political economy. Interestingly, the political economy in this situation is interpreted to mean both the local political economies of the indigenous ethnic nationalities that make up the nine states in the Niger Delta region, the national political economy of the Nigerian State and the international political economies of the global energy market, all of which are tied to the Niger Delta environment. Conversely, a devastated and degraded environment will manifest in a distressed and distraught workforce with an unhealthy and a non-performing political economy as a consequence. It is therefore not surprising that the World Health Organization (WHO, 2004: 26 & 34) clearly delineated the huge correlation between physical well-being and mental health vis-à-vis the environment to avoid the question of 'poverty trap'. Our physical health is dependent on the state of the health of the environment from which our food security is assured. "Health" is therefore defined by WHO (2001: 1) to be "a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity".

Ultimately the degradation of the environment means the violation and degradation of people's physical and mental health because deficiency in one significantly impairs the quality of people's lives and their livelihoods. To maintain a proper healthy balance in life, the environment needs to be healthy to produce quality food free from contamination and poison. Capitalising on this, Hill (2013: 42-43) in reviewing Barrett (2011) asserts that 'an organism's behaviour relies on the mutuality between their body and the environment'. Further, 'organisms are inseparable from their environments because it is this mutual interaction that produces behaviour' (Hill, 2013: 42-43). By this, Hill suggests that Barrett has clearly shown the importance of the environment to its constituents. In other words, a healthy environment impacts the organisms in it positively. On the flip side, a degraded environment influences the organisms within it negatively. This is logical because a healthy environment creates employment opportunities for the farmers and the fishermen and produces contamination-free food. It invariably points to why the conflict happened in the first instance. The negativity from the severely damaged environment frustrates people by depriving them of their right to work, food and good health. This frustration-dynamic converts the distressed and powerful energies into aggression and violent conflict as a consequence of the cross accusations it provokes.

The importance of this brief narrative is to position the environment in the right frame of what this thesis is all about. This is because the environment comprising the land, water and air is man's source of sustainable existence. Based on this, the Nigerian Federal Environmental Agency Act 1992 defines environment as comprising the entire water, air, land, and all plants and human beings, or animals living therein and the interrelationships that may exist among these or any of them. From this definition, the MNOCs, the Nigerian State and the OBHCs in the Niger Delta constitute the integral part of the Niger Delta environment. Even if the main seat of the Nigerian State is in Abuja, its interrelationships as seen in the joint venture partnership with the MNOCs makes it a stakeholder in keeping with the definition. Being a member of the Niger Delta environment is just a fragment of the emergent thesis. The other part and perhaps the most important is that the three actors in the conflict under consideration are not only members of the same environment, but they are also mutually benefitting from the same environment whose degradation is at the

centre of the imbroglio. For example, the oil and gas which constitute the main, if not the only source of income and livelihood for both the Nigerian government and the MNOCs to the tune of over \$600 billion for Nigeria (Courson, 2009: 9; Chukuezi, 2006: 162; Watts, 2004: 58) are derived directly from the same environment which the OBHCs hold so dear for their existence.

If this environment is a common benefactor to all the actors, why are some of the beneficiaries not concerned about preserving the sanctity of their benefactor - the Niger Delta's environment, for sustainable benefaction? Clearly, the phenomenon which this thesis is investigating is, why are the beneficiaries of this Niger Delta environment degrading it? This marks the point of departure of this study from the contemporary scholarships on the Niger Delta conflict. This is because amongst the literature consulted, none to the knowledge of the author considered the common membership of all the actors of the same environment and the mutual beneficial importance of the environment to all the actors in the conflict as their common source of livelihood. And most importantly, why is it being degraded by its beneficiaries? This study therefore questions whether the mismanagement, neglect and maltreatment of the environment impact on the oil- and gas-bearing communities, the MNOCs and the Nigerian State differently as members of the same environment or in the same way? The controversy surrounding this debate is the matrix on which the resulting frustration-triggered cross accusations that led to aggression amongst the actors is based. To tackle the cross accusations, the famous Kaiama Declaration was promulgated by the agitators as a sanctioning mechanism to repudiate and invalidate the sovereign State's enacted decrees. The dearth of scholarship on this perspective of the Niger Delta conflict explains the importance of the desire to fill this gap in scholarship with the application of the Frustration-Aggression Theory. This theory explains that frustration is a huge conflict driver which enables the frustration-dynamics to convert distressed but powerful energies into aggression and violent conflict.

The importance of the Niger Delta's environment is based on the knowledge that essential natural resources that support quality existence of humanity are derivable from there (Onuoha and Ezirim, 2010: 261). Such natural resources include crude

oil, gas, animals, fish, forests, fertile soils, fresh water, rivers and coral reefs which are just a few of the environment's resources that help to fuel our healthy political economy, claims the Community Research and Development Information Service (CORDIS, 2010: 2). The latest Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB, 2010: 14) study is a major global initiative supported by the European Commission Environment's Directorate-General (DG Environment). It points out that the significance of many of these 'ecosystem services' often remain invisible but nature undeniably makes huge beneficial contributions to human livelihood, health, security and culture at all levels towards our global healthy political economy. This throws light on the philosophical explanation of Dr. Ken Saro-Wiwa who argues that "The environment is man's first right. The absence of a safe environment makes it impossible for man to fight for other rights: be they economic, social or political" (Courson, 2009: 9). What Saro-Wiwa is saying is that the absence of a safe environment means the absence of safe water, air, land, and all plants and human beings, or animals living within the environment as well as the interrelationships existing therein. This is because all these are the foundation of the social, political and economic rights of man. Paradoxically, man, through the activities of the MNOCs in association with the policies of the Nigerian government, is militating against a sustainable healthy environment with which nature has endowed the Niger Delta. This aggravates the environmental, food, health and economic insecurity incidence in the Niger Delta. This leads to the research problem.

### **1.3 STATEMENT OF RESEARCH PROBLEM**

In Clark McCauley's (n.d) view, the frustration-aggression theory (FAT) authored by Dollard et al (1939), is American psychology's most prominent contribution to the understanding of aggression and violent conflict in the world political system. Consequently, Johan M.G. van der Dennen (n.d cited in Bandura, 1973: 33) agrees with this postulation (see chapter 4, section 4.1). The basic assumption of the FAT is that aggression has its root causes in the frustration of one or more actors' goal achievement (Ibaba, 2011: 560). Explaining this, Gandu (2011: 49) argues that given

the considerable level of resources the Niger Delta is endowed with, the frustration and resentment of non-beneficiaries usually lead to aggressive attacks on oil and its facilities. The interpretation of this postulation is that conflict can be traced to the unfulfilment of personal or group objectives and the frustration that this breeds. From this concept, it can be adduced that conflict occurs when competing groups' goals, objectives, needs or values clash, and aggression results as its consequence.

This lends credence to the scholarly assumption that the root causes of war lie in human nature and human behaviour. This intrinsically gives rise to the uncompromising and unco-operative stance of the actors which result in conflict as a consequence. This belief that human nature and behaviour are the harbinger of conflicts and war is the prime motivator of the debate exploring the relationships between the individual and its existence in its environment. This is why the frosty relationship continues between the MNOCs, the Nigerian State and the OBHCs in the Niger Delta. Although they are members of the same environment and benefiting mutually from it, they still indulge in uncompromising behaviour towards the environment. The frustration from the uncompromising behaviour triggers conflict in the Niger Delta region. In studying this frustration arising from the uncompromising behaviour, the frustration-aggression theory is the perfect theory of conflict that will fulfil the objectives of this study.

Drawing from what transpired above, it is clear that the degradation of the environment by the actors in the Niger Delta is definitely responsible for the escalation of the crisis in the region. All the stakeholders in this conflict namely the MNOCs, the Nigerian State, and the OBHCs commonly benefit from the same environment for their existence and livelihoods. The OBHCs have the oil in their ancestral land which they farm to eke out their living. Over 60% of their populations are made up of farmers, fishermen and women who depend wholly on the environment for their livelihoods (UNDP, 2006: 306). These groups have no alternative occupation through which they can survive without the environment. This is what they have been doing all their lives to fend for their families' various needs. To these groups, any damage to the environment is similar to shutting down an industry which has serious economic implications for the affected employees of the

company. The shareholders and employees of such a company, realising that the company is their source of livelihood, would do everything within their powers to avert such a calamity. This is exactly what the OBHCs are doing to save their source of livelihoods.

The MNOCs on the other hand, depend on the same Niger Delta's environment for their profits. As evidence, Dr. Enu, the President of the Nigeria Association of Petroleum Explorationists (NAPE) asserts that the MNOCs have lifted over 100 billion barrels of crude oil from the environment since oil extraction began (Courson, 2009: 9-10). The MNOCs are in joint venture partnership with the Nigerian State over the oil extraction. Because Nigeria has a mono-economy based entirely on crude oil extraction, it depends solely on the rents, royalties and taxes from the MNOCs to implement its financial commitments (Oyefusi, 2008: 539–540) amounting to over \$600 billion (Amnesty International, 2009: 9). This shows that all the actors in this conflict benefit from the Niger Delta's environment for their survival. But, to this latter group, any damage to the environment may not diminish the environment's capability to continue oil production as opposed to the effect on the environment's ability to remain productive for the farmers and the fishermen. The controversy that has arisen from the uncompromising behaviour of some of the actors over the effect of the degraded environment culminated in the adoption of the Frustration-Aggression Theory for this study. The theory is used to analyse and explain how cross accusations arising from frustrations triggered by the environmental degradation led to aggression amongst the actors. This leads to the research aim.

## 1.4 RESEARCH AIM OF THIS STUDY

The cross accusations resulting from frustration caused by the ill treatment of the environment which triggered aggression amongst the stakeholders in the Niger Delta conflict has added impetus to the degree of the crisis. These accusations are hinged on the actors' treatment of the environment from which they all benefit bountifully. The treatment was the major factor responsible for Owolabi's (2012: 49) classification of the Nigerian government and the MNOCs as being "careless" over

the environment. Maltreatment of a source of a people's source of livelihoods is tantamount to toying with their lives and their future generations. As a result, the whole region has been impoverished (Amnesty International, 2009: 14) to the extent that they survive on less than US\$1 per day (Courson, 2009: 9; Watts, 2005: 58). This is why I am interested to explore why some of the actors would not want to protect the sanctity of their source of livelihoods even when armed with the knowledge that the environment's degradation threatens the existence of other actors. The answer to this might be a permanent solution to this seemingly intractable conflict. It would contribute to a better understanding of Nigeria's Niger Delta conflict through generation of new knowledge from this new perspective based on relevant literature and empirical data. Thus, this research aims to stimulate further research interests in this perspective of the conflict. I now explain the research questions and the hypotheses.

## 1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

To gather critical and comprehensive data about this uncharted aspect of the Niger Delta conflict, I made use of the first-hand information gathered through interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs) with actors representing various interests, values and positions in the conflict. To lay to rest the cross accusations arising from frustrations bred by environmental degradation which engendered aggression amongst the actors in this conflict, the following are the research questions:

1. Are the major beneficiaries of the Bayelsa State (Niger Delta) environment degrading their benefactor?
2. Are the cross accusations of frustrations from impacts of environmental degradation triggering aggression and violent conflicts amongst the actors?
3. Are these beneficiaries advertently or inadvertently degrading their benefactor, the (Niger Delta) environment?
4. Does the environmental degradation affect the capacity of the environment to produce crude oil and gas?

5. Does the degradation affect the economic, water, food, health and socio-political security of the indigenous oil-bearing host communities (OBHCs)?
6. Why do actors translate their frustration into aggression?

## 1.6 THE RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

To do justice to the research problem which centres on how the mismanagement of the cross accusations created by the frustrations from the environmental degradation that degenerated to aggression impacts the Niger Delta conflict, a number of hypotheses have been developed. The Hypotheses are:

1. Environmental degradation constitutes frustration flash point
2. Frustration is fundamental in aggression

These hypotheses will guide and show the relevance of the Frustration-Aggression Theory (FAT) pioneered by Dollard et al (1939) for this study. They will also demonstrate that frustration-dynamics convert distressed but powerful energies in the OBHCs into aggression and violent conflict, due to frustrations from environmental degradation. The next section is the justification for the study.

## 1.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS RESEARCH

Though research studies have been carried out and papers written on the problematic issue of environmental degradation in the Niger Delta (Eyitsede, 2010; Amnesty International, 2009; Raji and Abjide, 2013; Manton, 2013; Aghalino et al, 2009; Alapiki, 2004; Aminu, 2013 and Ayokhai, 2013), none has covered why it is being degraded by those who benefit from it. Frustrations from the degradation by the same beneficiaries have bred cross accusations amongst the actors leading to aggression and violent conflict amongst them: the Nigerian government (NG), the MNOCs and the OBHCs in the Niger Delta. This study is significant because the continued indifference of the NG to the environmental destruction is a huge threat to the global energy trade, and the foreign capital investments in the Niger Delta (Owolabi, 2012: 55) For example, Ikelegbe argues that “instability in world oil supplies and the critical link of oil to the international economy has made Nigerian and more generally African oil to be more strategic” (Ikelegbe, 2005: 208). This

postulation is corroborated by the views of Stephanie Hanson (2007: 1) who argues that the Movement for the Emancipation of Niger Delta (MEND) automatically launched itself onto the international stage in January 2006 by claiming responsibility for the capture of four foreign oil workers. This action, according to Hanson drastically reduced Nigeria's oil production capacity from the Niger Delta region by almost one-third. This achievement by MEND got the US, the MNOCs and the NG worried about the militant's ability to disrupt the global oil supply (Hanson, 2007: 1).

The effects of MEND's activities on the international energy market influenced Sebastian Junger to ask, "Could a bunch of Nigerian militants in speedboats bring about a U.S. recession?" Rhetorically answering his own question, Junger observes that by "Blowing up facilities and taking hostages, they are wreaking havoc on the oil production of America's fifth-largest supplier (Junger, 2007: 1). And significantly, MEND has successfully shown that 20 guys in speedboats could affect oil prices around the world (Sebastian Junger, 2007: 3). Consequently, the former C.I.A. director, Robert Gates, warned that "the last two major recessions in this country [USA] were triggered by a spike in oil prices, and a crisis in Nigeria—America's fifth-largest oil supplier—could well be the next great triggering event" (Junger, 2007: 3).

Particularly, Sebastian Junger argues that any disruption in the oil-rich Niger River delta, results in a loss of 800,000 barrels a day on the world market. Since Nigerian oil is classified as "light sweet crude," meaning that it requires very little refining, this makes it a particularly painful loss to the American market. This is because global oil production is already functioning at close to maximum capacity (around 84 million barrels a day), small disruptions in supply shudder through the system very quickly. A net deficit of almost two million barrels a day is a significant shock to the market, and the price of a barrel of oil rapidly goes to more than \$80 (Junger, 2007: 1). As a result, people would drive less, for example, so demand would decline—but the country would find itself in an extremely vulnerable position. Not only does the American economy rely on access to vast amounts of cheap oil, but the American military—heavily mechanized and tactically dependent on air power—literally runs on oil.

According to Junger, the Oil ShockWave panel argues that, near-simultaneous terrorist attacks on oil infrastructure around the world could easily send prices to \$120 a barrel, and those prices, if sustained for more than a few weeks, would cascade disastrously through the American economy. Furthermore, gasoline and heating oil would rise to nearly \$5 a gallon, which would force the median American family to spend 16 percent of its income on gas and oil—more than double the current amount. Transportation costs would rise to the point where many freight companies would have to raise prices dramatically, cancel services, or declare bankruptcy. Fewer goods would be transported to fewer buyers—who would have less money anyway—so the economy would start to slow down. A slow economy would, in turn, force yet more industries to lay off workers or shut their doors. All this could easily trigger a recession (Sebastian Junger, 2007: 28).

This is why the uniqueness of this study is that it focuses attention on understanding why the beneficiaries of the environment should turn around to destroy the same environment. This is especially when they are armed with the knowledge that such action threatens the existence of other actors. Besides that, by finding out why an actor(s) that benefits from the Niger Delta environment would as Owolabi (2012: 49) argues, carelessly degrade and despoil it, the literature and knowledge on the Niger Delta conflict would be improved. As if the accusation of “Carelessness” was not enough, David Dafinone (2008 cited in Aghalino, 2011: 3) insists that the actors’ (or the beneficiaries’) “Willful” and “Constant” destruction of the Niger Delta environment is counterproductive.

The understanding of why an actor would degrade the source of its livelihood, even when it is aware that the act threatens the existence of other actors would lead to the discovery of a workable conflict resolution mechanism that is satisfactory to the stakeholders in this conflict. This invariably will allow the MNOCs to continue with their aims of maintaining unobstructed and free flow of oil and gas to the international energy market, while the Nigerian government earns its foreign exchange revenues with which its budgetary expenditures are executed. The

OBHCs will have a solution to their damaged environment, and economic, social and political marginalization.

## 1.8 LIMITATIONS OF THIS RESEARCH

Nigeria's Niger Delta region is made up of nine states namely Abia, Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Delta, Edo, Imo, Ondo and Rivers. So, the focus of this research on only Bayelsa state is a major limitation to this research effort. This is necessitated by financial constraints. Time is another serious limitation experienced by this ethnographic research investigation. Ethnographers, argues Seers (2012: 2) require a long time to live in the community being investigated through immersion for thorough observation and better results. Tension created by the security threat posed by a religious sect called Boko Haram was another serious constraint to this study. The sect is perceived as an instrument for destabilizing the presidency of Dr Jonathan who hails from Bayelsa State. This made people very cautious about what to say and to whom. Even the security agencies found it difficult to grant interviews to me. Besides that, my security while in the conflict zone was another huge constraint. The fear of abduction and kidnapping limited the scope and freedom of my movement and association while in the conflict zone. The respondents' safety was equally a problem to be contended with. They were generally mindful of what to say and where to say it, due to the security issue in the conflict area. This raised the issue of trust between the researcher and respondents which Vine et al (2008: 353) aver is an indispensable tool in conflict zones.

Other social and political problems that I encountered contributed in no little degree towards limiting the scope of the study are as discussed below. Firstly, as a Nigerian of Igbo extraction which is one of the three majority ethnicities in Nigeria often accused by the minorities of marginalization and domination, the people of Bayelsa did not trust that the aim of the research would be in their interest. They suspected that as an Igbo, I might have been planted to find out incriminating facts about the conflict in the Niger Delta which the Igbo or the Federal government would use against them. The fact that the Niger Delta was an integral part of the defunct Biafran Republic which had the Igbos as the majority ethnicity did not help matters, because

they believed that the Igbos were after the Niger Delta's oil deposits. Their suspicion was heightened by the choice of the research problem which tried to find out why they expressed their frustration with the government and the multinational oil corporations through aggression and violent conflict. To answer this question, some rhetorically asked me why the Igbos fought the Biafra-Nigeria civil war. This initial hostility borne out of historical suspicion of the interest of the Igbos in the Niger Delta oil resources was eventually overcome with the aid of the letter of introduction from Nottingham Trent University and careful but persuasive and constructive negotiations. This leads me to the proposed theoretical model.

## 1.9 PROPOSED THEORETICAL MODEL: SIFAT

From the analysis earlier in the overview section, the emerged antecedents of instrumental aggression clearly indicates, using SIFAT, that the Petroleum Decree of 1969, Land Use Decree of 1978, Abrogation of 50% revenue derivation and the degradation of the environment are all aggressions triggered by frustration. Instinctively, the proposed theoretical model in Figs. 1.8.1 and 1.8.2 below indicates a complex graphic illustration of frustration being fundamental in aggression. The code 'GOVMT' means the government.

Fig. 1.8.1: PROPOSED THEORETICAL MODEL: SELF-INFLICTED-FRUSTRATION-AGGRESSION-THEORY (SIFAT)

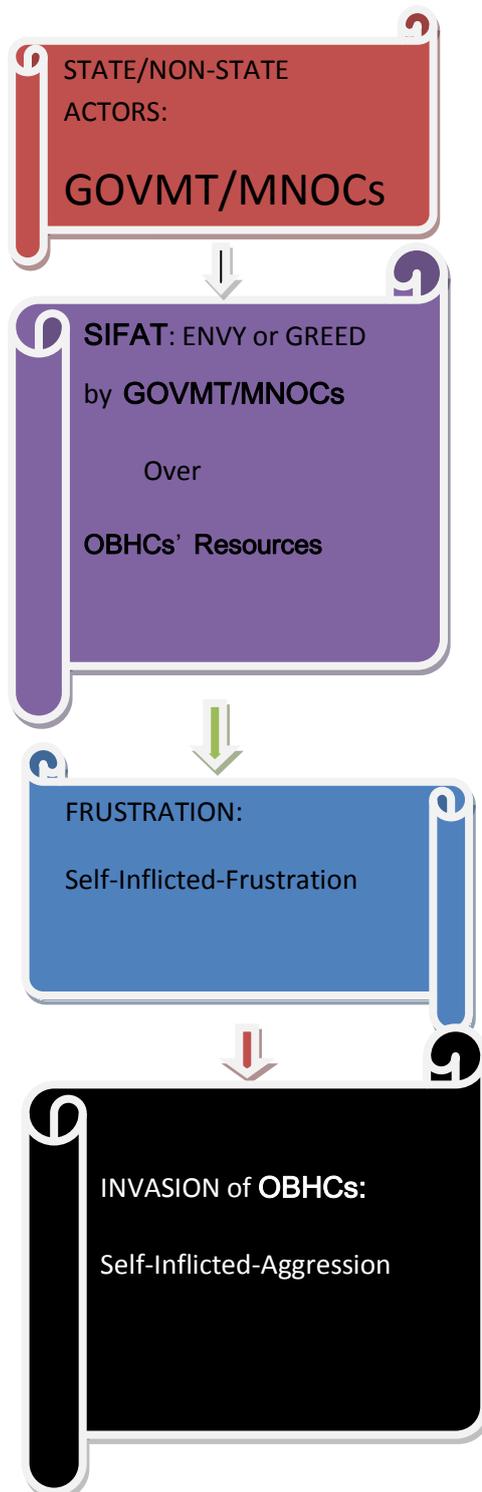
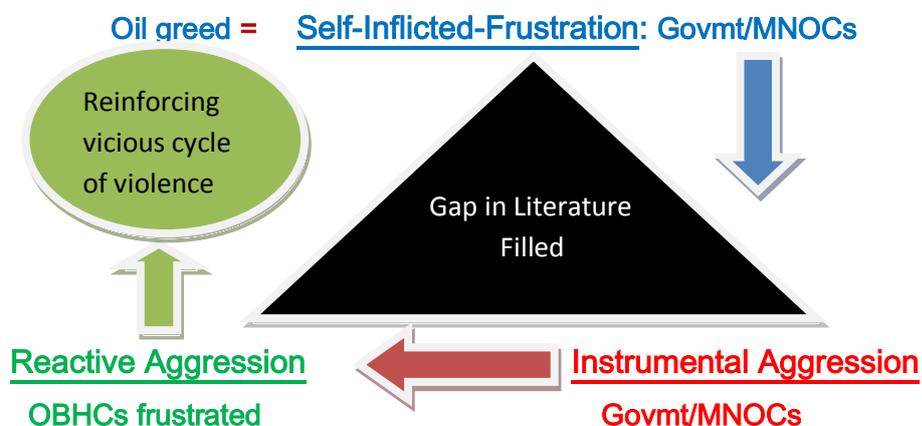


Fig. 1.8.2 SIFAT: THE INSTRUMENTAL & REACTIVE AGGRESSIONS NEXUS



Carrying out the theoretical literature review implied the necessity for a theoretical model to empirically analyse the instrumental aggression that seemed to be without provocation (Anderson & Huesmann, 2003: 298). Consequently, this proposed theoretical model helped to explain these complexities in the frustration-aggression paradigm as done in chapter 4. This leads to the major areas of research contributions.

## 1.10 MAJOR AREAS OF RESEARCH CONTRIBUTIONS

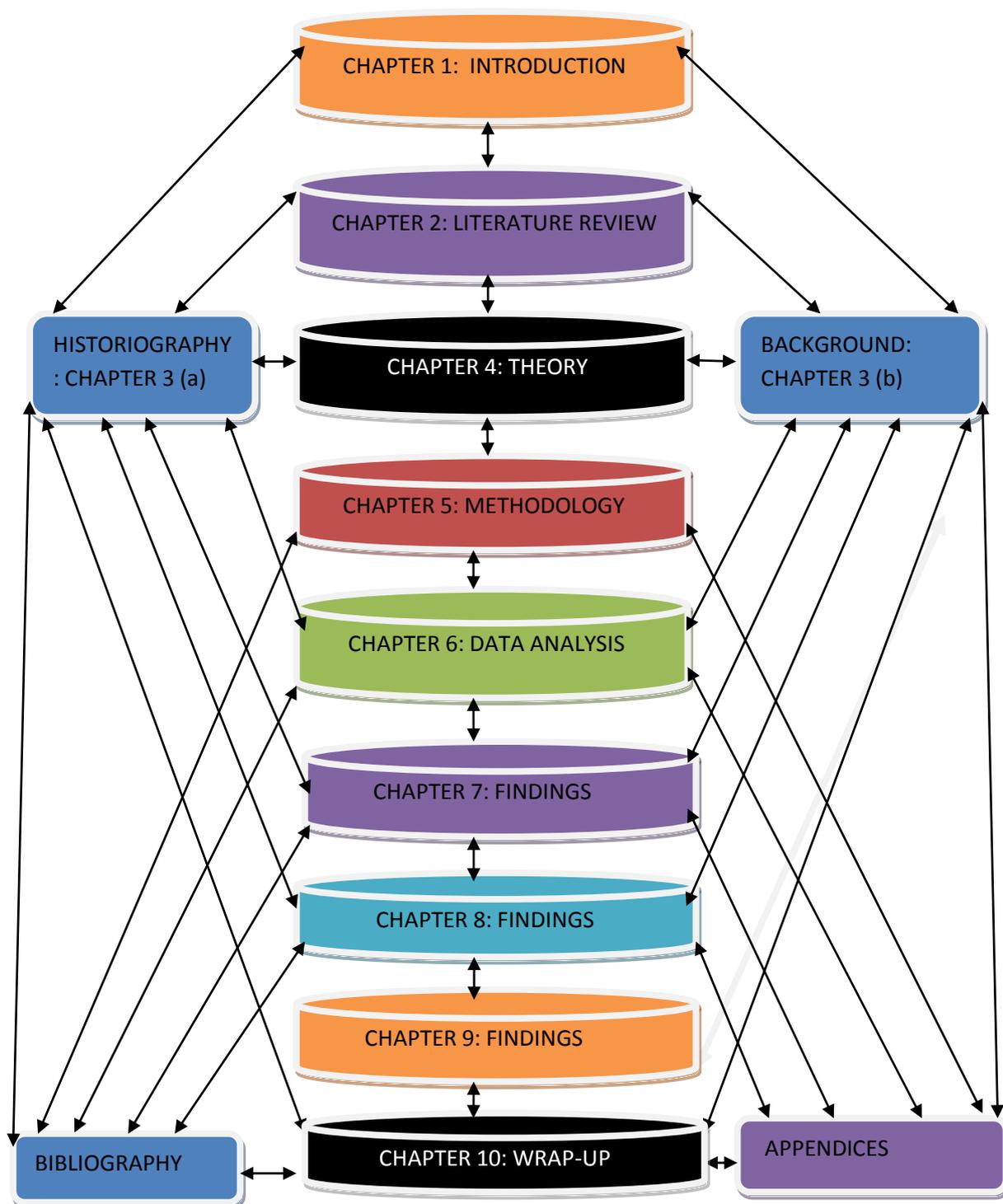
It is the intention that this research shall contribute meaningfully to the international relations body of knowledge through interrogation of why the major beneficiaries of Bayelsa State (Niger Delta) environment are degrading their benefactor. The major areas of contribution are:

- Theoretical Framework: The focus of the contribution of the study in this area is the development of the proposed theoretical model: the Self-Inflicted-Frustration-Aggression Theory (SIFAT) for the explanation of conflict and the behaviours of rogue states and their leaders in international politics (Malici, 2007: 1-3).

- Frustration-Aggression and Provocation: This study contributes to the literature by explicitly using the proposed theoretical model: SIFAT to clearly demonstrate that the premeditated, proactive and instrumental aggressions which Anderson and Huesmann (2003: 298) argue are without provocation, actually have frustration as their provocation.
- This study contributes to the literature by actually using the Premeditated, Proactive and the Instrumental aggressions to explain that the abrogation of the 50% revenue derivation principle, the introduction of the Petroleum Decree of 1969, the Land Use Decree of 1978 and the degradation of the environment are all aggressions triggered by Self-Inflicted-Frustration, thereby demonstrating that frustration is fundamental in aggression (Dollard et al, 1939: 1).
- This study contributes to knowledge by way of its discovery that the military regime embarked on mono-economy based on only crude oil and gas to ensure that oil which is a non-renewable energy is depleted as part of the spoils of war policy. This shows why the environment is subjected to instrumental aggression.
- The study makes contribution to knowledge by its establishment that the phenomenon of environmental degradation in the Niger Delta is deliberate. The problematic phenomenon of gas flare, deforestation and weak legislation demonstrate this.
- The study contributes to knowledge by demonstrating that colonial legacies laid the foundation of the conflict devastating the Niger Delta. Examples are the oil Mineral Ordinance 1946; Raisman-Tress Commission 1958; and the spoils of war policy.
- Finally, this study contributes to the literature by its discovery that the aggression of environmental degradation in the Niger Delta is associated with the Nigerian-Biafran civil war, 1967-1970. This leads to the thesis structure.

1.11

# THESIS STRUCTURE



This thesis investigates why the Niger Delta environment is being degraded by actors who benefit hugely from it. Frustrations from this precarious situation endanger the lives of the expatriate oil workers, the sources of livelihoods for OBHCs in the region and expose oil facilities and equipment underwritten by America,

Europe and Asia, located in the region, to danger (Owolabi, 2012: 55). The situation affects the profits of the MNOCs and the Nigerian government's (NG) source of foreign exchange earnings. This is why the frustration-aggression theoretical framework is deployed in this thesis to explain how frustrations trigger aggression. The overall structure of this thesis is discussed here in line with the research problem. The thesis comprises ten chapters excluding the bibliography and the appendices sections as follows:

Chapter 1 being the introduction has given a brief summary of the thesis to aid the understanding of the subsequent chapters. I presented the aims of the research, the research questions, the hypotheses and limitations, the significance of the study and its anticipated contributions to knowledge. Chapter 2 analyses the copious contemporary literature on environmental degradation highlighting the importance of the Niger Delta environment to Bayelsa State, the MNOCs and the Government in order to establish the theoretical framework for the study. This literature analysis aids the identification and filling of existing gaps in knowledge which constitutes the major academic contribution of this research by examining why the beneficiaries are degrading the environment.

Chapter 3 hinges on the historiography and background of the stakeholders in the conflict. It explains the historical perspective underpinning the research problem commencing from colonialism to the contemporary conflict in the Niger Delta region. For example, the colonial Raisman-Tress Commission of 1946 began the reduction of the existing 100% revenue derivation formula to 50%, while the Colonial Mineral Oil Ordinance laid the foundation for Petroleum Decree of 1969.

Chapter 4 includes a detailed explanation of the Frustration-Aggression Theory (FAT) as the theoretical framework adopted for the analysis of the Niger Delta 'bloody conflict'. It identifies and critically examines the dichotomies of aggression to understand how the application of instrumental aggression due to frustrations triggers retaliation with the reactive aggression. It discusses the proposed theoretical model, SIFAT, for analysing conflicts, instrumental aggression, rogue states and

their leaders. Because "A bloody phenomenon cannot be explained with a bloodless theory" (Horowitz, 1985: 140), and because of the mismanagement of the cross accusations caused by frustrations leading to a "bloody" aggression and violent conflict, a strong theory is needed. This is why this thesis concludes that Frustration-Aggression Theory is the most appropriate theoretical framework for this study.

In Chapter 5, I present the research methodology involving data collection techniques, while in chapter 6, I present the data collected with ethnographic tools and their analysis using the frustration-aggression theoretical framework. In presenting the data care is taken to meticulously analyse them to avoid mistakes in interpretation. In doing this, the thesis employs the findings of the data analysis to answer the research questions in order to answer the research problem. Furthermore, I consider how the stark realities of destitution, hopelessness and pauperism galvanised collective aggression as a model for liberation from marginalization and oppression.

Chapters 7, 8 and 9 are devoted to the presentation of key findings derived from the data analysis based on the respondents' narratives with which diverse dimensions of the environmental degradation were interrogated. The conclusion draws on all the issues covered by this study. It recaps the importance of the Niger Delta environment to all the stakeholders in the conflict and provides the answer to why it is being degraded.

Chapter 10 concludes the thesis by reflecting on the substances covered by all the chapters. It also reflects on the contributions of the research to the body of knowledge. Reflections are made on how colonialism's legacies are decimating the Niger Delta region and the nation as a whole, because it laid the foundation for these crises. I argue that the "inattention" of the NG and the MNOCs (Owolabi, 2012: 49) and their "determined" and "steady" destruction of the Niger Delta environment (David Dafinone, 2008 in Aghalino, 2011: 3) hinges on its connection with the defunct secessionist Biafran Republic. The literature review is in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER 2

### DEFINING THE NIGER DELTA CONFLICT BOUNDARIES: THE RESOURCE CURSE OR THE ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION THEORETICAL TRAJECTORY

#### 2.0 OVERVIEW

Chapter 1 laid the foundation of the thesis with a general introduction to all the chapters in the chapter outline. It presented the research questions and the hypotheses, the justification for the study, its limitations, and the major areas of contribution of the study. It proposed a theoretical model: the Self-Inflicted-Frustration-Aggression-Theory (SIFAT) for conflicts analysis, instrumental aggressions, rogue states and their leaders. In this chapter 2, relevant literature on different theories of resource-related conflicts involving the resource curse, bad governance, marginalisation, poverty, greed and grievances were analysed in relation to the Niger Delta conflict. This analysis led to the rejection of these theoretical trajectories in preference for the theory of environmental degradation. Ostensibly, environmental degradation intensifies grievances by causing unemployment, poverty, hunger, underdevelopment, diseases and deaths in the OBHCs. As a result, this study advocates for “governance curse” as opposed to the resource curse theory.

Besides ensuring the establishment of the befitting theoretical framework for this study, this literature analysis equally helped to identify a gap in the extant literature that requires filling by focusing on - Why the major beneficiaries of the Niger Delta environment are involved in its degradation? For instance, Courson (2009: 9; Omotoso, 2013: 8) claim that the “NNPC 1983 report alleged that since the discovery

of oil in the Niger Delta in the 1950s, neither the NG nor the MNOCs made any meaningful efforts to control environmental degradation associated with the oil industry". The major beneficiaries of the Niger Delta environment are the Nigerian Government (NG) and the multinational oil corporations (MNOCs) while the indigenous oil-bearing host communities (OBHCs) are continually impoverished due to deprivations caused by environmental degradation. This interrogatory trajectory is the basis of this study's contribution to knowledge. The next section considers the resource conflict.

## 2.1 THE NIGER DELTA RESOURCE CONFLICT

Being the 12th largest petroleum producer in the world, as well as its 8th largest exporter, Nigeria consistently exhibits high levels of directly-resource-related conflict at 5%, which revolves around oil (The Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (ACLED, 2014: 2). Resource-related battles and instances of violent conflicts can be seen in countries like Angola, Equatorial Guinea, Nigeria, Libya, Sudan, DR-Congo, South Sudan, Sierra Leone, and Central African Republic. ACLED (2014: 4) claims that South Sudan witnesses the second highest number of explicitly resource-related conflict after Nigeria in recent time. Just like Nigeria, about 5% of violent conflict in South Sudan since achieving independence in 2011 has been explicitly resource-related, primarily between government forces and rebel groups. Again, just like in Nigeria, resource-related conflict in South Sudan is also oil-related, and has occurred almost exclusively in oil-rich Unity state comparable to Nigeria's Niger Delta. Similarly, Sudan has also experienced a high number of these oil-related conflicts particularly in the highly contested Abyei region (ACLED, 2014: 5), which is responsible for about a quarter of Sudan's total crude oil output (Enough Project, 2013 cited in ACLED, 2014: 5).

Political complications manifested in citizens of the oil-rich Abyei region being made citizens of Sudan against their wishes. According to BBC (2013 cited in ACLED,

2014: 4) they are arguably in favor of joining South Sudan. While oil drives resource-related conflict in Nigeria, Libya, Sudan, and South Sudan, resource-related conflicts in Sierra Leone, Central African Republic and DR-Congo are primarily fueled by mining such as diamonds and cobalt. DR-Congo is estimated to have about \$24 trillion worth of untapped deposits of raw mineral ores, including the world's largest reserves of cobalt (Morgan, 2009 cited in ACLED, 2014: 6).

Primed by this, Scholars interested in the Niger Delta political imbroglio, especially Allen (2008: 5-6) argues that O'Hara's (2001: 308) analysis of the violent conflict in the region, highlights oil, environmental degradation, negligence, marginalisation, underdevelopment, Nigerian state's interests, human rights violation, and existential struggle for livelihood as the core conflict enablers. According to Allen (2008: 5-6), Alilemen and Adeniyi (2008: 559; Okunnu, 2008: 396; Watts, 2008: 40; Ikelegbe, 2008:107) corroborated O'Hara's view, while some, including Ikelegbe (2005: 210) beg to differ by arguing that the conflict is much more pro-greed than grievances. The greed thesis proponents such as Collier and Hoeffler (2000; 2002; 2004) contend that the only interest of rebel leaders is the looting of resources for personal enrichment as opposed to grievances motivated agitation rooted in political marginalisation, exclusion and neglect (Emuedo, 2014: 7).

In line with this, Emuedo observes that Collier (1999) asserts that "the real cause of most rebellions is not the loud discourse of grievance, but the silent voice of greed". Similar sentiments have been shared by scholars such as Mwanasali (2000; Berdal and Malone, 2000; Fearon and Laitin, 2003 cited in Emuedo, 2014: 7). This thought model has generally underpinned explanations for conflicts in Africa and elsewhere. And particularly, "conflicts in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Angola, Sudan, Equatorial Guinea, and Congo DR seem to strengthen the greed thesis. Even the Nigerian State's view of the Niger Delta conflict seemed underpinned by the greed thesis, as coercion has been the trademark policy under all successive regimes" (Emuedo,

2014: 7). However, when this is viewed from the perspectives of the OBHCs' life constrained trajectory, it is entirely conceptualised as a grievance motivated conflict. This perspective accounts for why the greed theory is not canvassed further in this study.

But from a detailed reading of O'Hara's work, as well as many others such as Ikelegbe (2005: 215; Ibeanu, 2008: 96; Agagu, 2008: 240; Ibeanu & Luckham, 2007: 87 and Fayemi, 2006: vi) there is an underlying explanation of the conflict from the angle of the thesis arguing that oil is more of a curse than a blessing to countries that have it (Allen, 2008: 5-6). This view was championed by Auty (2003: 1) in his 1993 seminal discourse. However, while corroborating the stance of McNeish (2010: 11) that resources do not automatically, without the political elites' influence engender conflicts, Okolie-Osemene (2015: 5) intones that "if having abundant oil may be considered a curse, invariably, the lack of it, can equally be the worst curse". As a probable explanation for this, Di John (2007: 975) notes that the prevalence of conflicts and wars in Burundi, Djibouti, Mali, Rwanda, Somalia, Uganda, Ethiopia and Eritrea, all of which are non-mineral dominant economies, renders the argument of the resource curse protagonists very spurious. Besides that, the scramble for and partition of Africa and in fact, the entire political system of colonisation stimulated by resource-paucity in the global north, and sustained by resource exploitation in the global south, ruined the economies of the global south (the colonised). This is why Okolie-Osemene (2015: 5) argues that resource-paucity is the worst curse. Surprisingly, the extant resource curse literature has been silent on this pivotal perspective critical to understanding this enigmatic phenomenon termed the resource curse.

## 2.2 THE RESOURCE CURSE PHENOMENON

The political paradigm configured as resource conflict has become an undermining phenomenon frequently bedevilling the extractive economies of the global south. It

produces a situation termed the resource curse, which Ross (2014: 1) defines as the perverse effects of a country's natural resource wealth on its economic, social, or political well-being. It is a paradox indicating that countries with abundant natural resources often have less economic growth than those without natural resources. The dependence on a few sources of revenue typically discourages diversification, leads to overheating of the economy, and increases volatility of prices and revenue. The attendant conflicts from such paradox clearly became the matrix enabling scholars to dub the Sierra Leone's diamond as "blood diamond". This pedestal aided McNeish (2010: 11) to argue that while "Sierra Leone's civil war did not begin over diamonds *per se*, however, the government's mismanagement, corruption and overall bad governance concerning revenue sources such as diamonds did provide fertile conditions or at least initial support in some quarters for rebellion".

Arguably, McNeish raised valid issues critical to understanding the resource conflict phenomenon. First, McNeish contends that diamond did not cause the war in Sierra Leone. The same could be said about the war in Angola as the war commenced before the advent of the Angolan resource economy. However, from the reading of McNeish's postulation, it is understandable that diamonds helped in financing the war. But, he clearly underscored the fact that the government's mismanagement or bad governance was what caused the rebellion in Sierra Leone. The subterranean point being argued by McNeish is that resources do not engender conflicts and wars, rather, bad governance or government's mismanagement of the resources and its wealth is directly responsible for the cataclysm witnessed by the resource dependent global south. This argument is somewhat a robust invalidation of the resource conflict thesis.

In any case, prior to Richard Auty's 1993 conceptualisation of the resource curse paradigm, the prevailing wisdom was that natural resource endowment stimulates development. For instance, McNeish (2010: 24) writes that in the 1950s, the

geographer, Norton Ginsburg argued that “The possession of a sizable and diversified natural resource endowment is a major advantage to any country embarking upon a period of rapid economic growth”. Furthermore, McNeish revealed that similar views were also expressed by the mainstream economists such as Viner (1952; Lewis, 1955) during this time frame. According to McNeish (2010: 24), a prominent development theorist, Walter Rostow (1961), has in the 1960s further argued that “natural resource endowments would enable developing countries to make the transition from underdevelopment to industrial take-off, just as they had done for countries such as Australia, the United States, and Britain”. McNeish observes that in the 1970s and early 1980s, neoliberal economists such as Balassa (1980; Krueger, 1980 and Drake, 1972) put forward related arguments, with the former, for instance, arguing that natural resources could facilitate a country’s industrial development by providing domestic markets and investible funds (McNeish, 2010: 24). The pertinent question is why did the same resources fail to perform the same economic wonders for the global south in the post-colonial era?

Significantly, Auty’s resource curse conceptualisation changed that prevailing conventional wisdom but with robust equivocation on why the periphery is faltering. Auty like other proponents equivocated on this phenomenon as a cover for the mindset entrenched by colonialism indicating that resources in the global south are lootable as demonstrated by the scramble and partition of Africa. Like the colonial agents, the global south’s post-colonial leaders looted these resources and the accompanying wealth which they deposited in banks in the global north. The confusion raised by this resource curse phenomenon has pitched scholars against each other in a debate regarding its merits and demerits or is it a reality or an illusion? This polemicism surrounding the economic paradox of plenty made scholars to develop different terminologies in an attempt to account for the complicated state of affairs faced by resource-rich countries in the global south. The terminologies include: intractable conflicts, new wars, resource wars, complex political

emergencies, conflict trap, resource securitization, petro-violence, blood diamonds (Collier 2005; Kaldor 1999; Kaplan 1994; Nafzinger & Auvinen 1996; Watts 2008 cited in McNeish, 2010: 2). With all this attention, it would be proper to understand the roles resources play in political economies.

## 2.3 ROLE OF NATURAL RESOURCES IN POLITICAL ECONOMIES

The ACLED (2014: 1) argues that “Natural resource extraction by mining (including oil, diamonds, copper, and cobalt) has tremendous positive economic potential for states. However, these resources can also do more harm than good if used towards ulterior motives including corruption, the unequal distribution of wealth, and to fuel violence”. In any case, it is difficult to determine the exact role that extractive resources may play in indirectly inciting political economies of violence. This is because, while it is largely accepted that rebel groups used profits from conflict diamonds to finance civil wars in Angola, DR-Congo, and Sierra Leone (Amnesty International, 2013 cited in ACLED, 2014: 2), it is even much more difficult to measure the extent of the resources’ effect given its indirect role. ACLED was clear that natural resources have positive purposes for humanity and political economies, but when “used” in a negative way, it does more harm than good. Invariably, resources cannot “use” themselves. What ACLED is implying is that human factor is what is responsible for whatever purpose the natural resources accomplish: either, negative or positive political economies.

To harness these resources and put them into productive use in order to realise their purpose to humanity, man usually undertakes a much more complicated activities than just drilling a number of oil wells in the ground. More than that, it is fully capital intensive, requiring investors to deploy essentially valuable fixed assets for exploration and exploitation purposes. Subsequently, the complex petrochemical separation procedure handled with requisite expertise is decided and discharged by

the ruling political class. This is due to the fact that the governments (the ruling political class) provide the necessary oversight-function for resource management, regulating trade and development, establishing licensing protocols, levying taxes on resource industries, and engaging in natural resource extraction directly or by selling extraction rights. This is followed by the haulage stage that involves exportation to the international energy markets from the export terminals.

This exportation earns revenues for the resource abundant nation. The purpose of all these difficult processes is, to harness the valuable treasure (mineral resources) to empower sustainable socio-economic development and enhance the wellbeing of humanity through wealth creation. It is therefore not surprising that the United States Institute of Peace (USIP, 2007: 12) argues that the intended purposes of resources, such as timber, minerals, and oil, are to produce revenue and it is these revenue-producing resources that cause the most problems hinged on the paradox of plenty. The resulting sense of complacency culminates in corruption, weak institutions and poor bureaucracy due to failure in the oversight-function resulting in 'governance curse'. Now, should the revenue realised from the sales of the resources be misappropriated by the agency with the oversight-function, would it be justifiable for the resources to be accused or blamed as a curse? If it is agreed that the answer is "No", then something must definitely be wrong with the resource curse hypothesis. This is part of the reasons it is not adjudged fit for this present study.

Clearly, in resource abundant nations where the political elites are conscious of and generate functional economic policies, the incidence of 'governance curse' does not arise. This is a strong refutation that there is nothing like 'resource curse'. Rather, what the resource abundant economies are plagued with is 'governance curse'. This is a robust justification for Di John's (2011: 167) contention that the resource curse hypothesis lacks conviction and therefore a complete political enigma as well as an economic anathema. The governance curse is the culmination of the abuse of the

purpose of the resource which is the creation of wealth to enhance developmental sustainability. Implicitly speaking, developmental sustainability is predicated on governance stewardship that empowers socio-economic growth by guaranteeing the OBHCs' basic needs such as shelter, clean water, food, employment, environmental sanity and reliable energy through efficient use and management of available resources. Such judicious governance of resources or stewardship is imperative because wealth creation from resources is inseparable from risks which offer opportunities for maximising potential competitive advantages. Contrary to this, the result of governance curse is socio-economic misfortune manifesting in environmental degradation, unemployment, poverty, hunger, diseases and deaths.

## 2.4 IS IT REALLY RESOURCE CURSE OR GOVERNANCE CURSE?

Richard Auty, a Professor of Economic Geography at the University of Lancaster in the United Kingdom, has been identified as the man who conceptualised the resource curse thesis in 1993. Auty did this while describing how countries rich in natural resources were unable to use that wealth to boost their economies and how, counter-intuitively, these countries had lower economic growth than countries without natural resources abundance. Basically, the operative word in Richard Auty's 1993 declaration is that the natural resource rich countries were "unable" to, and not that the natural resources were unable to boost their economies. In furtherance, Auty (2003: 1) declares poor governance to be the bane of most developing countries. This, Auty argues, accentuates the intensity of pollution from irresponsible exploitation and exploration of renewable and non-renewable resources. Most importantly, Auty observes that good governance will definitely enhance environmentally sustainable management of resources (Auty, 2003: 1).

This discourse thus far, seems to point to the fact that the appellation - resource curse, is more or less a misnomer. A better appellation therefore should be “governance curse”. The “governance curse” is the political process that engenders and culminates into the inversion and abuse of the intended purpose of resource abundance. This is because it is the mismanagement of the political authority that is responsible for the negative influence of the resources on the OBHCs and the environment. Auty, who is the father of this resource curse paradigm, rooted it squarely on poor governance which culminates into aggravated environmental degradation through negligent oil production processes. According to Auty (2003: 1), irresponsible exploitation and exploration of renewable and non-renewable resources is attributable to poor governance. In other words, ‘governance curse’ is the problem and not resource curse. This practically demonstrates why the Niger Delta imbroglio cannot be explained with a non-existent paradigm such as the resource curse thesis.

This concept is explainable with the fact that oil that remained buried under the earth, does not and cannot pollute the environment nor can the revenue from such oil do anything without the application of political stewardship of the ruling political elites. It is therefore, the actions, policies and influence of the political class that determines whether the environment and the OBHCs are impacted either positively or otherwise by the natural resources. Therefore, poor political governance as Auty (2003: 15) identified is what is responsible for failure to use the wealth in the resource rich nations to boost such economies and not the resource itself. Equally, having lower economic growth in the resource abundant nations is dependent on the poor economic policies of the political class charged with the governance of such economies. In the Niger Delta for example, did the resources devalue the quality of the lives of the OBHCs while it remained buried in the earth? Did the resources render the OBHCs’ population unemployed while not harnessed? Did the resources degrade the environment while securely buried under the earth? Did it short-change

their means of livelihood in the absence of irresponsible exploitation and exploration? The honest answer to all these is emphatically, “No”. What did all these, are the policies of the political class charged with the governance of the nation. This is what I call the “governance curse” and not the resource curse.

In an effort to explain this phenomenon better, Marsland (2011: 1) argues that “Two significant factors have the potential to condition a country’s encounter with globalisation. And these factors are the country’s natural wealth (resource abundance) and their policy”. This is because, Marsland explains, “globalisation increases the demands for extractable resources, and many countries that have abundance of these resources, either benefit or fail, depending on how they deploy this wealth in their societies” (Marsland, 2011: 1). With this line of thought, Marsland has completely exonerated “resource” from blame, should anything go wrong in the chosen policies implemented in the administration of the resource economies. Clearly, the blame has been apportioned on the shoulders of the political elites in control of the economic and political administration of such economies. Continuing, Marsland argues that how countries manage their natural wealth and invest in human capital will be vital to whether countries either reap the benefits or suffer the consequences of globalisation (Marsland, 2011: 1).

Equally, worried about the resource curse paradigm, Ragnar Torvik (2009: 1) emphasised that he is not concerned about the average performance of resource abundant nations. Rather, he is concerned about the huge variations, because, on the average, resource abundant countries have had lower growth over the last four decades than their resource poor counterparts. Explaining this phenomenon, Torvik argues that “For every Nigeria or Venezuela, there is a Norway or a Botswana”. Comparatively, he wonders, “Why do natural resources induce prosperity in some countries (such as Norway and Botswana), but stagnation in others (such as Nigeria and Venezuela)?” (Torvik, 2009: 1). Emphatically, with different economic analytical

scenarios, Torvik (2009: 2-4) demonstrated with the help of Mehlum's et. al (2006) dataset that, "The problem was policy – not resources". Coming to this conclusion was not an easy one because, it may be reasonable to assume that resource economies that export natural resources have weak protection for property rights, much corruption, and bad quality of the public bureaucracy. Then, failure to control for these factors could misleadingly culminate in blaming resources for the poor performance, when in fact it was the quality of institutions that was the problem (Torvik, 2009: 4-5). Clearly all these factors are caused by poor governance.

Invariably, the case being established here by Torvik is that any of those factors could have been responsible for the poor performance of the resource economy. Critical examination of this postulation crystallises into what I have elsewhere proposed as governance curse instead of resource curse. However, Torvik (2009: 7) elucidates the importance of understanding how and when resource abundance breeds economic success or economic failure? To do this, Torvik identified "Saving of resource income" amongst others as the core determining factors responsible for either success or failure of the resource abundance.

## **2.5 SAVING OF RESOURCE INCOME: A PANACEA**

The ability of a resource abundant nation to save its income from the resources to a great extent determines whether the economy will escape the resource curse syndrome or become a victim. Torvik argues that "When a country sells its oil and puts the proceeds in the financial market, it reduces the natural capital of the country while it increases the financial capital of the country" (Torvik, 2009: 7-8). Furthermore, he explains that in such a scenario, the wealth of the country is unchanged. However, if the resource abundant nation happens to consume all the proceeds from the sale of oil, the correct understanding is that its savings rate is negative. Thus, the savings rate of the affected nation in the national accounts is calculated as zero. In plain language, the resource dependent country had an

'income' which unfortunately it used for consumption purposes thereby making the savings rate to be equals to zero (Torvik, 2009: 7-8).

In Nigeria, this income (money) realised from oil sales are lodged into the Federation Account from which it is distributed to the 36 states of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. From the readings of Torvik's postulation, Nigeria used its oil revenue for consumption which translates into "zero" savings. In this case, oil cannot be held responsible for the political elites' economic myopism and overspending, rather, governance curse should. To further buttress this point, Torvik shows that a total of -22.0% was recorded against Nigeria as its resource adjusted savings between 1972 and 2000 (Torvik, 2009: 8). The import of such economic report card is very clear to the extent that it had Shaxon & Christensen (2013: 2) worried. They regret that paradoxically, the failure of such resource rich economies to harness their huge wealth for national development culminates into poor economic growth, greater corruption, higher inequality, less political freedom and often more absolute poverty than their resource poor peers. This paradox of poverty from plenty is known as the resource curse thesis (Shaxon & Christensen, 2013: 2). But the appropriate reflection should read: governance curse.

Subsequently, a growing body of research has emerged predicated on the efficacy of sound economic policy as the panacea to even the paradigm of Dutch disease (Usui, 1997: 157; Larsen, 2004: 68). The Dutch disease as a dimension of the resource curse indicates a rise in the real exchange rate of countries with resource abundance relative to their trading partners as a result of crowding out of other sectors. This affects usually the manufacturing sector by drastically reducing growth and development. Though Usui (1997 and Larsen, 2004) argue that this situation can be salvaged with sound economic policy, Papyrakis & Gerlagh (2004: 188) suggest that poor investment rates may be the most marked link between natural resources and poor growth rates. Clearly, Atkinson & Hamilton (2003: 1804) point out that poor

growth performance in resource rich countries is linked to government's resource rents being spent unsustainably, with low rates of genuine saving. They provide some evidence that governments that invest rents towards future – non resource related – development, such as investment into human capital accumulation, tend to be better at avoiding the resource curse. Interestingly, Ding & Field (2005: 498) found resource dependence not to be negatively associated with growth, and intrinsically found that resource endowment was positive for growth. This was corroborated by Brunnschweiler & Bulte (2008: 256) when they contend that resource abundance was positive for growth. All this point out that effective resource management is the problem and not the resource itself. If the resource is not the problem, is oil a curse?

## 2.6 OIL IS NOT A CURSE: A VALID ARGUMENT OR NOT?

The desire to understand the phenomenon Auty in 1993 described as resource curse has led scholars to ask, does natural resource wealth lead to political dysfunction? (Ross, 2014: 1). In this respect, Ross argues that there is strong evidence that one type of resource wealth, particularly petroleum, has at least three important effects including making authoritarian regimes more durable; leading to heightened corruption and helping to trigger violent conflict in low and middle income countries (Ross, 2014; 2). But, with his “From Institutions’ Curse to Resource Blessing,” Menaldo (2014: 1) analysed the political economy of development. This enabled him to conclude that “there is no such thing as a natural resource curse”. Instead, he demonstrates “that natural resources are a blessing that improve fiscal capacity, promote capitalism, industry and democracy”.

Menaldo explains that his book: “From Institutions’ Curse to Resource Blessing”, was inspired by three big puzzles, each of which challenges the resource curse, especially the theory that oil and minerals harm state capacity, democracy, and economic development. One of the puzzles that inspired Menaldo’s work is the fact that state building and industrialization in the Western world, which was, to a large extent, ignited by the exploration and production of coal, minerals, and oil taken from the periphery states in the global south, has now paradoxically become a curse for the same global south. Worryingly, Menaldo regrets that for example, the “oil-rich Venezuela is bedeviled by rampant poverty, as well as political and social unrest”. This is irrespective of the fact that the global north, who took the same resources from the global south, used same to advance their economies while the richly endowed periphery is in ruin.

Equally, Menaldo is “puzzled that the Oil-rich Nigeria is afflicted by environmental degradation, corruption, and political violence. Also, the oil and gas abundant Russia is a nasty kleptocracy that increasingly threatens its neighbours, if not world peace. Indeed, Saudi Arabia, the world’s largest oil producer, is ruled as a quasi-theocracy. It is one of the few places on earth where citizens have no say over their political destiny and women live under an Apartheid-like system. Equally, Angola, Iran, and Congo, all heavily dependent on natural resources, are poster children for human rights abuses and repression” (Menaldo (2014: 15). Providing answers to these puzzles, Menaldo (2015: 168) states that indeed, “the myriad problems faced by the citizens of weak states in the Latin American periphery are ultimately due to the state’s neglect or incompetence. They are not as a result of natural resources per se”. The word incompetence points to the problematical issue of governance curse. Most importantly, Haber (2014: 20) argues that Latin America’s industrialization was catalyzed by resource booms. Others in support of this view include Liou and Musgrave (2014: 1588) with the argument that oil boosts public goods; Alexeev and Conrad (2009: 577; Brunnschweiler and Bulte 2008: 258; Girod, 2009: 4) contending

that oil bolsters economic growth, while Brunnschweiler and Bulte (2009: 663; Cotet and Tsui 2013: 78) observe that oil does not cause civil wars. Furthermore, Haber and Menaldo (2011: 18), Wacziarg (2012: 647), and Menaldo (2014: 12) conclude that oil actually bolsters democracy instead of undermining it (cited in Menaldo, 2015: 165-166).

In their contribution to the ongoing resource curse debate, Luong and Weinthal (2010: 211) categorically declared that “oil is not a curse”. Their postulation is predicated on the fact that “mineral-rich states are cursed not by their wealth but, rather, by the ownership structure they choose to manage their mineral wealth”. They equally declared that “weak institutions are not inevitable in mineral-rich states” (Luong and Weinthal, 2010: 211). This new dimension to the resource curse debate is a robust justification for the theory proposing that governance curse rather than resource curse is the problem. Clearly this means that resource abundant nations can, when placed under wise leadership, build and sustain strong institutions - particularly fiscal regimes. For instance, the successful developmental trajectories of the five oil-rich Soviet successor states namely Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, the Russian Federation, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan is a robust demonstration that oil is not a curse (Luong and Weinthal, 2010: 211). This postulation no doubt contributes immensely to a growing, but still nascent literature that questions the long-held and widespread presumption that the possession of abundant mineral resources is inevitably a curse for developing countries. Irrespective of the fact that, Ross (2013: 105) claims that the presence of oil monopolises a nation's economy, squeezing out industry and other progressive fields of enterprise, Ross concludes that “oil is not destiny”. This, according to Ross is because some “nations as diverse as Norway, Oman and Malaysia have managed their oil wealth quite well, without all the bad effects”.

Hinged on this, Ross reversed his earlier assumption by declaring that “oil is not particularly deadly to democracy” (Ross, 2013: 105). This position arguably augurs well for the emergent proposition that governance curse is at the root of the catastrophes experienced by resource dependent nations. For Colgan, oil is a double edged sword. Juxtaposing the concept of the resource curse within the realm of international relations (IR), Jeff Colgan (2013: 102) argues that Petro-Aggression shows that oil creates the enabling environment for the eruption of aggression as well as the opposite. However, Colgan observes that whether oil breeds aggression or the opposite entirely depends on the resource economies’ domestic politics, and more importantly on their leaders’ inclination. Again, this delineates governance curse as being very problematical for resource economies. In corroboration, Collier (2008: 45) identifies bad governance amongst others as the militating factor against evading resource curse.

Based on the foregoing and contrary to the school of thought behind the emergence of the different resource conflict terminologies discoursed earlier, Di John (2011: 167) contends that the resource curse theoretical trajectory is a complete utopia and an aberration. Consequent upon this development, other scholars participating in this resource curse debate, both the proponents and the sceptics such as Morrison (2007: 380; Ross, 2001: 340 and Wantchekon, 2002: 66) amongst others claim that “resource wealth inhibits democratization”, but Wiens; Poast and Clark (2014: 1) conclude that such claims are ambiguous. While Morrison (2009: 122; Smith, 2004: 238; Dunning, 2008: 92) contend that resource wealth stabilizes both autocracies and democracies, Ross (2012: 56) argues that resource wealth undermines the prospects for democracy in both autocracies and democracies. The polemicism surrounding this paradigm permits scholars to vacillate as new knowledge unfolds unlike in the environmental degradation thesis that is clearly delineated without polemics. In contrast to all these postulations, Girod (2009: 2) argues that regimes can actually avoid the incidence of resource curse as evidenced in Norway, Canada,

and Botswana through boasting strong institutions when they discovered their resources. Predicated on this understanding, this thesis makes a case for 'governance curse' rather than the misnomer called resource curse. Hinged on this prevailing knowledge, this study interrogates environmental degradation as the core conflict enabler in the Niger Delta, particularly because of the way the MNOCs and the NG relate to the environment in the region.

Predicated on the above premise, Di John (2007: 974) declares that "Given the lack of a credible theory on the mechanisms that would necessarily generate a link between oil abundance and civil war, it is unlikely that the statistical relationship between oil and civil war is likely to be convincing". He emphasised that there are substantial grounds to suggest that significant correlation between oil abundance and civil war is not robust. Specifically, Di John canvasses that there are also grounds to doubt, even in the case that there is a correlation, whether oil causes civil war (Di John, 2007: 974). Clearly rejecting the proposition that oil causes conflict as a result of it being a curse, Smith (2004: 242), utilizing Gleditsch's et al (2002) dataset, concludes that oil wealth is robustly associated with increased regime stability.

This, insists Di John (2007: 974), substantiates the failure of Fearon and Laitin (2003: 87) to find a significant relationship between oil wealth and civil war. Some typical examples of such stability can be found in Qatar and Iraq. They were both stable and durable regimes that did not experience war amidst their oil wealth. Similarly, demonstrating that resource abundance is not always associated with conflict, Smith (2004: 242) found that, neither boom nor bust periods exerted any significant effect on regime stability in states most dependent on exports. This is even while those states saw more protests during the burst period. This again, points to political

processes of durable coalition-building, a facet lacking in the rentier state proposition. Clarifying this, Smith observes that:

Durable regimes in oil rich states are not the outliers that both rentier state and resource curse theorists have assumed them to be. Regimes such as Suharto's in Indonesia, which lasted 32 years, Saddam Hussein's Ba'athist regime in Iraq, which lasted 35 years and long-lived monarchs of the Persian Gulf, appear to be more representative of regime durability than do the favourite cases of Iran, Nigeria, Algeria, and Venezuela - the 'big four'. Moreover, the durability effect has been independent of the consistent access to rents with which regimes can buy legitimacy, since the busts created no trend toward regime crisis or instability in exporting states (Smith, 2004: 242).

This being the case, it practically demonstrates the effectiveness of political governance in determining regime durability. Good economic policies ensure that rebellion is kept in check. The implication of this is that neither oil nor its rents can disrupt a political class that is endowed with good governance. Supporting this, Haussmann (2003 & Di John, 2004 cited in Di John, 2007: 968) observe that oil abundance in the twentieth century in Venezuela did not culminate in declining economic performance or higher levels of political violence compared with the resource-scarce nineteenth century; nor did oil booms coincide only with poor economic performance. Oil abundance has co-existed with periods of rapid growth, stagnation and growth implosions (Di John, 2007: 968).

With this in mind, Di John warns that where leaders are prone to have predatory as opposed to developmental aims, growth, implosions and

political violence prevail (Di John, 2007: 969). By the same token, even a dictator who does not have to tax citizens to generate revenues still can rationally have developmental as opposed to predatory motivations. Predation will occur as a consequence of the failure to adopt much more lucrative and broad-based legitimacy-enhancing developmental aims (Di John, 2007: 970). Additionally, Kahn states that “The institutional argument is that good governance has an economic effect by precisely enhancing investment and its efficiency” (Khan, 2002: 13). From this discourse, it is clear that the resource curse project is really utopic. Rather, the reality is the governance curse as demonstrated here.

Invariably, from this reading, it is therefore not surprising that Evoh (2009: 40) regrets that oil is indeed supposed to bring “wealth and socio-economic development”. But instead, Aghalino (2009 cited in Okolie-Osemene, 2015: 5) observes that the same oil is unfortunately responsible for “environmental deterioration” in the Niger Delta as a result of negligence. This is what is wrongly termed as the resource curse instead of governance curse. Knowing that resources do not on their own accord make wealth, we understand that the political class has the responsibility to use the resources to create wealth. The same political class is expected to judiciously use that wealth to empower the socio-economic development of the nation. Where it fails to do all these, it clearly becomes a case of “governance curse and not resource curse”. Ostensibly, according to Ndujihe, this problematical political situation crystallises into:

The huge oil revenue earnings, not being translated into improved welfare for the people of the oil producing areas, whose environment – land, water, and air have been adversely contaminated, devastated and polluted. How Ogoniland and other polluted communities would be cleaned, is a matter of conjecture (Ndujihe 2012: 10).

In furtherance, Wilson (2014: 76) writes that according to Nasir Imodage:

Nigeria has lost over N8billion on providing security for oil personnel and installations in the Niger Delta region between 2009 and 2012. According

to Wilson, NNPC in the same period spent over \$2.3billion on repairs of broken oil pipelines and wells and providing security for oil installations (Wilson, 2014: 76).

From these revelations, both the MNOCs and NG have wasted a lot of financial resources that should have been used to facilitate the development of social and physical infrastructure in the region. These financial resources were instead channelled into equipping the security agents used in securing oil facilities and personnel against the activities of oil pipeline vandals. The implication is that the wasted resources would be wrongly attributed to resource curse instead of governance curse. This is the foundational matrix on which the concept of oil as a curse is perceived (Pérouse de Montclos 2014: 3). The salient but equally the subterranean truth in Ndujihe's postulation remains the resolute immutability of the huge oil revenues into improved welfare for the OBHCs or the environment without the implicit application of the political active force devoid of predation. This presupposes that there is a missing underlying factor that is responsible for either oil and its revenue catalysing positively or negatively the welfare of the OBHCs.

The missing factor is good governance. The argument is that the mere presence of abundant mineral resources does not affect peoples' welfare either negatively or positively. But what does, is the active force of the political governance. If the political governance is good and effective, it will invariably translate into impacting the welfare of the people positively. But if the political governance is bad and therefore ineffective, it translates into negativity on the parts of the OBHCs and the environment. The conclusion is that oil or its revenue is not to be blamed but their management. This is because the resource curse theory is a theory in economics which simply predisposes nations to concentrate their developmental efforts on the natural resources in which they have comparative advantage at the detriment of other sectors.

The concentration of developmental efforts on a particular sector is performed by the political class and not by the resource or its revenue. The fall out of this simple economic policy, is retardation in other sectors in which the resource rich nations have little or no advantage. From this reading, the so called resource curse is the result of poor economic policy from bad governance. Consequently, deconstructing the fundamental theoretical construct of the resource curse argument and civil-war link predicated on rent-seeking and the rentier state model, Di John (2007: 961) contends that the proponents failed to provide a convincing argument as to why oil economies are more vulnerable to the inception of civil war. Clearly, Di John argues that the so-called 'resource curse' argument relating to the idea that natural resources abundance and particularly rent-seeking and the rentier state causes poor growth and raises the incidence, intensity and duration of conflict is bereft of substance (Di John, 2007: 961).

## 2.7 THE RENTIER STATE AND THE RENT-SEEKING THESE IN CRISIS

By definition, a rentier state is in the opinion of Akinde (2011; Bagaji et al, 2011 cited in Duru, 2014: 18) a state whose primary source of income is not earned from taxation on productive activities from agriculture, industry, and services undertaken by its economically active population. Rather, the income comes from a guaranteed source such as from rents on natural resources. Thus, a resource-rich country's government and elites may due to their resource-dependency adopt a nonchalant, detached and even antagonistic approach towards their citizenry, simply because the citizens are not the source of the government's income. That is to say that, the citizens are not taxed to generate income or revenues for the government. Contrary to this, in non-resource-dependent economies, governments tax their citizens, who invariably expect judicious use of such tax for socio-economic development of their

nation from the ruling class. However, the apathy or the hostile approach of the political class towards their citizenry because they are not taxed in the resource dependent economies, usually crystallise into the citizens being neglected, marginalised and deprived leading to such issues as environmental degradation. The situation in the Niger Delta fits into this scenario. It is the government that is neglecting the OBHCs and not the resources. And because environmental degradation leads to unemployment, hunger, poverty, diseases and death, we decided to focus on why it is being degraded by its major beneficiaries.

Predicated on the foregoing, Di John (2011: 167) attempts a critical analysis of the 'resource curse' thesis: the idea that mineral and fuel abundance generates poor economic performance in less developed countries, and after interrogating the Dutch disease, rentier state, and rent-seeking versions of the resource curse, he declares that "Mineral and fuel abundance does not determine either the political or economic trajectory of less developed countries" (Di John, 2011: 167). Controverting Di John's (2007: 961) earlier postulation that the relationship between rent-seeking, the rentier state and conflict is bereft of substance, Collier and Hoeffler (2003 cited in Di John, 2007: 980) just like Ikelegbe (2005: 220) argue that huge rents from resources usually generate economic incentives for violent rebellion. However, Di John insists that the reasons why violent rent-seeking should be greater in oil economies have not been well developed by the proponents of the oil-civil-war link. Contending that what is particularly problematic for the notion that oil economies are vulnerable to violent rent-seeking, Di John (2007: 980) insists that the looting mechanism is not so relevant in such economies. This, he explains, is owing to the fact that oil rents are "point resources, not diffuse", and thus should be less likely to be 'lootable'. As a result, Di John (2007: 980) contends that there are not convincing theoretical arguments as to why violent rent-seeking is either more likely in economies dominated by oil or in other 'point' resources such as kimberlite

diamonds or copper which rely on capital-intensive production methods and are subject to significant barriers (Di John, 2007: 966).

Dwelling on the capital-intensive nature of resource extraction, Ross (2004: 353) opines that resources are more likely to provoke separatist rebellions if they are extracted through a capital-intensive process. Ross' argument is hinged on the fact that such capital-intensive process offers little or no benefits to the local and unskilled workers while it's more beneficial to the state and large extraction firms. Oil, natural gas, copper and diamonds as mined in Botswana, are examples of capital-intensive mining processes that benefit the state and MNOCs to the detriment of the indigenous population, to which Di John (2007: 980) argues that these did not create problems for Botswana. In other words, if the governance is befitting, the capital intensive nature of the oil extraction should not have created problems in the Niger Delta. Therefore, the fact that there was a problem indicates that management or the quality of governance in place was incompetent.

Furthermore, resources that can be extracted through labour-intensive methods such as alluvial diamonds, timber and agricultural produce, according to Ross (2004: 355), offer greater benefits to the local economy in poor regions. In this way, they are therefore, less likely to induce secession (Ross, 2004: 355). True as it is that capital-intensive produced resources do not benefit the locals directly, but nothing can replace the effects of efficient and effective management of the resources and its wealth by the political class to impact the welfare of the locals. This, ostensibly neutralises whatever conflict inducement influence the capital-intensive resource extraction processes may have. This therefore, boils down to the problem of governance curse as opposed to the resource curse. This is invariably what Di John referred to above in reference to

Botswana not having problems with their capital-intensive extraction processes. Deconstructing the theory that the capital-intensive nature of the oil extraction mechanism makes it prone to conflict generation, Di John (2007: 963) argues that certain characteristics of oil, particularly its capital-intensive production processes and its un-lootability, make armed rebellion particularly difficult to be financed.

Rejecting the empirical argument that oil exporters are particularly vulnerable to political violence, Di John espouses that the link is not robust. Di John (2007: 963) attributes his rejection on the general lack of a plausible 'resource curse' theory explaining how and why oil regimes become vulnerable to insurgency. Through the lens of Di John's contention, it is clear that resource curse cannot be used to explain the Niger Delta conflict, due to the fact that it lacks a plausible theory on one hand. And, on the other hand, its un-lootability and the capital-intensive nature of its production processes make it impossible to finance insurgency. Having established why the resource curse and the greed theories have been rejected as unfit for this study, let's get to the bottom of its advocacy for environmental degradation and the valid arguments for viewing this theoretical trajectory as being responsible for Nigeria's Niger Delta conflict.

## 2.8 ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION AS THE CAUSE OF THE NIGER DELTA CONFLICT

The fundamental basis for environmental degradation activism is hinged on the articulation of Ken Saro-Wiwa, the executed leader of the Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP). Saro-Wiwa observes that "the environment is man's first

right” (Courson, 2009: 9-10). The validity of this argument is very robust because without environment, everything else is baseless. The fact remains that if there is no environment, there would be no natural resources. And if there are no natural resources, the incidence of resource curse and the greed theses would not occur. Therefore, environment is the basis of human existence. This shows the importance of the environment to the OBHCs who depend entirely on the environment for their survival. This is why Saro-Wiwa argues that “The absence of a safe environment makes it impossible for man to fight for other rights: be they economic, social or political” (Courson, 2009: 9-10). This clearly indicates that safe environment is the most important factor to man and especially in the region where their livelihood is dependent on the environment. Espousing further the importance of the environment above everything else, Saro-Wiwa, during his trial at the military tribunal, pleaded thus:

My lord, we all stand before history. I am a man of peace, of ideas. Appalled by the denigrating poverty of my people who live on a richly endowed land, distressed by their political marginalization and economic strangulation, angered by the devastation of their land, their ultimate heritage, anxious to preserve their right to life and to a decent living... (Ejibunu, 2007: 12).

The above postulation did not show Saro-Wiwa as a man motivated by greed. The bulk of the prevailing evidence in this discourse is centred on poverty arising from environmental degradation. A good example of this comes from Barrister Mudiaga-Odje of the Niger Delta Democratic Union. He implored the late President Musa Yar’ Adua to “offer the people of the region reassurance, hope, employment and empowerment programmes which will alleviate their poverty status and better their lives (Ejibunu, 2007: 12). According to Ejibunu, Barrister Mudiaga-Odje insists that the reason for the agitation in the region is “deprivation and poverty amidst its plenty oil and gas resources”. To cap it all, the World Bank basing its argument on research

findings, maintains that “the root causes of conflicts are the failure of economic development as a poverty trajectory that contributes greatly in deepening the conflict” (Ejibunu, 2007: 12). This exposé explains that conflict and poverty are both interwoven and intermingled to the extent that it is difficult to extricate one from the other. And poverty is a known by-product of environmental degradation.

Paradoxically, depicting their poverty amidst plenty, Ejibunu (2007: 12) writes that Ken Saro-Wiwa argues that the Niger Delta region fetches for the NG daily revenue from oil estimated to about \$100 million”. Corroborating this assertion, Agbonifo (2009: 73) writes that Ken Saro-Wiwa argues thus:

If you take away all the resources of the people, you take away their land, you pollute their air, you pollute their streams, you make it impossible for them to farm or to fish, which is their main source of livelihood, and then what comes out of their soil you take entirely away ...if more people in Ogoni are dying than are being born, if Ogoni boys and girls are not going to school...if those who manage to scale through cannot find jobs...then surely you are leading the tribe to extinction.

Saro-Wiwa clearly argues that the destruction of their environment is tantamount to extinction. This is evidenced in World Bank’s expressed view that “the world’s poorest countries are locked in a tragic vicious circle where poverty causes conflict and conflict causes poverty” (Ejibunu, 2007: 10). Analytically, environmental degradation produces poverty, hunger, unemployment and deaths which in turn lead to conflict. That is the tragic vicious circle the World Bank is discussing.

Drawing from these readings, Ejobowah (2000: 30) clearly delineates environmental degradation as the major cause of political and social rebellion in the Niger Delta region. Primarily, the ecology of the region is covered by a fragile mangrove forest, which is one of the largest in the world, boosting a diverse plant and animal species,

including exotic and unique flowers and birds (Ibeanu, 2000: 25). This predisposed the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change to warn that the introduction of oil exploration and drilling in such a fragile environment would have devastating effects (Ibeanu, 2000: 27). Manifestly, the region is presently described as one of the five most petroleum-polluted environments in the world (Obi, 2010: 228), due to over five decades of environmental wreckage caused by resource exploitation and exploration. Its culmination in abject socio-political and economic neglect have left most of the Niger Delta region and its environment barren, dilapidated, deprived and above all impoverished from extreme pollution resulting from intensive oil exploration (Ejobowah (2000: 32). Seriously speaking, Ikelegbe, (2005: 208) adds that decades of oil exploitation, environmental degradation and state neglect has reduced the OBHCs to destitute. This, he argues produced a resistance of which the youth has been a vanguard.

Environmental degradation is a materialization of gas flaring, oil and water pollution, massive bush clearing and burnings and the emission of carbon monoxide from different oil exploration activities. Nigeria, for instance, annually flares about 24 billion cubic metres of gas from about 70% of the oil fields in the Niger Delta which flare their gas on a daily basis. Van Wyk and Mwiturubanu (2010: 18) claim that this produces huge amounts of carbon dioxide to the detriment of the environment. Constant flares affect wildlife and human beings negatively. The extremely high temperatures that gas flares produce make living in many communities nearly impossible (Ibeanu, 2000: 26). Indeed, oil spillage constitutes a very huge problem to the region's survival. One of such problematical situations is the alteration of habitats, biodiversity loss and deforestation (Van Wyk and Mwiturubanu, 2010: 18) as well as shortages in land and water supply. Because farming is the main activity of the OBHCs, Halleson argues that well over 60% of the population is dependent on the natural environment for its livelihood. Therefore, oil-generated environmental pollution, which affects farming and fishing, makes it extremely difficult for the

inhabitants to earn a living (Halleson, 2009: 60). All these deprivations result in different illnesses, hunger, poverty, unemployment and deaths to the OBHCs.

To this end, the American Central Intelligence Agency (CIA, 2000) report sees the Niger Delta crisis as a result of “environmental stresses” (CIA 2000 cited in Watts, Okonta & Kemedi, 2004: 2). These environmental stresses contends the report, is orchestrated by the activities of some stakeholders such as the MNOCs and the NG. Confirming this, Watts, Okonta & Kemedi (2004: 2) argue that the Niger Delta conflict is chiefly motivated by environmental problems triggered by the terrifying costs of resource extraction. In other words, the conflict is as a result of grievances from the effects of the environmental degradation. Critically analysing the polemicism surrounding the motivation for the Niger Delta conflict, Aminu (2013: 813) writes that different scholarly efforts made to pinpoint the causes of the restiveness and militancy in the Niger Delta by Afinotan & Ojakorotu, 2009; Amaraegbu, 2011; Badmus, 2010; Civil Liberties Organization (CLO), 2002; Douglas, Okonta, Kemedi, & Watts, 2004; Ejibunu, 2007; Ikelegbe, 2001, 2005 & 2010) have yielded results in favour of grievance. Moreover, the International Crisis Group (ICG, 2009), Amnesty International (2009; 2013), and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP, 2011) all studied the Niger Delta conflict and discarded the thesis of greed and opportunity in favour of environmental degradation as a factor of grievances based on facts. For example, the UNEP (2011: 6) found that there are, “in a significant number of locations, serious threats to human health from contaminated drinking water to concerns over the viability and productivity of ecosystems”.

On this basis, the UNEP (2011: 9) concludes that “pollution of soil by petroleum hydrocarbons in Ogoniland is extensive in land areas, sediments and swampland”. Consequently, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 2006: 306) argues that “more than 60 per cent of the population of the Niger Delta depend on this same natural environment that has been massively damaged for their

livelihoods”. In the same vein, the Amnesty International (2009: 14) observes that a team of Nigerian and international environmental experts who studied the Niger Delta problem in 2006, found the region to be “one of the world’s most severely petroleum impacted ecosystems”. It noted that “the damage from oil operations is chronic and cumulative, and has acted collaboratively with other sources of environmental stress to result in severely impaired ecosystem and impoverished residents”.

However, it is interesting to note that in Aminu’s opinion, the NG is largely blamed for motivating this conflict. For example, Aminu notes that several years of oil exploration and production in Bayelsa State (Niger Delta) by the Shell Petroleum Development Company (SPDC) and other MNOCs have devastated the oil communities in the region and led to environmental pollution and despoliation. The government, Aminu argues abdicated its constitutional responsibility to look after the welfare of the people of the region by failing to stop the holocaust perpetrated by the MNOCs under the guise of doing business (Aminu, 2013: 814). In summary, what Aminu and all the other scholars are arguing is that the conflict is motivated by grievances as a result of environmental degradation due to NG’s apathy. This NG’s apathy or bad governance culminated in poverty, unemployment, hunger, underdevelopment and deaths.

Reacting to these problems, Ken Saro-wiwa clearly expressed the OBHCs’ grievances when he pointed out that:

There is tremendous awareness in Ogoni now. There is no woman or child who does not know that the Nigerian government is cheating them and that the ethnic majorities in Nigeria are cheating them. They also know that something has to be done to stop it (Ibaba, 2005: 83).

Certainly, this does not betray any sign of greed. The above situation is completely in rejection of the greed thesis as applied by its advocates. The greed protagonists argue that the militant arm of the OBHCs is motivated by greed. But from Saro-Wiwa's postulation above as captured by Ibaba (2005: 83), the NG and the MNOCs are the ones guilty of greed because they are cheating the OBHCs. This forms the basis of the fundamental reason for this thesis' adoption of environmental degradation as the choice factor for interrogation. This is because, grievances arising from environmental degradation which culminated into poverty, unemployment, hunger and deaths triggered the insurgency. What motivated the conflict were grievances from environmental degradation which exacerbated unemployment, poverty, hunger and deaths as demonstrated. For instance, Enyia (1991: 183 cited in Gandu, 2011: 15) points to the fact that farming, which used to be the mainstay of Oloibiri – the town where the first successful oil well was drilled in Nigeria, is now “a shadow of its former self”. This is because “the community's economy has been devastated, because farmlands have been destroyed, fishing activities grounded and aquatic life virtually shattered by many years of oil prospection and exploration”.

The consequences of the Oloibiri experiences are that the OBHCs are forced to give up their traditional occupation due to the destruction of land, rivers and fishes that are sources of subsistence in the rural Niger Delta (Gandu, 2011: 15). Opukri and Ibaba (2008: 188) state that the effect of oil exploration in Oloibiri from 1956 is still rendering the present generation of that community economically redundant. This goes to support the Amnesty International report (2009: 28) stating that the effect of oil pollution stays for ages within the soil cavity. To cap it all, Ibeanu (2002: 164) and UNDP (2006: 2) assert that Nigeria's budgetary and developmental programs have been predicated wholly on the gas and oil industry from the Niger Delta environment. Apart from Nigeria being the most oil-dependent economy the world over, Alabi

(2010: 58), argues that it is undeserving that the inhabitants of the Niger Delta remain among the most deprived oil communities in the world.

Categorically, Kaldor (2006: 68) emphasises that “the old wars are grounded on grievances”. The Niger Delta crisis happens to have begun in the 1960s with Isaac Adaka Boro’s declaration of the Republic of the Niger Delta due to grievances. Similarly, the core of the OBHCs’ grievances is focused on the environment as the sole source of their survival. In conformity with this popular opinion, in 2005, Ikelegbe interrogated the greed paradigm, and concluded that greed is not the cause of the conflict, but a consequence of it (Ikelegbe, 2005: 212). To this end, Ellis (2004: 34) argues that to assume that “greed underpins conflicts is, ‘dangerously simplistic’.

MOSOP complements this with its narrative on the effects of gas flaring on the people of Ogoni. Their grievances read:

The once beautiful Ogoni country side is no more a source of fresh air and green vegetation. All one sees and feels around is death (Ejibunu, 2007: 14).

Throwing his weight behind this MOSOP stance, Ken Saro-Wiwa once more asserts:

I looked at Ogoni (Niger Delta) and found that the entire place was now a wasteland; and that we are victims of an ecological war, an ecological war that is very serious and unconventional. It is unconventional because no bones are broken, no one is maimed. People are not alarmed because they can’t see what is happening. But human beings are at risk, plants and animals are at risk. The air and water are poisoned. Finally, the land itself dies. Oil has brought nothing but disaster to our people of Niger Delta (Oluduro & Oluduro, 2012: 49).

In corroboration, Kadafa (2012: 38) asserts that the Niger Delta environment has been turned into wastelands. This, Kadafa explains, is because “an estimated nine to thirteen (9 -13) million (roughly about 1.5 million tons) of oil has been spilled into the Niger Delta ecosystem over the past 50 years”. This prevailing circumstances within

the OBHCs is of great concern to the International Crisis Group (ICG, 2006: 19–22), which claims that the worst scenario in the conflict situation is the issue of massive suffering by the OBHCs in the midst of plenty. This unfortunate development heightened the degree of destitution within the region and markedly exacerbated violence between the OBHCs and the Nigerian State (Watts: 2008: 50–74; ICG, 2006: 2–7; Douglas et al, 2003: 2–6 and Ukeje: 2001: 339–358). Obi (2006: 95–97) and Watts (2007, 2008: 74) argue that perceived neglect of the region by the Nigerian state on one hand and sustained environmental degradation as a result of the oil extractive activities continue to generate more militant protests and threat of outright rebellion against the state. Adaliku (2007:15–16) submits that collusion by oil TNCs “with repressive military dictatorships in exploiting Nigeria’s oil wealth for the benefit of corrupt elite... failed to protect the environment (Gandu, 2011: 14).

## 2.9 CONCLUSION

This chapter has with the readings of Di John, Ezirim and Ugochukwu et al, introduced the political paradigm of mismanagement as a possible solution to this problematical phenomenon termed resource curse. They all blamed mismanagement of the resource abundance and not the resource itself as the real cause of political conflicts in the oil economies. This can be seen with Shaxson (2007: 1123) coming completely clean against the resource curse thesis with the claim that “Dependent and mismanaged mineral enclaves do not only have problems in terms of economic growth, but also in terms of risks of violent conflict, greater inequality, less democracy and more corruption”. It is these very factors that all combine to make oil enclaves prone to greater conflict risk (Collier and Hoeffler: 2005: 570).

This chapter demonstrates that during the boom, the government could promote industry by channelling resources toward other sectors through protection, subsidies,

financial incentives and investments in infrastructure to avert the incidence of resource curse. This helps to modernise the manufacturing capital stock which in turn enhances productivity. To this, Neary & van Wijnbergen cited in Di John (2011: 170) note: "In so far as one general conclusion can be drawn from our empirical studies, it is that a country's economic performance following a resource boom depends to a considerable extent on the policies followed by its government". Evidence from Venezuela, for instance, suggests that policy responses (such as industrial policy and exchange-rate management) determine how oil booms affect the growth prospects of the economy.

Di John advocates that attention should shift towards understanding how government policies affect the processes of growth and diversification of mineral-dominant economies (Di John, 2007: 980). Karl highlighted the importance of this, when he argues that Norway and Australia already possessed 'strong' bureaucracies before their oil windfalls arrived and thus had countervailing industrial and agricultural interests groups to ensure that oil rents were well managed (Karl, 1997: 40-43). This points to the fact that resource curse is a complete misnomer, because if the political class had done what they should with good policies as was done in Norway and Australia, the problematical "governance curse" may not have occurred in the Niger Delta.

While these aided the rejection of resource curse as applicable to the Niger Delta conflict, Ikelegbe notes that "The Niger Delta struggle for environmental, social and political equity and justice has taken place in five phases" (Ikelegbe, 2006: 104-106). Interestingly, out of these five phases, Ikelegbe did not accommodate the greed theory. This is a robust indication and justification for this study's rejection of this thesis as a factor motivating this particular conflict. Actually, Ikelegbe observes that "The region's population is still largely impoverished, hungry and unemployed. This has been compounded by the fact that oil exploitation has

brought environmental pollution, ecological disaster and socio-economic deprivation. It has wasted scarce land and fishing waters as well as dislocating primary occupations, culture and communal governance” (Ezomon, 1999 cited in Ikelegbe, 2006: 106-107). In all this, not even once was the greed theory mentioned in connection with this conflict.

This is why this study focuses on environmental degradation as the major cause of the conflict. For instance, Saro-Wiwa claims that safe environment is the essence of existence (Courson, 2009: 9-10). This stance is robustly supported by NNPC 1983 report that found the NG and the MNOCs culpable in pollution of the environment (Omotoso 2013: 8 & Courson 2009: 9). UNEP (2011: 25) confirmed these assertions with its discoveries of massive pollution in Ogoniland.

## CHAPTER 3

### PART A

## THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND TO THE NIGER DELTA CONFLICT

### 3.0 OVERVIEW

In Chapter 2, the relevant literature was reviewed to establish the theoretical framework for the study and to identify any possible gap in the literature that would be filled by this thesis as its contribution. In this chapter 3, the historiography linking colonialism with the Niger Delta conflict and the stakeholders' background are discussed. To lay a solid foundation for this study, this chapter is divided into two parts namely Part A and Part B. While part A discusses the historiography, the B part discusses the stakeholders' background. The discussion commences with the sign posting.

### 3.1 SIGN POSTING

Historiography or historical research is an examination of elements from history (Berg, 2001: 210). It is involved with the study of the relationship between events, persons, time and places with the intention to gain an understanding and explanation of past events (Durojaye, 2012: 5-6). Historiography, then, becomes the method for discovering, from records and accounts, what happened during some past period (Berg, 2001: 210). Historical research attempts to systematically recapture the complex nuances, the people, meanings, events, and even ideas of the past that have influenced and shaped the present. It is the study of the relationships among issues that have influenced the past, continue to influence the present, and will certainly affect the future. This provides access to a broader understanding of human

behaviour and thoughts than would be possible if we were trapped in the static isolation of our own time (Berg, 2001: 211). This informs my decision in this study to evaluate the relationships between colonialism and the contemporary plight of the Niger Delta.

Ordinarily, “in most human tragedies”, Palmer (1968: 18) argues that “...there is emotion, power, suffering, grievances and reality as well as some degree of reason for every human tragedy”. Therefore, in the events of the various human tragedies leading from colonialism to the declaration of Biafra and Nigeria’s Niger Delta conflict, there existed all the elements of the classic Greek tragedy. These elements, insists Palmer, include the “combination of mistakes, misunderstandings, and wrongs”. Scholars such as Diamond (2007: 352; Klieman, 2012: 156; Adeleye, 2013: 2) argue that the colonial integration of the two distinct Southern and Northern protectorates into a nation called Nigeria in 1914 was a good example of the Greek experience. Although, the contemporary democratic institutions are predicated on ethnic pluralism, the concerned ethnicities function maximally when they share some degree of affinity. Where this is not the case, there is manifest the likes of the unfortunate historical incident in Rwanda, where the Tutsis and Hutus were involved in an unprecedented genocide. The lack of affinity between the two Southern and Northern protectorates has been blamed for the constant crises in the country. The result was the thirty months civil war between Biafra and Nigeria. A good example is the situation in the Northern Ireland where people belonging to the same Christendom as Protestants and Roman Catholics could not see eye to eye due to religious chauvinism. Some other precedents that have tried amalgamation, but failed include Sudan now broken into two nations after decades of internecine wars. India and Pakistan, the North and South Koreas, the established nation states of the Scandinavia, the Baltic nation states of the Soviet Union and the recent Scottish nation’s attempt to pull away from Britain with its massive tax revenues from huge oil and gas reserves are amongst other examples.

Lord Lugard who was the architect of the protectorates' integration was quoted as saying that the two protectorates are like oil and water that will never mix (Enyiagu, n.d: 10). Why he went ahead to consummate the marriage of these two strange bed fellows after his succinct observation deserves careful interrogation for proper comprehension. This is the root of the colonial foundation of the crisis-prone Nigeria and in particular, the Niger Delta. According to Imbornoni (2013: 2) solution to the Northern Ireland crisis has remained problematic because of the dearth of affinity between Protestantism and Catholicism. The absence of this affinity engenders a pejorative relationship which according to Bulhan (1985: 209 cited in Soeters, 2005: 49) encourages dehumanization. Dehumanization of human beings comes in motley of ways, all of which breed deprivation and antagonism. In Nigeria, the dehumanization of a section of the society triggered the military coup of January 1966, the counter coup of July 1966, the secession of Niger Delta, the secession of Eastern Region (Biafra) and the capture of the oil industry and the Niger Delta vis-à-vis the decree wars. The next section showcases how the colonial legacies influenced the crisis in the Niger Delta.

## 3.2 COLONIALISM: ITS LEGACY FOR THE NIGER DELTA

Faced with the hard realities of the 1873 Great Depression, British capitalism embarked on a drive for alternative solution to the hardship. Studies indicate that the solution was found in the cheap and abundant supplies of raw materials and minerals from the third world nations. Invariably this led to the colonisation of these nations. However, colonisation impacted greatly the lives and culture of the colonised, but it also had some shortfalls. For instance, Palmer (1968: 20) argues that "the colonies' best farmlands were planted with export crops through forced labour, instead of subsistence crops needed by the colonies. Even the

infrastructures that were built, Palmer observes served mainly the strategic interests of imperialism and not the local populations”. This legacy of forceful appropriation of the resources of the colonies without restitution from colonialism, was what influenced the “policy of spoils of war” adopted by the Nigerian government after the civil war. This is evident in the Biafran enclave of the Niger Delta, its resources, and its environment. Its resources have been appropriated for the development of the victorious side in the war, while its environment is steadily being wasted. This concept was what gave birth to the amalgamation of the Northern and Southern protectorates to make it economically viable for colonialism to administer (Azike, 2013: 4; Adeleye, 2013: 1; Stafford, 1984: 49).

Despite all the benefits accruable from the concept of colonialism, scholars have accused it of institutionalising structural inequality fraught with security threats and vulnerabilities in the colonies. Essentially, the accusations centre on the colonialists’ overwhelming concern about their strategic interests to the detriment of the colonies. For instance, Klieman (2012: 157) argues that “the roots of Nigerian-Biafran civil war can be traced to British colonial rule. It forced three very distinct peoples, predominantly Muslim Hausa-Fulani in the North, the Yoruba in the Southwest, and the Igbo in the Southeast — to integrate into a state that encouraged regional and ethnic competition”. Building on Klieman’s assertion, it can be adduced that undemocratic practices that guaranteed the protection of the colonialists’ strategic interests were promoted above the well-being of the colonies themselves.

The existence in Europe and other Western worlds of such epithets as “Auslander Raus” (Foreigners Go) and many others are indicative that xenophobia is a factor to be considered before integrating distinct groups together. On the contrary, there was no evidence that this was considered by the colonialists, at least not with the postulation of Lugard (Enyiagu, n.d: 10) that the two Protectorates can never blend or work harmoniously together. This view accredited to Lugard, who was the man

behind the amalgamation project, continues to baffle scholars. This is because, despite the obvious security implications of this observation, Lord Lugard forged ahead to consummate the integration. In other words, the expectation was not for the amalgamated people to co-exist in peace. Indeed as expected, with that degree of xenophobia in the air, the groups invariably lacked the mutual trust which is a pivotal element in harmonious communal living.

In a forced integration like that of 1914, there is bound to be friction almost on a daily basis. This heightens the suspicion that the ulterior political motive for the amalgamation was not in the interest of the population. It is on this basis, that the amalgamation has been severely criticised as the bane of Nigeria by both Northern and Southern Nigeria. For instance, Alade (2013: 3) writes that Chief Obafemi Awolowo, a war-time Federal Minister in Nigeria, described “Nigeria as a mere geographical expression to which life was given by the diabolical amalgamation of 1914. This will remain the most painful injury that a British Government inflicted on Southern Nigeria”, while a notable Southern Professor saw it as the “South's nightmare preordained by British colonial machinations” (Ekeh, 1997: 5). Both Chief Awolowo and the Professor are of the Southern Nigeria extraction and therefore, it may not be difficult to understand why they are averse to the idea of amalgamation. The reason may be because their region is considered to be the economic lifeblood of the nation. However, to have people of the Northern extraction, equally condemn the amalgamation which every analysis considers to be in their favour, remains intriguing.

Indeed, the North surprised all analysts with the emergence of a systematic public resentment against amalgamation. The campaign against the idea of amalgamating the North with the South originated from the ranks of the Northern journalists with fiery editorials in the Northern leading Newspaper of the time, *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo*. Adeleye (2013: 2) observes that the editor of *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo* argued that; “We, on reflection, consider that a mistake was made in 1914 when the North and South

were joined together”. Corroborating this postulation was Sir Ahmadu Bello, the Sardauna of Sokoto and former Premier of Northern Region, who reportedly asserted that “The mistake of 1914 has come to light and I should like to go no further” (Adeleye, 2013: 2). Alhaji Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, the Prime Minister of Nigeria referred to Southerners who came to the North after the amalgamation as ‘intruders’; “We don’t want them and they are not welcome here in the North. The people are different in every way, including religion, custom, language and aspirations... we in the North take it that Nigerian unity is only a British intention for the country they created. It is not for us” (Mangovo Ngoyo & Enyiagu, [www.africafederation.net](http://www.africafederation.net)).

The political weight of this assertion by the Prime Minister is overwhelming. The Prime Minister called the citizens of his country “intruders” for no other crime than being present in other parts of the same country. He did not stop there, but went on to add that they are not wanted in their own country. Unmistakably, this sounds more like inciting the public against the South. Additionally, Sir Ahmadu Bello, the Sardauna of Sokoto and former Premier of Northern Region declared that he did not want to be associated with the project. For men in such exalted political positions to publicly make such declarations portended considerable political as well as security implications for the country. For instance, a situation where citizens from the Southern part of the same country are described as “Intruders and unwanted” in other parts of the same country indicates that the “intruders” are not trusted. Such a situation invariably makes the “not trusted” to equally not trust the “name callers”. This type of environment that lacks trust in both directions, breeds total lack of honesty, openness and quality representative involvement in shaping the future of the nation. In Nigeria, the degree of hatred between the two distinct divides was publicly advertised through the media by people in responsible positions of authority, thereby exposing a dangerous conflict trend that could be ignited at any time. This is the kind of xenophobia that the 1914 integration created by ignoring tribal locations and differences as Alhaji Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa observed.

This has continually militated against the wellbeing of Nigeria because “Nigeria was created as an economic unit” serving the economic interests of colonialism (Stafford,

1984: 49). Relatedly, Adeleye (2013: 1) argues that the comparatively richer Southern Protectorate with ₦1.5 million from annual import taxes could easily offer aid to its Northern neighbour with only ₦.03 million from import taxes, to balance its budget. This has fuelled the presumption that the amalgamation of 1914 was purely an economic proposition to protect the strategic interests of colonialism because from the analysis above, the North was not interested in the Southern wealth or the unity of the country. All they wanted was “out”, but they were forced by the colonialists against their wish to remain. Attesting to the real reason underlying the amalgamation, George Thomas, British Commonwealth Minister, wrote in 1967 that “our only direct interest in the maintenance of the unity of the federation of Nigeria is that Nigeria has been developed as an economic unit and any disruption of this would have adverse effects on trade and development” (Ejiofor, 2012: 165). Buttressing this fact further, Ugoh and Ukpere (2012: 6771; Ejibunu, 2007: 5) argue that the reason for the amalgamation was purely economic. The Southern Protectorate was more viable due to its resources, and in order to bridge the gap, the two protectorates were merged together. Similarly, Colonel Nyiam observes that “Lugard engineered the amalgamation to enable him use the resources of the Southern protectorate to subsidise the Northern protectorate thereby saving the Crown office from extra expenses” (Azike, 2013: 4).

Nonetheless, more and more evidence is emerging in support of the fact that strategic interests were of utmost importance to the colonialists during their time in Nigeria, more than the peaceful co-existence of the people they forced into living together. In this wise, Ayoola (2009: 102) writes “Even in Northern Nigeria, where there was little to exploit, the colonial regime’s exploitation unleashed repression that manifested itself in a determined drive to gain profits”. Amalgamation may have worked in Tanzania, Ghana or elsewhere, but the fact still remains that the attempt to amalgamate the white, black and the coloured people in South Africa for instance, resulted in the Apartheid system of government. To change that system took twenty seven years of Nelson Mandela’s life which he spent in prison without counting the thousands upon thousands of deaths the system caused. Drawing from this experience, Nigerians from the two blocs (North and South) have without ambiguity

demonstrated that amalgamation was wrong for them. That is the foundation of the contemporary political, economic and social issues troubling the nation.

Arguably, besides Lugard's admission, further evidence from other colonialists such as Sir Hugh Clifford, the colonial Governor-General of Nigeria from 1920-1931 confirmed that motives other than the unity of Nigeria was uppermost in the minds of the amalgamation architects and engineers (Abubakar, 1992: 56). Sir Hugh Clifford simply reinforced Lugard's testimony that the protectorates cannot blend as people of the same community because they are full-fledged sovereign states in their own rights. Obviously, Lugard's admission coupled with Sir Clifford's corroboration, go a long way to show that something is definitely wrong with the amalgamation phenomenon.

Viewing the 1914 amalgamation as a sad 'miscalculation', Major Atofarati Abubakar (1992:175) writes that the fact that Lugard continued with amalgamation after his careful conclusion, indicates that the amalgamation was for the administrative convenience of the colonial masters. It was for the exploitation of the country's resources for the benefit of the colonial economic strategic interests. Besides that, the divide-and-rule policy of the British manipulated the differences between the tribes and ensured that unity would not exist, thereby making the easy governance of such a large country practicable (Adichie, 2006: 166–67). This practice accentuated division, hatred, unhealthy rivalry, and pronounced disparity in development between and amongst the sides. Besides all these, how is colonialism connected with the Niger Delta crisis? The next section will analyse this for progressive enrichment of stable international relations.

### 3.3 HISTORICAL EVIDENCE LINKING COLONIALISM TO THE NIGER DELTA CONFLICT

#### 3.3.1 SPOILS OF WAR

Besides instituting the legacy of “Spoils of War”, meaning the forceful appropriation of all the resources of the colonies, and its subsequent transfer to the imperialists’ home countries, to the abject detriment of the colonized nations, other historical evidences abound. Scholars have argued that colonialism used the resources of the colonized nations for the development of their home countries, to the detriment of the colonized (Tomlinson, 2003: 416-7). For instance, Ayoola (2009: 102) highlighted that the pursuit of materialism has clouded the colonial sense of structural balance in the colonies. Others authors including Alumona (2011: 73; Azike, 2013: 4; Adeleye, 2013: 1; Ejiolor, 2012: 165; and Palmer, 1968: 17) are all agreed that colonialism was much more interested in its strategic interests than on the delivery of quality political goods to the colonies. Admittedly, the strategic interests of colonialism were hinged on sourcing materials for the economic strengthening and general development of their home countries and governments. Thus, scholars have argued that the colonies served the purpose of economic reinforcement for the colonial powers. They siphoned the economies of the periphery via human and mineral resources capture to accumulate wealth in the core states. This meant taking what belonged to the colonies to refurbish their own economies without restitution. This is the legacy of the “Spoils of War” being practised in the Niger Delta, and it forces the development of deprivation and marginalisation.

Soon after the Nigeria-Biafra civil war, the military government of Nigeria that prosecuted the war against Biafra, assimilated this policy and implemented it. The implementation meant that the resources in the Niger Delta which was an integral

part of the secessionist Republic of Biafra were seen as spoils of the civil war. Just like colonialism, the government devoured the resources of the small Biafran enclave of Niger Delta and used it to transform the victorious side in the war. As Irobi (2010: 46) argues, the government used the proceeds from oil to develop some parts of the country but neglected the southern region defeated in the Nigeria-Biafra civil war. The spoils of war policy galvanised frustrations caused by the MNOCs' payment of oil profits taxes and royalties to the government of Biafra instead of Nigeria, to promulgate the Petroleum Decree of 1969. That aided the total aggressive takeover of the oil resources and the industry while the war was still in progress. To complete the spoils of war circle and the final humiliation of Biafra, the military government enacted the Land Use Decree of 1978. These two decrees and the subsequent ones, vested the total ownership of lands, resources found in them and from offshore facilities, in the government. These scenarios crystallize the evolution of the government's unconcerned attitude over the unprecedented degradation of the environment and the deprivation of the people. All these are the spill-over effects of the legacy of colonialism propelling the deprivation and the marginalisation of the colonies. Further evidence linking colonialism to the contemporary impasse in Niger Delta includes the Colonial Mineral Ordinance of 1914. This later became the 1946 Oil Mineral Ordinance discussed next.

### **3.3.2 THE 1946 OIL MINERAL ORDINANCE**

Ordinance is a decree that guides the modalities of mineral production in Nigeria. So, right from 1914 when the colonial administration began the amalgamation of Nigeria, they had the information that the country being created was rich with natural endowment. To confirm this, the 1914 Mineral Ordinance was made immediately after the country was created. This is a confirmation that the interest of the colonial administration was more in economic activities than in the well-being of the colonies. This is because, thirty-two years later, in 1946 when the picture became clearer about what nature has in stock for the Eastern region of Nigeria in the Niger Delta, the Oil Mineral Ordinance was made. To explain this, Etikerentse (1985 cited in Udeke, 1995: 6) posits that armed with the privileged information about the

possibility of oil exploration in Nigeria, the British colonial administrators introduced the 1946 Oil Mineral Ordinance which stated that:

The entire property and control of all mineral oils, on, under or upon any lands in Nigeria, and of all rivers, streams and water courses throughout Nigeria, is and shall be vested in the British Crown.

Then, ten years later in 1956 when oil was finally discovered in Oloibiri, Bayelsa State, the 1946 Oil Mineral Ordinance just like its predecessor, the 1914 Ordinance completely transformed Nigerian petroleum resources into British ownership. It had to be produced by British petroleum companies, in the interest of British industry (Udeke, 1995: 6). Furthermore, Aiyedogbon, Anuya and Ohwofasa (2012: 452) posit that both the Petroleum Decree of 1969 and the Land Use Decree of 1978 were just the exact replicas of the 1946 Oil Mineral Ordinance. The only marked difference between them is that while the Oil Mineral Ordinance vested the ownership of land and all the resources found in them on the British Colonial Crown, the Petroleum and the Land Use Decrees vested the ownership of the same land and all the resources found in them on the government of Nigeria (Aiyedogbon et al, 2012: 452; Ekanade, 2011: 79).

Drawing from this, it becomes clear how colonialism laid the foundation of all the contemporary problems in the Niger Delta by converting not only the resources of the oil-rich enclave of Niger Delta but also appropriating its lands to the British Crown. The post-independence Nigerian leaders, as expected by their colonial mentors, swallowed this legacy hook, line and sinker. For instance, the contents of the Decrees 1969 and 1978 show them to be exact replicas of the colonial Oil Mineral Ordinance of 1946. This infuriated the ethnic nationalities that completely depended on nature, especially land and water, as farmers, fishermen and women for their daily livelihoods and existence. This marginalisation and deprivation forged the frustration that degenerated into aggression and violent conflict in the Niger Delta

region of Nigeria. These decrees of 1969 and 1978 just like the Colonial British Oil Mineral Ordinance has denied the minorities of the Niger Delta their rights to their land and resources derived from them.

This practice contrasts with what obtains in federalist Canada and Australia. In Canada, in spite of the discovery of oil in Alberta Province, the federal government did not centralize the control of the resource (oil). In Australia as well, federating units have rights over oil and gas resources within their borders while the federal government can only levy taxes on these natural resources. In America, oil was discovered in Alaska in 1976 while in Bayelsa, oil was discovered in Oloibiri twenty years previously in 1956. The oil in Alaska remained the State of Alaska's property while in Bayelsa it moved from the colonial British Crown to the government of Nigeria. Alaska has a population of 600,000 and every year each citizen of Alaska State is paid \$1000 in Citizens' Dividends Cheques from oil rent trust fund just like it is done in Norway. Bayelsa has a population of 2,000,000 and each year the citizens of Bayelsa are rewarded with high rates of unemployment, poverty, underdevelopment, strange illnesses and deaths caused by pollution and contamination of their environment. Citizens' oil benefits in Norway include 8 week's vacation yearly, 3 years maternity leave for working class mothers and buoyant single mother's benefit (Hartzok, 2004: 2) while in Nigeria any demand is met with repression through the use of the security agencies.

As Klieman (2012: 157) argues, the confirmation that the Biafran war or the war against the Eastern region's oil was conceptualised in the era of colonialism, is that the colonial oil ordinance was promulgated in 1946, after the Second World War. This colonial ordinance which converted the land and minerals found in Niger Delta into the exclusive property of the British Crown (Ekanade, 2011: 80) was the forerunner of the 1969 Petroleum Decree and the 1978 Land Use Decree. The Kaiama Declaration's effort to repudiate and invalidate these decrees escalated into

violent conflict. Significantly, this shows that the contemporary problems confronting the Niger Delta are rooted in colonialism. This was why the agents of colonialism ensured that the Eastern region (Biafra) was marginalised and deprived as was begun with this ordinance and the Raisman-Tress commission of 1958. This can be seen in the manner by which the Petroleum decree of 1969 blatantly captured the entire resources in the environment of Niger Delta just as the colonialists had captured them and transferred them to the British Crown. Furthermore, the Petroleum Decree was followed by the Land Use Decree of 1978. What the Petroleum Decree failed to do, the Land Use Decree completed for them.

A close look at the wordings of the Ordinance will reveal that it said the “entire property” and the control of “all minerals and mineral oil” wherever they are found are vested in the British Crown. This does not leave anybody in doubt about what was meant. Therefore, the independence declaration by Biafra was seen as a challenge to the inheritance of the British Crown and therefore, had to be stopped at all costs. To understand the connection that colonialism has with the Niger Delta conflict, Omoruyi (2001: 8) argues that this colonial ordinance had set the standard for the economic injustice against the Niger Delta or the entire Eastern region. The foundation of the injustice was that the colonial ordinance killed the spirit of federalism in Nigeria when it captured and transferred the resources of Nigeria to the British Crown. For instance, Nwolise (2005: 116) posits that Federalism implies that resources in regions or states are controlled by the states and agreed quantum paid into the central pool. With the transfer of the “entire property” and the control of “all minerals and mineral oil” to the British Crown, what is then left for the States to manage and pay taxes to the federal government? This is what the Nigerian government has copied while it claims to be running a federal government. Thus, colonialism created this contemporary problematic issue of resource control in the Niger Delta.

Furthermore, soon after the civil war, the military government with Decree No. 9 of 1971 drove its point home by appropriating rents and royalties from all offshore oil revenues, and reduced derivation to states of origin to 30% (Suberu 2002: 151-152). All these actions were interpreted by scholars to mean a devastating blow to the corporate existence of Niger Delta. The next section considers how the Phillipson Commission handled revenue derivation vital for Bayelsa State's sustainability.

### 3.3.3 THE 1946 PHILLIPSON COMMISSION & THE REVENUE DERIVATION PRINCIPLE

In tracing the protracted conflicts linking Niger Delta to the legacies of colonialism, several policies introduced by the colonial regime that have continued to haunt the present day Niger Delta and Nigeria as a whole, are highlighted. Such legacies have for instance, somehow, made the year 1946 very significant in the history of Nigeria. Firstly, it was in that year that the ordinance to govern the oil that was eventually discovered ten years later was made. Furthermore, in the same year, the Phillipson Commission 1946 introduced a new political and economic modality of revenue sharing based on the principle of derivation in order to encourage the regions to become competitive (Anugwom, 2011: 2). The commission recommended the adoption of a 100% derivation to be allocated to each region according to their contribution to the national economy. In that interim, agricultural produce which was the economic mainstay of Nigeria's economy came from the majority ethnic nationalities namely Igbo, Hausa and Yoruba. Based on this, all export duties on these agricultural produce and the import duty on tobacco and motor fuel were returned to these three big regions on the basis of derivation (Ekanade, 2011: 77).

Nonetheless, 1958, the very first year that Eastern region commenced commercial oil production and its export to the international energy market, was the same year that the historic 100% revenue sharing formula based on derivation was reviewed downwards (Ojeleye, 2011: 144). Somehow, being privy to the knowledge of the magnitude of influence that the commercial production and exportation of oil would

confer on the Eastern region, the Raisman-Tress Fiscal Commission in its report in 1958 recommended a reduction from 100% to 50% (Ekanade, 2011: 77; Klieman, 2012: 18; Pavsic, 2012: 1 and Ojeleye, 2011: 144). Invariably, the colonialists who set up the Raisman-Tress Commission had anticipated that 100% of such oil revenue in the hands of the Eastern region would translate into too much political and economic power concentrated there. The reduction of the economic and political influence of the Eastern region which was begun in 1958 by Colonialism has been continued until now. The 50% recommended by Colonialism has been drastically reduced further to 1.5 % and was recently raised to 13% by the government of Nigeria (Ojeleye, 2011: 144; and Ngomba-Roth, 2007: 192). However, the reduction of the revenue derivation formula from 100% is an extension of the spoils of war policy. Next discussion shifts to Part B, which centres on the stakeholders in the Niger Delta conflict. The stakeholders are the OBHCs in Bayelsa State, the MNOCs represented in this study by Shell and the Nigerian government.

## PART B

# INTRODUCING THE STAKEHOLDERS IN THE NIGER DELTA CONFLICT

## 3.4 BAYELSA STATE: JUSTIFYING ITS CHOICE



Source: ZODML 2013.

Nigeria's crude oil history shows that oil was first discovered in Oloibiri, Ogbia Local Government Area of Bayelsa State by Shell, in 1956. Apart from Bayelsa State having the highest crude oil reserves amongst the 9 states in the Niger Delta, Shell describes its oil discoveries in Gbarain, Bayelsa State as the biggest in any single community in the entire West African sub-region (ECCR, 2010: 29). This indicates that oil prospection and production in the state is very intensive. In the same vein, it means too that the rate of environmental degradation induced by oil exploration in Bayelsa State is unprecedented. This is because as UNEP (2011: 9-12) has explained elsewhere, 4 decades after an oil spill in Ogoniland, the area was found still to be highly contaminated even after several clean-up exercises. The UNEP report notes that to rehabilitate the environment would take 30 years. This means that in Bayelsa State where oil was first discovered in Nigeria as early as 1956, the environment would die. These disturbing issues underpin the reasons for focussing on Bayelsa state for my research.

Other factors that favoured Bayelsa's choice are that Major Adaka Boro, the man who declared Niger Delta a 'Republic' in 1966, hails from Kaiama town in Bayelsa State, and the famous Kaiama Declaration was promulgated in the same town. The historic Odi that was burnt down by a military invasion in the 1990s is a town in Bayelsa State. Nembe, a town in Bayelsa State, when under the leadership of King Koko was attacked by British soldiers in 1895 in order to prevent the natives from participating in the lucrative trade in palm oil. These are the things that make Bayelsa State my first choice for research.

### 3.4.1 EXPLORING BAYELSA

The Ijaws are the fourth majority ethnic group in Nigeria after the Hausa-Fulani, the Igbo and the Yoruba. They are the core people of the Niger Delta and constitute the majority in Bayelsa State while having minority status in five other states in the Niger

Delta (Ukiwo, 2007: 591). They dwell along the banks of the rivers, creeks, and estuaries that flow into the Atlantic Ocean. This explains their choice of occupation as farmers, fishermen/women. That is an explanation for their close affinity to their environment as the only source of their livelihoods and survival. Bayelsa State has played a pivotal role in the history, development and the sustainability of Nigeria beginning from the era of the trans-Atlantic slave trade. Through this trade in human beings who were defined as “Slaves”, Bayelsa State, not only helped immensely in stabilising the economies of Europe and the New World, but helped to place Nigeria on the world political and economic map. The sea ports of Akassa and other neighbouring towns helped to facilitate the transportation of slaves to the New World (Ozo-Eson, 2000: 47). At the abolition of the slave trade in 1807 (Alagoa, 2005: 86), the importance of Bayelsa State did not diminish. Rather, it flourished more as its relevance to globalisation through massive empowerment of international trade magnified in stature. This is because the sea ports that were pivotal in slave trade facilitation, became equally important for the emergent lucrative trade in palm oil. The exigencies of the industrial revolution necessitated the inordinate demand for palm oil as lubricant for British and other European industrial machines (Francis and Sardesai, 2008: 56-57; Steyn, 2003: 107).

However, despite this early contact with globalisation agents, and its role in sustaining trade in both slaves and palm oil, paradoxically, Bayelsa State has remained underdeveloped and impoverished. Studies have shown that this development was because the pre-independence contact with the agents of globalisation set the stage for the conflict-ridden existence that Bayelsa State and the entire Niger Delta region are part of (Alagoa, 2005: 87). This early contact transformed the lives of Bayelsa people in particular, and the Niger Delta region in general, into a very confrontational existence. Nonetheless, stiff competition in the land-grab for African territories, treasures and wealth, especially between Britain and France, led to the Berlin conference of 1884. At this conference, what might be called the African peoples’ birthright was shared amongst the Europeans. Armed with the authority conferred by the conference, the colonialists began to prosecute mercantile wars to neutralize the influence and activities of the coastal kings whose middlemen position posed a great threat to the economic survival of the colonizers.

For instance, Okonta and Oronto (2004: 45) observe that on February 22, 1895, a British naval force under the command of Admiral Sir Frederick Bedford laid siege to Brass, the chief city of the Ijo people of Nembe, Bayelsa State in Nigeria's Niger Delta.

This invasion was aimed at preventing the Nembe people in Bayelsa from participating in the lucrative trade in palm oil (Alagoa, 1999: 89), an agricultural product produced by the Nembe people of Bayelsa State. However, colonialism following its involvement with capitalism, set plans in motion to achieve this objective to the detriment of the local population. Such blatant invasion that was not provoked by the target population appears ordinarily to be without apparent cause. In the words of Pfrancis et al (2008: 67), the exclusion of the indigenous people by the British colonial masters from participating in palm oil trade in their own local markets fuelled hostility between the colonial masters and the local population. The frustration and threatening effects of this greedy contrivance created several insecurities among the indigenous population. For instance, they lost their jobs and means of livelihood as middlemen.

This dire stressful situation galvanised the people into an aggressive attack of the colonial headquarters in Akassa under the leadership of King Koko of Nembe. The objective was to avenge their frustration and liberate themselves from such oppression (Pfrancis and Sardesai, 2008: 66). The aggression was because the British colonial masters coveted the palm oil trade due to its sudden acquisition of major importance because of the needs of the industrial revolution. Besides palm oil's use as a lubricant, it was needed in factories for the manufacture of soaps, candles and margarine. This great demand made the export drive for palm oil skyrocket from 150 tons in 1806, to 13,600 tons in 1839 and to over 100,000 tons by 1846 (Steyn, 2003: 143). This explains why colonialism was driven by envy, greed and covetousness to exclude and deprive the Nembe people of Bayelsa State from gainfully exercising their right to work with their own agricultural product. This galvanised the frustration-dynamics which converted the distressed but powerful energies of the Nembe people into aggression and violent conflict. This conflict led to the destruction of the RNC offices in the area (Alagoa, 2005: 112; Crowder, 1966:

232-233). Shell is discussed next in order to understand its contributions to the development.

### 3.5 SHELL

Shell is Nigeria's oldest and the largest energy company. Its activities in Nigeria began in earnest in Bayelsa State in 1956 where it discovered oil in commercial quantities. However, the pioneer efforts of Bergheim, a British businessman assisted by the Colonial Office, led to the creation of the Nigerian Bitumen Corporation (The Ecumenical Council for Corporate Responsibility (ECCR, 2010: 29). The Anglo-Dutch consortium Shell D' Arcy's arrival in 1937 changed the oil prospection equation. At first their concession covered the whole Nigeria (ECCR, 2010: 18 & 29; Steyn, 2003: 182), and their first success was recorded in 1953 with a well called the 'AKATA-1'. This yielded only marginal gas (Eyitsede, 2010: 43), but their continued aggressive exploration paid off in 1956 with the discovery of crude oil in commercial quantities in Oloibiri, Ogbia Local Government Area of Bayelsa State (ECCR, 2010: 29; Amnesty International, 2009: 11; Klieman, 2012: 159; O'Neill, 2007: 96). The first oil export from Oloibiri after the construction of a massive network of pipelines was in 1958, with a production capacity of 4,000 barrels per day (Steyn, 2003: 182).

Since then Shell has dominated the nation's oil industry with over 1000 functional onshore oil wells scattered over a hundred producing oil fields (Shell, 2006: 3). These oil fields are connected to a network of over 6,000 kilometres of pipelines with an additional 1,500 kilometres of trunklines leading to over 90 flow stations (Civil Liberties Organisation (CLO, 2002: 2). Shell operates Nigeria's largest joint partnership venture which accounts for about 50% of the country's total oil production. The joint venture comprises stakeholding by the government owned Oil Company Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) of 55%, Shell 30%, Elf 10% and Agip 5%. The area of Gbarain and its many oil deposits are analysed next.

### 3.5.1 GBARAIN: THE BIGGEST AND THE LARGEST OIL DEPOSITS IN WEST AFRICA

Comparatively, out of the nine states of the Niger Delta region, Bayelsa state has the largest crude oil and natural gas deposits (ECCR, 2010: 29). By implication, therefore, it has a significant concentration of MNOCs, which means that crude oil exploitation and exploration activities are extensive in the state. This fact indicates that environmental degradation is equally extensive in the state. Besides Oloibiri, Shell also discovered oil in Gbarain, located in the Gbarain-Ekpetiama local government area of Bayelsa State, in 1967 (ECCR, 2010: 28). In 1990 for instance, Shell made a major discovery of over 400 million barrels of oil and over half a trillion British cubic feet of gas in Gbarain's deep oil fields. This massive discovery was quickly followed by another staggering 722 million barrels of oil in the same oil field in 1991. Shell described these as "the biggest as well as the largest from any single community in the entire West African sub-region in the history of its operation" (ECCR, 2010: 29). This is indicative of the importance of Bayelsa State as a player in the economic wellbeing of the nation and the global energy market. It equally explains the choice of the state as the case study to represent other states in the Niger Delta region in this study. It shows why Bayelsa State has been active in the struggle for justice and emancipation from injustice in Niger Delta. It is therefore not surprising that the core actors of the 1966 secession and declaration of Niger Delta Republic are from Bayelsa State.

These huge crude oil and gas discoveries in commercial quantities necessitated the building of the Integrated Oil and Gas Gathering project (IOGP) in Gbarain-Ubie. This and the oil fields in Nembe Creek raised the status of Bayelsa State as the centre of excellence hosting the highest oil and gas reserves in the whole of the Niger Delta region (ECCR, 2010: 32). The Gbarain-Ubie project is estimated to be the Shell Petroleum Development Company (SPDC's) largest oil and gas project in

Nigeria. It covers 12 producing fields and another 15 new fields that will regularly supply between 1,000 and 1,400 million standard cubic feet of gas per day (mmscf/d) to Nigerian Liquefied Natural Gas (NLNG). The facility will gather and process an estimated 240 million standard cubic feet of associated gas per day in accordance with SPDC's gas flare reduction specifications. Shell's commitment to development is discussed in the next section.

### **3.5.2 SHELL'S COMMITMENT TO DEVELOPMENT**

To comply with legislation requiring the MNOCs to create employment by using Nigerian companies to execute their projects, Shell used Nigerian companies to construct most components of the floating production, storage and offloading (FPSO) facilities were built in Bonga. By the end of 2011, the Bonga (FPSO) had produced well over 380 million barrels of oil with over 90% of its offshore staff being Nigerians. The Bonga spilled a total of 40,000 barrels of oil on December 2011, but through the combined efforts of the Shell Nigeria Exploration and Production Company (SNEPCo), the government, and other oil industry partners, the spillage was cleaned up. Work is ongoing at the Bonga phase 2 and Bonga North West Development which involves the drilling of a further 20 oil wells to make the Bonga function at full capacity (Shell, 2012: 3).

To improve relationships between Shell and its host communities in Bayelsa State, Shell in 2006 re-strategized its approach to issues. The new approach involves the use of a Global Memorandum of Understanding (GMoU). This GMoU places an emphasis on transparency, accountability, and regular and effective communication with the grassroots in order to prevent conflict. According to Shell (2012: 2) the advantage of this new working instrument is its inclusiveness which enables the communities to choose the specific development projects that they want. The SPDC provides the required funds on behalf of its joint venture partners to execute such projects. The communities carry out the implementation unlike in the previous

system in which the SPDC did that in isolation from the people. The SPDC has already spent US\$79 million while 596 projects have been completed (Shell, 2012: 4). A total of 7,392 students from SPDC host communities have benefited from in-country merit scholarship awards. Another 21 students were awarded overseas scholarships to universities in the United Kingdom. In Bayelsa state, the GMoU fund has been used to train about 60 youths in various vocational trades to which SPDC contributed roughly \$182,500 (about ₦27,375,000). In the same vein, largely in 2007 alone, Shell paid \$1.6 billion (Shell's share) to the Nigerian government in taxes and royalties from Shell-run operations (Shell: 2006: 4). It employs more than 10,000 people, of whom 4,000 work full time. Invariably, apart from the US\$1.6 billion paid to the government in taxes in 2007, Shell claims to have contributed more than US\$110 million to the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) within the same year. Shell also provided US\$68 million in the same year to its own community development programmes in the Niger Delta. Contracts worth nearly 1 billion dollars were awarded to Nigerian servicing companies by Shell in the same year (Shell: 2006: 24).

To challenge the absence of quality schools and teachers which bedeviled the performance of students in the Niger Delta Region, Shell created the 'Cradle-to-Career' (C2C) scholarship scheme in 2010. The scheme covers the entire Bayelsa, Delta and Rivers states, and awards scholarships to sixty brilliant pupils annually. Apart from this, there are other regular scholarship programmes that are open to students from the entire Niger Delta region. While the regular scholarship programme provides fixed amount for each award winner, the 'Cradle-to-Career' scheme covers all School related expenses (Shell, 2012: 3). In 2011, Shell operations contributed more than \$164.1 million to the NDDC as required by law, coupled with an additional \$76.3 million directly invested by SPDC and SNEPCo to facilitate the social and economic development of the host communities. Shell's total

investments in the region between 2007 and 2011 amounted to \$487 million. The next section focuses on the Nigerian government and its influence in the conflict.

### 3.6 THE NIGERIAN GOVERNMENT (NG)

The Nigerian government operates a three-tier system of governance involving the Federal Government, the State government and the Local government administrations. A breakdown of this structure shows that the Federal Government is the administrative head of the other two tiers of government. The other federated systems of the federal government are the 36 State Governments and the 774 Local Government Councils in the country. The local government is the grass root and rural based government administration that is closest to the people. It is directly impacted by the oil economy administration because the physical structures of the oil exploration are located here. On the other hand, the state government is directly above the local government administration and holds supervisory responsibility over the local administration. The federal government sits at the top of the three-tier-system of administration. It oversees and coordinates the activities of the other two-tiers of government.

The Nigerian Government is the Executive body entrusted with the governance of the Nigerian State. In line with its functions, it exercises complete control over the oil resources in the country, and determines the extent of oil developments and multinational involvement in the oil industry. The constitution provides the government with the powers to protect the environment of the nation of which Niger Delta is a part. As noted earlier, the Niger Delta is the nation's economic power house that generates Nigeria's oil and revenue (O'Neill, 2007: 96). Nigeria operates a mono-economy that is entirely dependent on oil for its rents. Through these rents the government executes its budgetary commitments. Thus, Omeje (2007: 46) avers that oil-related rents such as royalties, taxes, oil export earnings, interests on joint venture investments, and others are the lifeblood of Nigeria's economy. As a rentier

and distributive state, political authority and economic power stem absolutely from the government's ability to extract oil rents and profits from the international capital represented by the multinational oil corporations.

To maximise all rents from the oil industry, the government in 1969, in the middle of the civil war, enacted the Petroleum Decree that vested ownership of all mineral resources in Nigeria in the government (Amnesty International, 2009: 88 & 94). Apparently, to plug all the loopholes related to the control of the oil industry, the government formed a joint venture partnership with the multinational oil corporations. The oil boom of the 1970s transformed the oil industry into the only credible revenue generating source for the nation. Amnesty International (2009: 9) notes that oil from the Niger Delta environment has generated over US\$600 billion since the 1960s for the government through the MNOCs. This explains why Nigeria's entire budgetary and developmental programs have been based on the gas and oil industry in the Niger Delta environment (Ibeanu, 2002: 164). With all this wealth, scholars contend that it is quite unbecoming for an estimated 70% of Bayelsa people and the entire Niger Delta region, to be surviving within the bracket of the standard economic measure of absolute poverty of US\$1 a day (Amnesty International, 2005: 3).

The streak of profits guaranteed by the Niger Delta environment for the MNOCs continuously over five decades is what raises the question: why would the major beneficiaries be degrading their benefactor while the government looks on? The fact that this degradation threatens the existence of the citizens of this government is what makes the whole thing very intriguing. Everybody knows that mistakes can occur once in a while, but in a situation where spillages are allowed to go on for months, especially when the dangers of them are clear to all, it obviously begs a question. Furthermore, that the government of Nigeria whose constitutional duty it is to protect the citizens and the environment is aware of such dangers and decides to ignore them may not be seen as mistake. This is because no institution or even an individual can continue to make mistakes for five decades. If an act is allowed to continue, it becomes a tradition. So, in Nigeria it has become a tradition to violate

and degrade the environment of Niger Delta since the civil war that ended in 1970. It became a tradition because in the first 30 years of oil exploration and exploitation in the Niger Delta environment, the country had no environmental protection agency. That tradition has turned into habit, and it is well known that habits are easy to form but very difficult to end. The Government's efforts to check the problems in the Niger Delta will be explored next.

### 3.6.1 GOVERNMENT EFFORTS TO MEND FENCE IN THE NIGER DELTA

The Government's efforts to combat problems in the Niger Delta began with the inauguration of the Willink Commission in 1957 to address the unique developmental challenges of the region. The recommendations of this commission have made it possible for Niger Delta to be recognised as a region that requires special attention to meet these challenges (Osuoka, 2007: 5). Scholars argue that the government's interventions' failure to bring development to the region has partly been blamed on institutional corruption (Ebeku, 2008: 399). But when hit by an unprecedented rate of losses in earning, occasioned by conflict due to frustrations from environmental degradation and socio-political marginalisation, the government and the MNOCs adopted a change of attitude. For example, the government have at various times established the Oil Mineral Producing Areas Development Commission (OMPADEC), subsequently passed the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) Bill into law in 2000 and launched the Ministry of Niger Delta. The NDDC Act, just like the OMPADEC and the Ministry of Niger Delta is targeted at righting the wrongs of the past and at facilitating the swift, equal and sustainable development of the Niger Delta into a region that is prosperous, stable, regenerative and peaceful. Prior to this, since 1999 some indigenes of the Niger Delta area have been appointed to key national positions. This positive attitudinal change has resulted in an Ijaw man, Dr. Goodluck Ebele Jonathan, becoming the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria for the first time in the history of Nigeria. Interestingly, from the year 2000, the government implemented the increased derivation-based oil-revenue sharing formula from a negligible 3% in 1999 to 13%.

Notably, the oil multinationals operating in the Niger Delta were forced through incessant disruptions of operations to increase their community development funds to their host communities (Shell, 2007: 5). Furthermore, the MNOCs operate a joint venture in which each of the partners funds their operations in proportion to their shareholding (Shell, 2006: 33; 2007: 25). Shell claims to have contributed more than \$110 million in 2007 to the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC). Shell also provided \$68 million in the same year to its own community development programmes in the Niger Delta (Shell, 2007: 24).

All these palliative efforts were targeted at the development that would ensure a better life for the region. Irrespective of what the facts on the ground show, due to corruptive influences, it is obvious that the government may have made genuine attempts to address the unique developmental challenges in the Niger Delta. However, this does not excuse the government's abdication of its constitutional responsibility to its citizenry in the Niger Delta region by not ending the unprecedented environmental degradation by the MNOCs under the excuse of doing business (UNEP, 2011: 12). In Nigeria, the joint venture partnership between the government and the MNOCs is the major factor weakening the effectiveness of the government's control over the conduct of the MNOCs.

### 3.7 CONCLUSION

As well as laying the foundation for the political and economic crisis in the Niger Delta and Nigeria today, colonialism introduced an empty federalism whose federating units' resources, it vested on the British Crown. This is revealed in the wordings of the oil mineral ordinances of 1914 and 1946. Apart from that, clearly, the target of the colonial Raisman-Tress commission (1958) was to ensure that the Eastern region (later Biafra) would not enjoy the enormous political and economic power associated with possession of crude oil resources. This is because the Commission was set up in the same year that the oil from the Eastern region entered the export market. Obviously, armed with the privileged information on the actual oil reserve in the region, the colonial regime wanted to clip the foreseeable political wings of the region by reducing the 100% derivation to 50%. As if the 50%

recommended by the commission was not enough, the Nigeria's military regime set it to 1.5%. Confirming this, Ojeleye (2011: 144) writes that shortly after civil war broke out, the government through the Petroleum Decree of 1969 nationalised the lands and the mineral resources of the Niger Delta. This seems to show that the military government was in partnership with colonialism, who assisted it to win the civil war. This is because the government copied all their tactics: from spoils of war to Oil Ordinance, and finally to revenue derivation reduction. It could be concluded that the civil war between Nigeria and Biafra and by extension the Niger Delta's contemporaneous conflict began in 1958. As has been argued elsewhere, Nigeria's post-colonial leaderships copied the colonial administrative legacies hook, line and sinker. The war actually started in 1958 with the work of the Raisman-Tress Commission, with the ground work laid in the 1946 Mineral Ordinance. As a proof, Stanley Diamond writes that the British Labour government inadvertently revealed the brutal rationality of its Nigerian policy when it stated that:

It was the British interest against that of the Biafrans, and if the Biafrans had to be sacrificed, so they would (Diamond, 2007: 352).

This is because the British government owns 49% of BP and the Shell-BP consortium (Ejiofor, 2012: 185). They are the largest Nigerian oil producer in the Niger Delta's oil fields in 'Eastern Nigeria' (Biafra) which are the richest and produce a clean burning fuel with very low sulphur content. According to Diamond, "Biafra, then, was an economic threat to the United Kingdom, British colonialism could not afford an independent Biafra, hostile to the trading and investment interests which Nigeria had accommodated, to the profit of both the local business and political elites and the colonial companies" (Diamond, 2007: 356). Chapter 4 discusses the theoretical framework.

## CHAPTER 4

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

#### 4.0 OVERVIEW

The previous chapter discussed the various conflict historiographies and the stakeholders' background to lay a solid foundation for this study. In this chapter 4, the theoretical framework is discussed commensuring with the examination of the Frustration-Aggression Theory: A historiography.

#### 4.1 THE FRUSTRATION-AGGRESSION THEORY: THE HISTORIOGRAPHY

The ubiquitous environmental risks associated with the prevalent insecurity felt by the vulnerable populations of the Niger Delta OBHCs, whose livelihoods are wholly dependent upon their interaction and relationships with their environments, is the reason, this thesis is interrogating why the major beneficiaries of the environment; such as the MNOCs and the NG are degrading their benefactor, the environment. This is because the Niger Delta security has habitually been structured and delineated by its relationship with their natural environment. Any unjustifiable interference with or obstructionism in this relationship is tantamount to security threat, breach and deprivation that triggers aggression and violent conflict. In this context, the doyen of the psychoanalytic theory, Sigmund Freud is of the view that man's actions are determined by instincts, and specifically the sexual instinct (Rahmati and Momtaz, 2013: 3030). Importantly, Rahmati and Momtaz explicate that Freud was clear that when the expression of these instincts is frustrated, this invariably triggers an aggressive drive. Interestingly, some psychologists in the persons of Dollard et al (1939) took up the gauntlet and reformulated this promising hypothesis into a very popular theory known as the Frustration-Aggression Theory (FAT). This popular FAT postulates that an obstacle to goal attainment leads to frustration which may lead to aggression (Dollard et al, 1939: 10; Ramirez, 2009: 86).

Invariably, as a proof of this popularity, Rahmati and Momtaz observe that “For over fifty years, the frustration-aggression hypothesis has been a popular explanation for aggressive behavior” (Rahmati and Momtaz, 2013: 3030). This is a cogent explanation for Frustration-Aggression Theory being considered the most appropriate to be adopted as the analytical construct in this study. Besides that, Clark McCauley (n.d) considers the frustration-aggression theory as the American psychology’s most prominent contribution to the understanding of aggression and conflict. Consequently, Johan M.G. van der Dennen (n.d cited in Bandura, 1973: 33) argues that this Frustration--Aggression Theory proved to have an immense impact as it appears to have influenced the current Western thinking on aggression more profoundly than any other single publication. Clearly, Johan M.G. van der Dennen argues that for more than three decades, the F-A hypothesis has guided, in one way or another, the better part of the experimental research on human aggression (Dennen cited in Bandura, 1973: 33).

However, Dennen argues that:

Most importantly, the views of aggression that the theory involves seem to have become widely adopted and accepted; they have become commonplaces. This popular success may have various sources. First, the principal hypothesis is uncomplicated and easy to grasp. The theory is generally well structured and clearly articulated, a fact that again facilitates comprehension. Second, the theory does not involve overly abstract concepts or elaborate procedures. It is very close to common sense - seeming to be built on it (Dennen, n.d cited in Bandura, 1973: 33).

Finally, as Selg (1971) observed, “the theory tends to provide a justification for behaving aggressively: Being frustrated made me do it” (Dennen, n.d cited in Bandura, 1973: 33). Apparently, all the above positive characteristics make up the

reasons for the deployment of this frustration-aggression theory in this study. Besides that, the core contention of this FAT is that obstructionism or blockage of an actor(s) effort to actualise a goal, triggers the aggressive instinct that stimulates the behavioural urge to aggress against, and injure the source of the obstruction engendering the frustration. This is a true picture of the situation in the Niger Delta. And, in this way, the frustration–aggression hypothesis explains why people revolt. It gives an explanation as to the cause of violence. This, points to the fact that Dollard et al (1939) is clear that it is hopelessness and despondency that propel the frustration-dynamics to perform the necessary gymnastics that trigger aggression and violent conflict.

Consequently, the Frustration-Aggression Theory attributes conflict to the outcome of frustration triggered by obstructionism, betrayal, interference, negligence, failures, deprivation, discrepancy, or the gap between needs expectation and attainment. Faleti (2006: 47) views this formulation as the “want-get-ratio”. This discrepancy between man's value expectation and his value capabilities is what Gurr (1970: 24) ascribes to Relative Deprivation in his ‘Why Men Rebel’. Breaking this formulation down, Ademola argues that “People tend to become aggressive when what they get falls below their expectation” (Ademola, 2006: 60). This is an explanation for why the Ken Saro-Wiwa-led Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP) objected to the unjustifiable interference by the MNOCs and the NG in Ogoniland’s cordial relationship with their natural environment. This interference ostensibly culminated in colossal environmental degradation (aggression) and the uncompensated appropriation of Ogoni land for oil drilling. Consequently, Junger (2007: 18) contends that, ignored by NG, MOSOP petitioned Shell and the other MNOCs directly. MOSOP wanted \$10 billion in accumulated royalties and environmental-damage compensation, and a greater say in future oil exploration. Again ignored, Saro-Wiwa organized mass protests that managed to shut down virtually all oil production in Ogoniland. This deadly economic blow to both the NG

and the MNOCs because of their negligence, obstruction and deprivation galvanised a swift militarisation of the area with a measure of brutality. According to Junger (2007: 18):

The military moved into Ogoniland in force. They razed 30 villages, arrested hundreds of protesters, and killed an estimated 2,000 people. Four Ogoni chiefs were murdered during the chaos—possibly by government sympathizers—and the military used their deaths as a pretext to arrest the top MOSOP leaders. Saro-Wiwa was subjected to a sham trial and condemned to death. Before he was hanged, Saro-Wiwa's last words were "Lord take my soul, but the struggle continues."

Drawing from the foregoing, Horowitz (1985: 140) explains the inappropriateness of deploying a bloodless theory to analyse a bloody phenomenon. This therefore, is another cogent reason why the frustration-aggression theory is the most appropriate theoretical framework for analysing the Niger Delta conflict. Based on this, Professor Malici (2007: 5) declares frustration to be:

An individual's perception of a hostile environment, coupled with; his pessimism about the realization of goals and finally; the perception that the fate of these goals is in the hands of others,

is an eloquent testimony that the frustration-aggression theory is a perfect theory to explain why the Niger Delta OBHCs reacted the way they did against the NG and the MNOCs due to deprivation. The clear implication of Malici's postulation above becomes manifest when juxtaposed against the view of Professor Zartman. Zartman (2000: 45) argues that conflict has an ontological basis in human needs. Continuing, he observes that it is the denial that causes violent conflict, or causes re-solvable differences to degenerate into armed violence. This denial is the cause of frustration arising from Malici's conception that the goal being in the possession of another actor complicates the possibility of its actualisation. This informs Afinotan & Ojakorotu (2009: 32) postulation that the quest for emancipation which lies at the

heart of the Niger Delta struggle is not as yet directed towards secession or excision from the Nigerian State. But merely a protest against criminal neglect, marginalization, oppression and environmental degradation as well as economic and socio-political hopelessness, which in one word, is frustration, in the Niger Delta. The next section discusses the frustration-aggression: The working theoretical framework.

## 4.2 FRUSTRATION-AGGRESSION: THE WORKING THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

From the discussion earlier in the overview section in chapter 1, the emergent antecedents of instrumental aggression clearly indicate that using SIFAT, the Petroleum Decree of 1969, Land Use Decree of 1978, the Abrogation of 50% revenue derivation policy and the degradation of the Niger Delta environment are all instrumental aggressions triggered by frustration – that is, self-inflicted-frustration. Interestingly, most frustrations are viewed as provocations because a person is identified as the agent responsible for goal blockage (Anderson & Huesmann, 2003: 304). Moreover, Berkowitz (1993; Geen, 2001 cited in Anderson & Huesmann, 2003: 304) argue that provocation which is frustration, is the strongest instigator of human aggression. And as Anderson & Huesmann (2003: 298) observe, the instrumental aggression is a premeditated means of obtaining some goal as a result of cold calculation. Some veritable examples of the cold calculated instrumental aggressions in the Niger Delta include the Petroleum Decree of 1969, Land Use Decree of 1978, the Abrogation of 50% revenue derivation policy and the degradation of the environment. Ostensibly, Dill & Anderson (1995 cited in Anderson & Huesmann, 2003: 305) claim that even frustrations that are fully justified, increase aggression against the frustrating agent. In effect, Dollard et al (1939) postulation is being showcased in its proper pedestal.

Drawing from the foregoing, all at once, it seems crystal clear that the MNOCs' crude oil exploration and exploitation activities and the NG's negligent oversight may have

threatened the health of humans, animal and plant species and the environment in general in the Niger Delta. How was this situation possible? The answer is negligence, betrayal, marginalisation and deprivation – all of which breed frustration. Professor Malici (2007: 3) emphatically articulates that “genuine hostility does not trigger aggression and violent conflicts. Rather, frustration does”. Juxtapose this against Bulhan’s visualisation of aggression for a better appreciation of the result. Bulhan (1985: 102) depicts aggression as any relation imposed by any actor that impairs the wellbeing of another. Moving this concept a step further, Berkowitz (1993: 213) clarifies that aggression is predicated on any act that devastates the victim either psychologically or physically or both. Contextualising environmental degradation (aggression) which culminates into poverty, unemployment, destitution, despondency and deprivation, it crystallizes into frustration. This conceptualisation and formulation directly informs that the act of hostility or aggression does not trigger reaction or reactive aggression. Instead, the impairment of the victims’ wellbeing that may be psychologically and physically is what produces the frustration that engenders aggression and violent conflict as Malici enunciated.

As a veritable example, a new study conducted by research teams from University of Oxford in the United Kingdom and the University of Rochester in the US, found that gamers are more likely to experience feelings of aggression from playing a game when it is too difficult or when the controls are too complicated to master. In comparison, the research found there was "little difference" in levels of aggression when the games themselves depicted violence (Krupa, 2014: 2). According to Krupa, Dr Andrew Przybylski from the Oxford Internet Institute and a co-author of the study explains, "We focused on the motives of people who play electronic games and found players have a psychological need to come out on top when playing. If players feel thwarted by the controls or the design of the game, they can wind up feeling aggressive. This need to master the game was far more significant than whether the game contained violent material. Players on games without any violent contents, were still feeling pretty aggressive if they hadn't been able to master the controls or progress through the levels at the end of the session" (Krupa, 2014: 2). In corroboration, the study’s co-author Richard M Ryan, from the University of Rochester argues that “The study is not saying that violent content doesn't affect

gamers. But our research suggests that people are not drawn to playing violent games in order to feel aggressive. Rather, the aggression stems from feeling not in control or incompetent while playing. If the structure of a game or the design of the controls thwarts enjoyment, it is this, not the violent content that seems to drive feelings of aggression" (Krupa, 2014: 3). Therefore, it is frustration, not the violence in games that is to be blamed for gamer aggression. This result supports Professor Malici's conclusion that it is frustration and not genuine hostility that engenders aggression and violent conflict.

Espousing equally that it is the video game frustration that breeds hostility, not violent video game, Caulfield (2014: 2) observes that "experiences of failure and frustration are actually the link to hostile behavior, not the amount of violence in a game, something anyone who ever played Super Meat Boy, or had the spread gun snagged away by their teammate during Contra could tell you". Clearly it is noticeable that failure to master the control of the game to enable the gamer to perform well and actualise his goal of winning, is what triggers aggression. That, failure is the frustration thwarting the chances of the gamer to win is established and this engenders aggression. This, thus buttresses the fact that frustration and not hostility is responsible for aggressive behaviour. Furthermore, Mikael Priks (2010: 1) tested the validity of the frustration-aggression hypothesis with unique data on hooligan scene in Sweden and found that frustration generated by a team's bad performance, actually leads to unruly supporter behaviour. Priks categorically states that a-one-point drop in the soccer league, leads to approximately 5 percent more unruly behaviour by the team's supporters (Priks, 2010: 1). Invariably, the bad performance of the team in this context is the frustration that was responsible for their defeat, hence this triggers the aggressive behaviour in the supporters. Once more, it is the frustration and nothing more that is held responsible for the aggression.

Dill and Anderson's (1995: 365) study on the effects of justified and unjustified frustration on aggression supports the hypothesis that frustration can lead to aggression because whilst unjustified frustration triggers aggression, its justification does not obliterate or eradicate aggression completely. The high point of this study is that an actor can cause tension by frustrating the other unjustifiably due to betrayal

or deprivation, with the likelihood of culmination to aggression. Thus, what Dill and Anderson demonstrated with their study is that when people perceive that they are being prevented from achieving a goal unjustifiably, their frustration is likely to turn to aggression. This is in conformity with the preceding studies demonstrating that frustration and not the violent content of games is responsible for aggression. Ubhenin's study brought this experience home when it declared that "the ensuing frustration, discontent and anger pushed the Niger Delta youths towards militant actions, when confronted with state and corporate insensitivity, abuse, intimidation, violence and militarization" (Ubhenin, 2013: 189).

At this juncture, I move to contribute to this literature by demonstrating that the Niger Delta OBHCs were drawn to aggression by frustration through the introduction of the proposed theoretical framework – the Self-Inflicted-Frustration-Aggression Theory (SIFAT). This is discussed later to demonstrate that the incidence of instrumental aggression that seemed to have no practical cause or provocation (Anderson and Huesmann, 2003: 304) is actually caused by frustration as Professor Malici and others have clearly demonstrated. Additionally, Aminu argues that "the frustration of the people of the Niger Delta resulting from the failure of the Nigerian government to satisfy their socio-economic needs led them into, and escalated the orgy of violence witnessed in the region. Specifically, the frustration was caused by the devastation of the environment of the region, pervasive poverty and underdevelopment, legislations of disempowerment and subjugation, inability to control the crude oil resource and suppression of the people by the machinery of the state" (Aminu, 2013: 813). Ibaba argues that "Because these challenges inhibit goal attainment, they provide objective realities for a vicious circle of conflict, as the reinforcement of frustration always motivates aggression" (Ibaba, 2011: 243). Next is the discussion of the frustration-aggression-displacement theory (FADT).

### 4.3 THE FRUSTRATION–AGGRESSION–DISPLACEMENT THEORY (FADT)

A meticulous analysis of the extant literature on the frustration-aggression theory reveals a massive misunderstanding, misinterpretation and total misrepresentation of Dollard et al (1939) popular contribution to the explanation and understanding of conflict and war. For example, Rahmati and Momtaz (2013: 3033-4) study concluded that although frustration is one of the violence and aggression resources, but it does not necessarily lead to violent and aggressive behavior at all times. Quoting the social learning theorists, Rahmati and Momtaz claimed that frustrated people may take different actions toward frustration including resorting to: dependency, achievement, withdrawal and resignation, aggression, psychosomatic symptoms, self-anesthetization with drugs and alcohol, and constructive problem solving (Atkinson et al, 1993 cited in Rahmati and Momtaz, 2013: 3033). Interestingly, as seen elsewhere, Berkowitz (1993: 213) emphatically delineated the paradigm of aggression to be the psychological and physical impairment of man. However, this overt misunderstanding was clearly taken care of by Dollard et al (1939: 10), when they argued that frustration always leads to “some” form of aggression. Within the context of this contention, the theorists have made it clear that all the conditions listed by Atkinson et al (1993) and adopted by Rahmati and Momtaz, 2013: 3033) are constituents of the “some” form of aggression as stated by Dollard and his Yale University colleagues.

Moreover, in their bid to make their theory and intentions better understood while explaining and analysing conflicts and wars, Dollard and his colleagues went further to advocate for “overt and non-overt” aggression. Obviously, the overt aggression is the one every scholar identifies as aggression while the non-overt aggression or inhibited aggression (Dollard et al, 1939: 10) is the situation most scholars neglect or at most, taken to be a non-aggression situation. But cleverly, still fighting to remain

relevant in order to be clearly understood, Dollard and his colleagues explained that the inhibited or non-overt aggression is what usually manifests as the phenomenon of “transferred aggression” (TA), (Dollard et al, 1939: 10).

The theoretical paradigm of “Frustration-Aggression-Displacement Theory” is a subset of the frustration-aggression theoretical mechanism that prevails when the source of the existing frustration or provocation is intimidating. In such overwhelming circumstances, the victim often redirects his hostility to a soft target that has significant affinity with the frustration source (Rahmati and Momtaz, 2013: 3030). Breaking this concept down, Faleti explains that under such situation, the targets of violence in this context are the individual, institution or organization perceived to be the cause of deprivation, or those related to it (Faleti 2006: 47). This interesting and astonishing conflict analytical mechanism of the frustration-aggression theory galvanised Miller (1948) into proposing a specific model to account for the occurrence of displaced aggression. That is, the instances in which individuals aggress against persons other than their frustraters (Baron & Richardson, 1994: 104) due largely to the frustraters’ intimidating characteristics. This forms one of the cogent reasons why the frustration-aggression theory is the most fitting theoretical framework for analysing the Niger Delta conflict. This is because when the Niger Delta OBHCs militants resorted to kidnapping and oil facilities’ vandalism, they were engaged in frustration displacement (Okumagba, 2009: 324) or transferred aggression (Dollard et al, 1939: 10). FAT, as a matter of fact, is the only theoretical framework that has got such a crucial conflict analytical mechanism.

In the words of Okumagba, this special conflict analytical mechanism of the frustration-aggression theory is known as the ‘theory of “frustration displacement” (Okumagba, 2009: 324) or “transferred aggression” (Dollard et al, 1939: 10). This theoretical mechanism argues that a weak victim usually transfers his aggression to soft targets related to or of significance to the aggressor. Explaining this mechanism vis-avis the Niger Delta conflict, the International Crisis Group (ICG, 2012: 9) posits that increased security measures by the oil companies in the delta and military pressure by the Joint Task Force (JTF), a unit composed of the army, navy and police, encouraged opportunists from the delta to seek softer targets further west. In

corroboration, Okumagba (2009: 324) avers that “Given the relative strength of the Nigerian state in the case of the Niger Delta-government face-of, it often results into “frustration displacement”. As a consequence, therefore, the activities of militia groups are directed at government and other groups in the region who would ordinarily not be affected”. This explains why the Niger Delta militants targeted the oil facilities which are very important to the aggressor which in this case are the NG and the MNOCs. With these attacks on the oil facilities, the militants were able to let the world know how they felt about their oppression just as Major Jasper Adaka Boro noted in 1966 (see chapter 3).

The transferred aggression or frustration displacement tactics of the militants therefore, reverberated on the foreign oil workers who became easy preys as soft targets for abduction, kidnapping and hostage takings. This tactics (though a terrorist strategy) paid off handsomely because it successfully made the international news media to become campaigners for the cause of the Niger Delta while concerned about their kidnapped citizens. But a critical examination of the modus operandi of the Movement for the Emancipation of Niger Delta (MEND) as Ibaba (2011) and Okonta, (2006) claimed, MEND was not involved in hostage takings for ransom reason but rather as an implement to attract international attention especially from the nations of the kidnapped expatriate oil workers. What Kenule Saro-Wiwa threw away his dear life trying to achieve peacefully, the militants now got on a platter of gold. This is how the frustration-aggression thesis lent credence to Horowitz’s (1985: 140) contention that a bloodless theory cannot be used to analyse a bloody phenomenon. In other words, Saro-Wiwa made the mistake of applying a bloodless theory to a bloody phenomenon and paid with his life. This is yet another reason for using this theoretical framework as the analytical mechanism for this study.

Showcasing the efficacy of this strategy, Okumagba argues that with the aid of the frustration-aggression theoretical mechanism of displaced frustration or transferred aggression, Hewstone and Stroebe (2001) argue that the militants were able to withstand the relative strength of the Nigerian State by transferring their aggression at expatriates working with multinational oil corporations (Okumagba, 2012: 79). Actually, in 2006, Ikelegbe clearly confirmed the development of transferred

aggression when he argued that, “Some youths began to hijack ships and helicopters, kidnap MNOCs’ staff, and vandalize oil facilities” (Ikelegbe, 2006 cited in Arong and Egbere, 2013: 94). The following section is devoted to the proposed theoretical framework – the SIFAT.

#### 4.4 THE PROPOSED SELF-INFLICTED-FRUSTRATION-AGGRESSION THEORY (SIFAT)

Being that the cause or the provocation of instrumental aggression is shrouded in obscurity, the Self-Inflicted-Frustration-Aggression Theory (SIFAT) is proposed to complement the efforts of FAT by interrogating and finding out the real provocation or cause of the instrumental aggression. In Figs. 1.8.1 and 1.8.2 on pages 16 and 17 of chapter 1, are graphic displays demonstrating the practical application of the proposed theoretical model, the SIFAT. The SIFAT model looks beyond the face value of conflicts by investigating deeply in order to explain conflicts that appear to be without provocation and the belligerent behaviour of rogue leaders. In consideration of the rogue states and their leaders in international politics, SIFAT goes beyond the periphery decisions and conclusions based only on descriptive foundations, to critically interrogate ‘Why’ they behave the way they do. A good example is, why is the Niger Delta environment being degraded? From figs. 1.8.1 and 1.8.2, the desire to acquire the OBHCs’ crude oil was what triggered the self-inflicted-frustration on the NG and the MNOCs. The result was the application of the instrumental aggression by the NG and the MNOCs against the Bayelsa State environment. Just as Malici (2007: 1-3) argues, SIFAT identifies self-inflicted-frustration as the cause or provocation of the MNOCs and the NG instrumental aggressive behaviour.

This thesis developed and used the theoretical model, SIFAT to show that in a situation where a victim did nothing to cause the aggressor to act aggressively against the victim, it becomes a clear case of Self-Inflicted-Frustration-Aggression.

For instance, the two distinct protectorates amalgamated into Nigeria did not invite Britain to that action (see chapter 3). The protectorates did nothing to frustrate Britain to warrant such aggressive act of forceful amalgamation. Invariably, the effect of the great depression in 1807 was the cause that propelled British people to seek better life elsewhere. Furthermore, the rich resources of the Southern protectorate were coveted by Britain for their critical importance to its domestic strategic interests. Therefore, the frustration that Britain acted upon in that instance was Self-Inflicted-Frustration. Another example is seen with the Self-Inflicted-Frustration of Saddam Hussein, the President of Iraq, when he aggressed against Kuwait. Kuwait invariably did not provoke Iraq under any known circumstances in international politics. But greed, envy and covetousness over Kuwait's abundant oil resources antagonised Iraq thereby imposing the Self-Inflicted-Frustration enabling it to aggressively invade Kuwait. This makes it clearer how SIFAT aids international relations in comprehensive understanding of mechanisms responsible for state and non-state actors' aggressive behaviour in the contemporary world's political affairs. It lends credence to the hypothesis stating that frustration is fundamental in aggression.

Furthermore, this thesis gives the example of the frustration and aggression dynamics surrounding the political situation of Adolf Hitler, the Chancellor of Nazi Germany and the Jews to further demonstrate the applicability of SIFAT in international political affairs. The Jews considered as inferior race were marked for elimination to achieve Hitler's goal of preventing 'pollution' of the superior race based on Darwinian views. Therefore, to prevent the Aryans (superior race) from breeding with non-Aryans (inferior race), Hitler argued that the Jews must be eliminated because they cause:

...peoples to decay... In the long run nature eliminates the noxious elements. One may be repelled by this law of nature which demands that all living things should mutually devour one another. The fly is snapped up by a dragon-fly, which itself is swallowed by a bird, which itself falls victim

to a larger bird... to know the laws of nature... enables us to obey them (Bergman, 1999: 105).

This Self-Inflicted-Frustration of preventing race pollution drove Hitler to aggression which culminated in the murder of millions of the Jews (Bergman, 1999: 101). Understandably, Nigeria's military elite who prosecuted the Nigerian-Biafran civil war were frustrated by the dilemma of the multinational oil corporations (MNOCs) over the payment for oil revenues and profits taxes to Biafra as discussed in chapter 3. This catalysed the aggressive capture of the oil industry and the Niger Delta through the Petroleum Decree of 1969 and the Land Use Decree of 1978.

With the aid of the definition of aggression offered by Bulhan, the introduction of these two decrees and the amalgamation of the Northern and the Southern protectorates can be clearly described as acts of aggression against Bayelsa State (Niger Delta) and Nigeria. According to Geen (2001: 5) there is a classification of aggression known as premeditated, proactive and instrumental aggression, planned and executed carefully, slowly and deliberately to accomplish a goal. These are aggressions that are initiated without apparent provocation and that are not evoked by anger, hostility or the need to defend oneself. They are rather evoked by other motives that relate to obtaining goods, asserting power, assuring the approval of reference groups and other such goals (Geen, 2001: 5). Regarding the issue of aggression without apparent provocation, the SIFAT argues that the provocation which is frustration is self-inflicted. The self-inflicted-frustration is propelled by the desire to save costs and increase profit margins to the detriment of the OBHCs of Bayelsa State (Niger Delta) through environmental degradation. This shows that in every act of aggression, there is frustration as Dollard et al (1939: 10) demonstrated. SIFAT makes it easy to identify in every political interaction.

The importance of the Self-Inflicted-Frustration-Aggression Theory (SIFAT) is demonstrated in its application to the problematic situation Rahmati and Momtaz were entangled in. SIFAT thrives most in a very confusing situation, particularly

where the source of frustration or provocation is obscured. For instance, Rahmati and Momtaz (2013: 3033) argue that there are many activities that are synonymous with violence and aggression, without any trace of frustration. Boxing, according to Rahmati and Momtaz is a typical activity that is completely enmeshed in aggression and violence without any association with frustration. "Though the boxers' aims are to inflict harm, but they are not frustrated" (Rahmati and Momtaz, 2013: 3033). They equally argue that Soldiers and warriors aggress during the war, not because of frustration but for other reasons such as attempting to defend and maintain the integrity of their homeland. But conversely, SIFAT clearly identifies the incidence of boxing and wars in which soldiers participate as incidents of instrumental aggression. Instrumental aggression as demonstrated by Geen above is targeted at obtaining tangible reward. The aggressive behaviour exhibited during boxing activity is to win a trophy. Therefore, frustration is responsible for their aggression.

The attraction and desire the coveted trophy has on the boxer, is the frustration that is propelling him to become aggressive in order to win it. On the other hand, SIFAT shows that soldiers are pushed into aggression due to frustration just the same way it did to the boxer. This has already been clarified with the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. In these two separate situations, the source of the frustration that is pushing the actors to aggress is frustration generated internally. This is what SIFAT is explaining. Therefore, the boxer's and the soldiers' frustrations are Self-Inflicted-Frustration-Aggression. Because the frustration is self-inflicted and internally generated, it is not visible. Therefore, to most scholars without the benefit of the Self-Inflicted-Frustration-Aggression Theory, such acts of aggression are devoid of frustration. This is what the SIFAT has corrected thereby enriching the international relations literature. The next section deals with understanding frustration and aggression.

## 4.5 UNDERSTANDING FRUSTRATION AND AGGRESSION: A DEFINITION

Aggression as a human concept is as old as humankind. The same applies to the aggression's twin paradigm of frustration. Frustration and aggression have been associated with humanity for as long as history can recall. This is why scholars such as Baron and Richardson (1994; Berkowitz, 1993; Bushman and Anderson, 2001 and Geen, 2001) believe that in the aggression continuum, violence is the extreme mode of physical aggression. Paradoxically, they know that all violence is equals to aggression, while at the same time, confirming that, not all aggression is violence (Anderson and Huesmann, 2003: 298). However, the difference between aggression and violence is so thin that it is sometimes hard to notice. What is significant here is that frustration is what gives rise to both aggression and violence, suggesting that the two paradigms may be used interchangeably in this thesis. Therefore, the correlation existing between aggression and frustration is very high. Creating this awareness is crucial to understanding why the environmental degradation by the beneficiaries is creating the frustrations that trigger aggression and violent conflict in Niger Delta. Therefore, a functional definition of these paradigms is highly important in order to completely blur the prevalence of diverse meanings (O'Leary-Kelly et al, 1996 cited in Kerry-Gaye, 2010: 22). The attempt to define the aggression paradigm is next.

### 4.5.1 DEFINING THE AGGRESSION PARADIGM

Though aggression and violence are not new phenomena amongst humans, but the degree of their prevalence in society today, has transformed them into a serious massive social problem worthy of attention in the contemporary world political system (Anderson and Huesmann, 2003: 296). Some notable examples of aggressive and violent include the Holocaust, the Columbine and the Colorado School shootings, and the terrorist attack on the World Trade Centre on 11<sup>th</sup> September, 2001 (Anderson and Huesmann, 2003: 296). The most recent calamitous aggressive and violent behaviour by man against man, include the Andreas Lubitz, the Germanwings

Flight 4U9525 “rogue pilot”, who killed his 144 passengers and six crew members in France in 2015. He thus joined the ranks of previous rogue pilots who in November 2013 deliberately crashed his Embraer jet – a Mozambique Airlines flight, killing all 33 passengers and crew members in Namibia. According to Calder (2015: 6), three months later, another “rogue pilot” of an Ethiopian Airlines Boeing 767, locked the Flight Captain out of the cockpit and diverted the Rome bound flight to Geneva where he sought asylum. All these cataclysmic aggressive and violent dispositions by man against fellow man are the matrix on which the frustration-aggression theory was propounded by Dollard et al (1939) to explain the phenomenon of frustration-aggression and violence in the world. Invariably the frustration-aggression theorists proffered frustration as the answer to why aggression and violence occur in the world political system. The seriousness of the conflict situation in the Niger Delta and in the world is why I subscribe to Horowitz’s exhortation about applying a tough theory to a tough conflict situation’ (Horowitz, 1985: 140). This accounts for the choice of the frustration-aggression theory for this study.

Ordinarily, the concept of aggression is commonly associated with injury delivery or destructive behaviour against people and their possessions (Bandura, 1973: 208). With this, Bandura positions aggression as any behaviour where the aggressor delivers a noxious stimulus to another person with the objective of causing harm to that person. If this is taken seriously, then instrumental aggression whose aim is not the delivery of noxious stimulus (Anderson and Huesmann, 2003: 298; Ramirez, 2009: 89) may be considered not to be aggression. Although, its aim is not in agreement with the above stated postulation, but it not only delivers harm, it also kills anything that stands between it and the accomplishment of its goal. On this note, Bulhan declares that aggression is any deed imposed by anybody that injures another person’s well-being (Bulhan, 1985: 213). Interestingly, Schat and Kelloway (2005: 191) support Bulhan’s postulation by arguing that aggression constitutes the “behaviour by an individual or individuals that is intended to physically or psychologically harm a target”.

Furthermore, Berkowitz (1993: 3) corroborated the physically or psychologically harm dimension of the aggression definition. On this premise, Kaufmann (1970: 14)

declared that Freud as the grand-master of psychoanalysis, pioneered the study into the psychological dimension of aggression when he wrote in 1932, “I express my entire agreement” to the concerns of Einstein over man, aggression and war as requested by an agency of the League of Nations (Freud 1973: 21, cited in Berkowitz 1993: 376). A stout believer that nothing evolves out of a vacuum, Montagu (1973: 10) expressed his unflinching conviction that the motivation for the development of the concept of “aggressive instinct” came from the psychology of “social Darwinism”. Freud being one of those under such influence, drew inspiration for the development of his theory of aggression, the “death instinct”, from his encounter with Einstein. According to Buss (1961: 185), the death instinct revolves on the principle that the stronger the hold of a death instinct on a person, the higher the propensity for the person to project aggression towards others. By this, Buss seems to be acquiescing that despondency and destitution are the mechanisms that enable frustration-dynamics to metamorphose into aggression and violent conflict in the Niger Delta.

Other scholars, however, moved this definition goal post further by declaring that all intentional harm-doing is an act of aggression. This means that continuing gas flaring when it is clear that the effects are harmful to man, plants and animals is intentional and therefore constitutes aggression. These definitions are more inclusive by ensuring that both the instrumental aggression and the reactive aggression are all accommodated. The all-inclusiveness of Bulhan’s definition can be seen in its accommodation of the definition of the International Labour Organisation (ILO, 1999). The ILO includes rape, robbery, wounding, battering, stalking, harassment, bullying, intimidation, innuendo, deliberate silence and systematic collective violence (which consists of subjecting a target to psychological harassment) that results in considerable detriment to the person's physical and psychological well-being (ILO, 1999, cited in Chappell and Di Martino, 2000: 17-18). Arguably, physical, verbal or psychological injuries to the individual are of importance to this understanding (O’Leary-Kelly et al, 1996: cited in Kerry-Gaye, 2010: 22).

Notably, Spector et al (2006: 30) take the aggression definition to another interesting dimension by adding the destruction of property. They contend that intentional acts that harm the target, such as physical violence, as well as milder forms of aggression

including verbal derogation or acts directed towards the target in the destruction of property are all aggression. Juxtapose this definition with the situation in Bayelsa State where continuous gas flaring and constant crude oil spillages destroy properties of the OBHCs without remediation. This aggression frustrates, and I have emphasised that frustration is provocation. This is what sustains the cross accusations of frustrations as the corner stone of the Niger Delta conflict. Promoting this concept, Davies' (1970: 613) contribution is that aggressiveness implies a "predisposition, an attitude of mind, an underlying characteristic" whose likely product is a tendency for a violent action, injury, or damage. From Davies' angle, it is understandable that all acts of aggression are predicated on inflicting injury and damage. This being the case, there is no doubting the fact that all the acts of aggression perpetrated by the major beneficiaries of the Bayelsa State (Niger Delta) environment are destined to injure and damage the environment and the OBHCs. This therefore presupposes that the act is intentional.

As an author of a bestselling book on Aggression (1966), Lorenz understands aggression as "the fighting instinct that ensures the survival of the individual" (Jakobi et al, 1975: 51-52). This definition is interesting because it introduces crucial aspects to the aggression paradigm. The rogue state leader that invades another state, what kind of survival was he seeking at the detriment of others? When Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait, what kind of survival instinct was that? The killing of millions of Jews, was that any kind of survival instinct? But on application of the proposed theoretical model - SIFAT, it is seen that frustration was the provocation behind such aggressions, but it was a self-inflicted-frustration. Such frustration is usually triggered by envy, covetousness and greed which occurs because the quality or resources possessed by the victim is not possessed by the aggressor, thereby making them a threat to that aggressor. This threat or provocation or frustration drivers, frustrates the aggressor to a point that it finally leads to aggression in order to acquire the quality or the resources by force. This may even lead to killing the victim as a means of removing the perceived competition. SIFAT locates the provocation or the cause, to be frustration, but apparently, it is "Self-Inflicted-Frustration-Aggression" as demonstrated. If this is what Lorenz meant, then something is definitely wrong with this type of survival instinct. But, when the survival instinct is considered within the

sphere of the reactive aggression as opposed to the instrumental aggression demonstrated above, there appears to be some value to the survival instinct. This is because the reactive aggression is in self-defense or retaliation which is tantamount to survival.

Following on the heels of Lorenz's definition of aggression centred on survival, Berkowitz argues that sometimes, people are forced to become aggressive and violent when their development is hindered. In other instances, people remember that aggressiveness can pay off: they learn that they can settle disputes by being aggressive towards others (Berkowitz 1993: 142). Just as discussed previously, the aggression under Berkowitz is from all indications, a reactive aggression because their development is hindered. Under instrumental aggression for instance, no development is hindered, so what survival is at stake? From all the definitions discussed, it is understandable that the functional definition for this study will be the definition that incorporates physical and psychological harm delivery and the institution of survival instinct based on reactive aggression. This is because the frustration-aggression theoretical framework pioneered by Dollard et al (1939: 1) describes aggression as a reactive form of behaviour. Understanding aggression from the lens of environmental degradation is in the next section.

#### 4.6 UNDERSTANDING AGGRESSION: FROM THE LENS OF ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION

Aggression is a multifaceted phenomenon because different scholars see it differently as demonstrated above. Thus, experts concerned about the influence of this paradigm on human conduct, have at various periods in history, wondered what is meant by aggression. In search of answers, one such expert, Malici (2007 cited in Aminu, 2013: 817) observes that aggression is ignited by frustration. In the scenario of the Niger Delta, it has been seen that environmental degradation engendered by MNOCs' oil prospection and production triggers frustration that gravitates towards aggression and violent conflict. Thus the correlation between the environment, frustration and aggression is very high. Conscious about not creating a gap in the literature, Bushman and Huesmann (2010 cited in Aminu, 2013: 817) noted that

aggression is the behaviour that is intended to harm people. If Malici argues that aggression is ignited by frustration, and Bushman and Huesmann maintain the debate by contending that the same aggression is intended to harm people, then, the conclusion will be that the degradation of the environment is purposed to harm the OBHCs.

Burton (1997: 17), as a human needs expert, philosophically contributed to the debate by explaining that the possibility of aggression being influenced by environmental pressure, signifies the essence of the struggle to combat the stress and its frustrative spill over effects on humans. The effects on humans are considered to be a public knowledge. This is because as demonstrated elsewhere, Nigeria is situated not in the temperate but in the tropical zone where the temperature is almost always high. The burning of associated gas continuously every day of the year, excessively raises the temperature to a point where it ignites aggression. Besides raising the environmental temperature, the excessive heat generated by gas flaring kills farm crops and afflicts the population with various strange diseases. Frustrations from these issues make life unbearable, with the likely consequence being aggression and violent conflict. In Baron's (1977: 78) opinion, aggression and violence do not happen in a "social vacuum." He declares that such behaviours often "stem from certain aspects of the social environment that instigate their occurrence, and influence both the forms and directions". What Baron seems to be arguing here is that not even the certified mad man becomes aggressive without provocation. Obviously, something in the social environment engenders the frustration and the provocation that gravitate to aggression and violent conflict. A typical example is the gas flare.

Drawing from the wealth of experience of researchers such as Baron and Richardson (1994; Berkowitz, 1993; Bushman and Anderson, 2001 and Geen, 2001), Anderson and Huesmann (2003: 300) defined aggression as "behaviour directed toward another human being with the sole aim to cause harm". This aggressive and violent behaviour by one human being toward another, they argued, was prevalent among our hunter/gatherer ancestors over 25,000 years ago and also among the Greek, Egyptian and Roman societies as recently as two to three

thousand years ago. Being hunters and gatherers meant that the ancestors were dependent on the environment for survival. Note that Anderson and Huesmann did not define aggression as a behaviour targeted to harm the environment. Rather, they argued that it is channelled against another human being. The analysis of this definition offers the explanation that a threat to harm another human being, may encourage the target to plan his escape mechanism to avoid the threatened harm.

The UNEP team, as described in Chapter Two found that because of the extent of crude oil contamination in Ogoniland, the environmental restoration is possible but might take 30 years (UNEP, 2011: 12). The UNEP report shows the critical effects of environmental degradation occasioned by the application of the instrumental aggression. Environmental degradation through aggression will take 30 years of the peoples' lives to restore, according to UNEP. For these 30 years people would still be subjected to the bad influence of environmental aggression such as unemployment, drinking contaminated water and breathing polluted air. The next section discusses understanding frustrations from the lens of environmental degradation.

#### 4.7 UNDERSTANDING FRUSTRATIONS: FROM THE LENS OF ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION

The ubiquity of the frustration concept impacts every aspect of the human endeavour. Frustration is created by failure to accomplish a goal or to receive a reward brought about by intervening variables or obstructions. The occurrence of frustration signifies the existence of insecurity. At that point, the victim becomes vulnerable to aggression and violent conflict. Amsel's name is synonymous with frustration as the acclaimed father of frustration theory. At a time when other researchers were concerned with mechanisms of reward, Amsel aptly defined frustration by focusing on what happens when reward is expected but does not occur. "As anyone knows, who has encountered a vending machine that fails to deliver once it has taken your money", Amsel declares, the absence of an expected event can be upsetting (Amsel, 2006: 109). With this, Amsel provided a precise definition of frustration when he argues that the natural reaction to the expectancy of

frustration is to be disappointed, get angry, kick and swear at the vending machine or walk away in fury. In all of these dispositions, frustration has borne fruit. Take this to the environmental degradation scenario in Bayelsa State (Niger Delta), where a father with a wife and children to feed, wakes up one morning, and discovers to his fury that he has no job any longer because of an oil spill.

Obviously, the vending machine incident will look like a joke. This is because the entire family's source of livelihood depends on their father's economic activity that is solely dependent on nature (environment). Note that the change in the man's fortune was without notice and when it will end is not foreseeable. All these add to the weight of his fury. The vending machine victim in Amsel's case study kicked at the vending machine because it was the source of his frustration. This father in Bayelsa State knows that the MNOCs are the source of his misfortune, and to add to his worries, while the source(s) of his misfortune is/are relaxed in their air-conditioned offices and drawing their fat salaries, he is agonised. In this example, only one man and his family is involved. Imagine what the community's mood will look like when all the farmers, fishermen and women, and their families are involved. Apparently, in an answer, Gurr and Goldstone (1991: 334) note that a widely shared sense of grievance among people is a necessary condition for a mass mobilization and rebellion (Gurr and Goldstone, 1991: 334 cited in Heleta, 2009: 27). This is how frustration from environmental degradation impacts and transforms the OBHCs. That is the important message which Amsel is delivering.

Employing Amsel's reward concept, the OBHCs expected huge rewards from the wealth realised from their environment, but none came. Explaining why men rebel, Gurr (1970: 12-13) using his "Relative Deprivation" theory, argues that disparity or discrepancies between peoples' expectations and the actual (reality) leads to discontent, aggression and violent conflict. This is the reality with the situation between the OBHCs, their environment and frustration. Moreover, Cohen (1990) explains that frustrations are most likely to heighten the occurrence of aggression when it is intense, or the source of frustration is perceived as arbitrary or still unfair (Cohen, 1990 cited in Kerry-Gaye, 2010: 34). Ostensibly, Lintner (1991: 75 cited in Breet, Myburg and Poggenpoel, 2010: 515) shows that there is a direct relationship

between frustration and aggressive behaviour. For instance, the imposition of irrelevant and even unrealistic restrictions in the name of discipline, according to Coleman and Webber (2002: 227 cited in Breet et al, 2010: 515), can also provoke aggression.

Generally, the demands posed by challenges encountered by people are at the root of the frustrations experienced by the individuals and groups, and these are the cause of aggression (Blau & Gullotta, 1996: 78; Balk, 1995: 21 cited in Breet et al, 2010: 512). To Baron and Richardson (1994: 8), frustration is synonymous with any obstacle or interference with on-going goal-directed behaviour that has previously been seen as an antecedent of violent behaviour. Environmental degradation caused by gas flaring constitutes an obstacle to OBHCs' achieving their goal of productive lives and therefore, it is highly frustrating. Frustration, argue Spector (1975; Storms & Spector, 1987), is positively correlated with aggression against others, interpersonal hostility, sabotage, strikes, work slowdowns, theft, and employee withdrawal (Kerry-Gaye, 2010: 42).

Violent behaviour, for Neuman & Baron (1998), is often the result of perpetrators' goal-directed behaviour in a manner seen as being unfair, intentional, illegitimate or unwarranted (Kerry-Gaye, 2010: 42). For example, major political problems confronting the developing countries are aggression and violent conflicts culminating in massive displacements of the population. Predominantly, the cause of all these aggressions and violent conflicts is attributable to frustrations which provoke the aggression and the violent conflicts. Providing evidence for this, Solomon and Swart (2004: 10) conclude that "no single internal factor has contributed more to socio-economic decline on the African continent and the suffering of civilian populations than the scourge of conflicts". The Niger Delta conflict is an example of this, because as the MNOCs and the government who are the major beneficiaries of the environment, degrade the environment, it engenders frustrations, which in turn, provokes aggression and violent conflict. The worst is that the reactive aggression, being the consequence of the frustrations from the first instrumental aggression, further exacerbates the environmental degradation. This is how frustrations lead to displacement of the population with serious consequences for their local political

economies. To understand the magnitude of the problem arising from frustrations, Hoogvelt (2002: 15) counted over 30 large-scale aggressions and violent conflicts or wars that have wreaked havoc on Africa and its economies since 1970. Discussion of the basic classifications of aggression is next.

## 4.8 BASIC CLASSIFICATIONS OF AGGRESSION

Proper understanding of the paradigm of aggression is a problematic issue owing to its multifaceted phenomenon. Divergent thoughts on the proper categorisation of aggression typologies culminate in an overabundance of classifications. Some classifications are according to their mode, while others are inclined to the functions they perform, as found in the literature (Ramirez, 2009: 86). A more acceptable mode of classification of aggressions appears to follow two distinctive groups. This is in accordance with the research findings of Ramirez whose aggression correlations are high within each categorised group. The two groups are in accordance with their similarities and dissimilarities of purpose. The first group is the Group 'A' which is made up of the Instrumental, Proactive and Premeditative aggression, while the second group is the Group 'B' which is made up of the Reactive, Hostile and Impulsive aggressions. Similarly, Anderson and Huesmann (2003: 298) argue that two distinct typologies of aggression are identifiable. In their opinion, they are the affected aggression which Feshbach (1964) calls hostile aggression and Berkowitz (1993) equally calls emotional aggression.

Irrespective of whatever name it is called, the typologies' common characteristics are that the reactive aggressions are impulsive, thoughtless, unplanned and generally driven by anger to revenge against the target that provoked them (Anderson and Huesmann, 2003: 298; Ramirez, 2009: 86). On the other hand, instrumental aggression is premeditated, and pre-planned to obtain some goals (Anderson and Huesmann, 2003: 298; Ramirez, 2009: 86). All in all, both the classifications of Ramirez and of Anderson and Huesmann are generally in conformity with the characteristics of the aggressions categorised into groups 'A' and 'B' in Table 2

below. The only dissimilarity occurs with semantic issues introduced by Berkowitz's description of reactive aggression as emotional aggression.

Table 4.1: CLASSIFICATION OF AGGRESSIONS ACCORDING TO FUNCTIONS

| GROUP A   | FUNCTIONS   |
|---|---|
| Instrumental Aggression<br>Proactive Aggression<br>Premeditative Aggression | This group A aggression is slow, deliberative, consciously controlled, reasoned, calculated, thoughtful, planned and without provocation. It is used predominantly for obtaining objectives, reward, money, profit, information, expansionism, safety, goods, gratification with sex, drugs or other services for the aggressor. It changes environmental contingency   |
| GROUP B   | FUNCTIONS   |
| Reactive Aggression<br>Hostile Aggression<br>Impulsive Aggression           | This group B aggression is provoked by anger from frustration. Therefore, it is unplanned, unreasoned, impulsive, spontaneous, automatic and thoughtless. It is used to remove obstacles or goal attainment blocker by hurting the blocker or obstacle. It is synonymous with fighting because it tries to retaliate, get revenge by attacking the blocker or the obstruction. The frustration-aggression theory is built on this reactive aggression |

From analysis of the theoretical data displayed in Table 2 above, Ramirez (2009: 89) argues that proactive aggression is synonymous with instrumental and premeditative aggression, while reactive aggression is synonymous with hostile and impulsive aggression. The reactive aggression group is usually applied in response to threat or

provocation that is in retaliation or as a defence against frustration. Thus, reactive aggression is rooted in the dynamism of frustration-aggression theory. For example, in frustration dynamism, the instrumental aggression triggers frustration due to the presence and interference or disruptive influence of the 'goal achievement blocker' or any 'obstruction to goal accomplishment'. This complex development of obstructionism or goal blocking dynamism triggers a retaliatory or defensive aggressive act to remove the 'blocker or obstruction' through reactive aggression. This explains the importance of this theoretical framework to conflict analysis as demonstrated in all chapters of this thesis.

Reactive aggression is synonymous with fighting (Ramirez, 2009: 89); hence FAT is considered the best for analysing this "bloody" conflict. The centrepiece of this theory is the specification of motivational dynamics by which blocked goals instigated retaliatory acts to remove them or their agents. Its information processing is impulsive, involuntary, automatic, inattentive, immediate, emotional and excitable (Caprara et al, 1996; Dodge et al, 1997; Vitaro et al, 2002 cited in Ramirez, 2009: 89). The significance of this retaliatory stance of the reactive aggression is that research finds that humans obtain gratification from hurting those who provoke them (Anderson and Huesmann, 2003: 304). This explains why the Niger Delta OBHCs are engaged in reactive aggression, and is one of the reasons why the frustration-aggression is the analytical framework for the Niger Delta conflict.

Because frustration is generally seen as provocation, it is a classical aversive instigator bearing in mind that frustration is the blockage of goal attainment (Anderson and Huesmann, 2003: 304). If frustrations are seen as provocations because a person is the agent responsible for goal blockage (Anderson and Huesmann, 2003: 304), it becomes strange to argue that instrumental aggression is without provocation. This anomaly is what the proposed theoretical model of SIFAT addresses, by demonstrating that such aggressions as the instrumental aggression have provocations in the form of frustrations. As Berkowitz has argued, research has

shown that frustration increases aggression even in a situation where the frustrating agent is unknown (Berkowitz, 1993 cited in Anderson and Huesmann, 2003: 304). But SIFAT has enhanced this understanding by demonstrating that the seemingly 'unknown frustrating agent' is known as the self-inflicted-frustration gravitating to aggression.

The focus of the frustration-aggression dynamism discussed in this study is based on the application of instrumental or group 'A' aggression which galvanises the reactive or group 'B' aggression into action. The intricacy of this conceptual framework necessitates the development of the proposed theoretical model to solve the issues surrounding the instrumental or group 'A' aggression. In this thesis I argue that the instrumental aggression is the aggression applied by both the MNOCS and the NG, while the OBHCs applied reactive aggression. The primary goal of the group 'A' aggression is to achieve some form of non-aggressive incentive rather than to inflict harm on the victim (Berkowitz, 1993; Geen, 1990 cited in Ramirez, 2009: 88). But clearly, in order to achieve its goal, the instrumental or the group 'A' aggression can kill people that stand between them and the achievement of their goals (Ramirez, 2009: 88). It is used to re-establish self-esteem, public image, power, control and domination (Tedeschi and Felson, 1994 cited in Ramirez, 2009: 88).

Other classifications of aggression include physical, verbal and indirect aggressions which in most cases are as a result of provocation through either threats or attacks (Breet, Myburg and Poggenpoel, 2010: 515). However, Buss (1961 cited in Kerry-Gaye, 2010: 17) classified aggression into Verbal-passive-indirect, Verbal-passive-direct, Verbal-active-indirect, Verbal-active-direct, Physical-passive-indirect, Physical-passive-direct, Physical-active-indirect and Physical-active-direct.

## 4.9 CONCLUSION

This chapter has discussed the paradigm of frustration and aggression to critically aid the understanding of this study. It shows how these paradigms affect peoples'

daily interactions with others, and their roles in international, national and regional politics. While examining the different typologies of aggression, I pointed out why I settled for the aggressions in groups 'A' and 'B' namely instrumental and reactive aggressions. These two form the focus of the entire thesis because the application of instrumental aggression galvanises the reactive aggression into action to avenge the harm done by the instrumental aggression. The chosen theoretical framework for this study: the Frustration-Aggression Theory (FAT) is built around the reactive aggression which Ramirez (2009: 89) describes as being identifiable with fighting. Because the instrumental aggression's source of provocation is shrouded in secrecy, the proposed theoretical model, SIFAT, comes to the aid of clearing this obscurity. SIFAT finds that elusive source of provocation to be "Self-Inflicted-Frustration". The sub-typologies of aggression serve to show the role of aggression in people's every day socio-political activities.

The SIFAT clearly controverts Rahmati and Momtaz (2013: 3033) by delineating that contextualising the boxing scenario; the opponent's presence becomes a threat to his chances of winning the coveted trophy. The opponent's presence is frustrating the boxer from realising his goal. Thus he launches an instrumental aggression against his challenger to enable him win the trophy. In this way SIFAT has been able to demonstrate that frustration is what is goading the boxer and the soldier to aggress against their opponents. This chapter has critically shown several cogent reasons why this frustration-aggression theory has been chosen to be the analytical mechanism for this study. First and foremost, its specificity and simplicity makes its application and understanding much uncomplicated. Given that it is synonymous with fighting, I saw the sense in Horowitz's exhortation about the hopelessness of deploying a bloodless theory in analysing a bloody situation. Thus the situation in the Niger Delta requires to be analysed with a matching theory such as the Frustration-Aggression Theory.

The theoretical sub-set of the frustration-aggression theory known as the frustration displacement or the transferred aggression plays a very pivotal role in making the

parent theory stand out amongst others. This theory is the only one that has this special theoretical mechanism that explained the change in tactics by the Niger Delta OBHCs militants. The intimidating characteristics of the NG and the MNOCs both militarily and financially left the militants with the only option of transferring their frustration and aggression to soft targets but with significant affinity with the main aggressors. This change in tactics was what necessitated the incidence of kidnapping, hostage taking, abduction and oil facilities vandalism. This theoretical mechanism is one of the reasons why the frustration-aggression theory is chosen for this study. The research methodology is next in chapter 5.

## CHAPTER 5

### UNDERSTANDING THE FRUSTRATION-AGGRESSION CROSS ACCUSATIONS FROM ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION: THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 5.0 Overview

Chapter 4 discussed the theoretical framework for the study. In this chapter 5, the research methodological road-maps adopted towards the realisation of the objectives set out for this study involving the sample characteristics, data collection tools, ethnographic research design, site selection and field access are discussed in detail. So, for avoidance of doubt, the research methodology or design of this study refers to the plan, structure, and strategy deployed to ensure that this thesis is completed by providing answers to the research questions. Nachmias and Nachmias (1996 cited in Durojaye, 2012: 28) explain that the research methodology is a systematic process that provides solution to identified problems by adhering to the procedure, process or method of research mapped out to realise the outcome. Simply put, research design or methodology is the chosen road-map to realising the research objectives. To realise these objectives, this chapter has been divided into seven sections which commences with the discussion of the qualitative ethnographic approach.

#### 5.1 QUALITATIVE ETHNOGRAPHIC APPROACH

Essentially, qualitative research is also referred to as ethnographic research (Durojaye, 2012: 86), while (Creswell, 2007: 2) argues that ethnography is a qualitative research approach. Notably, Atkinson & Delamont (2012: 12) contend that “ethnography can involve all types of data collection methods, including structured quantitative approaches. So, it is therefore, not interchangeable with qualitative research”. But tenaciously, Durojaye maintains that qualitative ethnography involves the collection of extensive narrative data (non-numerical data). This is done over an

extended period of time, in a naturalistic setting, to gain insights into the phenomena of interest. This is why research is vital to human day to day activities by enhancing everyday decision-making. “It is a process of generating new knowledge or establishing the veracity of the existing ones about the social world, in order to achieve the desired goals. Research therefore, enhances knowledge by solving problematic social phenomena through systematic investigations amenable to various methods, different styles, traditions or approaches of collecting data” (Durojaye, 2012: 104). Interestingly, Denzin (2009: 298) warns that:

Each research method implies a different line of action toward reality – and hence each will reveal different aspects of it, as much as a kaleidoscope, depending on the angle at which it is held, will reveal different colours and configurations of objects to the viewer. Methods are like the kaleidoscope: depending on how they are approached, held, and acted toward, different observations will be revealed.

This is essentially because there is no consensus in research; therefore, Henn et al (2009: 21) advocate for triangulation to achieve validity and legitimacy. On this basis, this thesis triangulated the in-depth interviews (IDIs) paradigm with focus group discussions (FGDs) and participant observation (PO) to achieve validity. This lack of consensus explains the importance of co-opting Durojaye’s (2012: 86) differential approach analysis as seen in Table 5.1.1 below for this research study. Table 5.1.1 clearly delineates what this present qualitative ethnography is and is not doing. Realistically, the goal here is not to test or support any hypothesis. Rather, it is to generate rich descriptions of phenomena, from which deep insights are gained through the extensive narrative perspectives of the participants’ articulation of their encounters with the phenomena. From this deep insight, theory emerges. Thus, Genzuk (2003: 55) argues that the principle of ethnography is ruled by naturalism and discovery. By discovery, Genzuk contends that ethnography is not interested in testing hypotheses, but in the discovery of reality. For Merriam (1988: xii), it is about the discovery of reality, rather than its confirmation. This accounts for why

ethnographers are more interested about uncovering knowledge about what people think and feel about the circumstances in which they find themselves.

According to Thorne, such researchers are not concerned about the validity of such feelings and thoughts. Rather, they rely on the inductive reasoning process to interpret meaning derived from data (Thorne, 2000: 69). The basic difference between inductive reasoning and deductive reasoning is the marked dividing line between qualitative and quantitative research. Inductive reasoning generates ideas from the data available, which is termed hypothesis generation. Deductive reasoning begins with the idea and uses data to confirm or negate the idea, which is termed hypothesis testing (Thorne, 2000: 69). This theory fits well with the research problem of this thesis that investigates why the Bayelsa State environment is being degraded by its beneficiaries. Thus, this thesis, is interested in the discovery of reality in relation to the degradation of the Bayelsa State environment, by generating theory from data gathered from participants, instead of testing any hypothesis. In the sphere of naturalism, Genzuk emphasises that ethnography rejects totally the artificial nature of experiments. Rather, it encourages first-hand contact and experience of the natural context of the phenomenon under investigation. Thus, the phenomenon must be explained in terms of their relationship to the context in which they occur (Genzuk, 2003: 55).

**Table 5.1.1: COMPARISON OF QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE APPROACHES**

| Basic Differences     | Quantitative Approach  | Qualitative Approach   |
|-----------------------|--|--|
| General Framework     | Seeks to confirm hypothesis about phenomena;<br><br>instruments use more rigid style of eliciting and categorising responses to questions;<br><br>Uses highly structured methods such as questionnaires, surveys and structured observation. | Seeks to explore phenomena; instruments use more flexible, iterative styles of eliciting and categorising responses to questions;<br><br>Uses semi-structured methods such as in-depth interviews, focus groups and participant observation. |
| Analytical Objectives | To quantify variation;   | To describe variation;   |

|                             |   |   |
|-----------------------------|---|---|
|                             | To predict causal relationship;<br>To describe characteristics of a population.   | To describe and explain relationships;<br>To describe group norms.  |
| Question format             | Close-ended   | Open-ended  |
| Data format                 | Numerical: obtained by assigning numerical values to responses.   | Textual: obtained from audio tapes, video tapes and field notes.  |
| Flexibility in study Design | Study design is stable from beginning to end;<br>study design is subject to statistical assumption and conditions;<br>Participants' responses do not influence or determine how and which questions researchers ask next. | Some aspects of the study are flexible such as addition, exclusion or wording of particular interview questions;<br>participants' responses affect how and which questions researchers ask next;<br>Study design is iterative, that is, data collection and research questions are adjusted according to what is learned. |

Source: Durojaye (2012: 86)

Analysis of the data in Table 5.1.1 above is indicative of the fact that qualitative research design is basically iterative. This means that the data collection, the instruments with which they are collected and the research questions are all amenable to adjustments in accordance with available knowledge (Durojaye, 2012: 86). It equally shows that the participants' responses determine the shape and nature of the interview, hence it is unstructured. Here, Durojaye shows that the data format is entirely textual derived from audio tapes, video tapes and field notes. The question design is open-ended. This system allows the participants the freedom to deploy their narratives in any way that they enjoy most. Most importantly, Durojaye shows that the analytical objectives of the qualitative research are purely to describe variations and explain relationships. Ostensibly, what Durojaye is saying is that qualitative research is not interested in hypothesis confirmation about phenomena as stated elsewhere. Just like Durojaye pointed out, this present qualitative study is not interested in hypothesis confirmation about any phenomenon or in data quantification either during their collection or in their analysis. Rather, it is interested in describing variations and explaining relationships. Given that Saunders et al

(2003: 88) state that qualitative research is usually exploratory, in-depth and normally founded upon ethnography, an ethnographic perspective was employed for this study, as it was the most appropriate method for interpreting and understanding social interactions.

Building on the above analysis, Vasilachis de Gialdino (2011: 7) agrees that there is no one single legitimate way to conduct qualitative research. This conclusion is based on the fact that qualitative research comprises multifarious orientations, approaches, intellectual and disciplinary traditions hinged on varying philosophical assumptions that generate new data-gathering and analysis strategies. On this basis, Neuman (2011: 96) and Creswell, (2007: 2) contend that the best procedure for conducting qualitative research develops from a researcher's philosophical as well as theoretical department. This assists the researcher in choosing the best approach that suits the research problem from the five distinct approaches in qualitative inquiry (Creswell, 2007: 2). The five qualitative research approaches are narrative, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography and case studies. One big advantage of ethnography is that it ensures that all voices are heard (Hirschauer, 2006: 420), because it has the advantage of enabling a holistic analysis of complex social situations (Denscombe, 2007: 45). It encourages full understanding of the studied reality as much as possible (Punch, 2005: 144). Thus Bryman (2008: 693) sees ethnography as 'a qualitative research method in which the ethnographer immerses himself in the realities of the respondents' environment over a long period, while observing behaviour, listening to what is said in conversations, and asking questions'.

The ethnographic "immersion" principle can be a problematic practice. It is time, labour and capital intensive. Besides those, if the study is investigating crime, the ethnographer will be mingling with criminals. That is ethnographic immersion. If the study is on conflict, it requires tagging along with rebels and others alike. If on prostitution, you stay with prostitutes. If on cultism, you move with cultists. If it concerns drug addiction, you stay with drug peddlers and users. The fact that permission is needed to conduct ethnographic study is another problematic issue. How can a researcher get permission from a gang of thieves and others? To answer

this problematic question, Berg (2001: 137) argues that while various research sites and groups are difficult to access, most are not impossible. However, Venkatesh (2008) paid the ethnographic research price when he was held hostage by a gang as he was doing research into gang-culture. His book: *Gang Leader for a Day* (2008) is a testimony to this. Berg (2007: 138) confirms that fieldwork during ethnographic study is full of uncertainties. Seale (2004: 218) corroborated this with the report of how Whyte's (1955) ethnographic study of "Street Corner Society", earned him threats to his life. Though cultivating and achieving entry into a research site is laden with difficulties (Berg, 2007:184), it is not however, insurmountable. Surmounting this uphill task is what gives credibility to ethnography. In the process of surmounting this obstacle, ethnographers transform into chameleons.

This chameleonic transformation makes them become 'near'-prostitutes while investigating prostitution just like in other instances. In other words, they have the flexibility to switch roles as etic (outsider) and emic (insider) (Hodkinson, 2005: 132) as the occasion demands. All these go to show that ethnographers are not arm-chair researchers. Amidst all these challenges, Bryman (2004: 302) expressed the concern that the ethnographer may after surmounting these obstacles, face the danger of "going native". This problem arises from the extended period of immersion, during which ethnographers form tight relationships with the respondents, capable of derailing their focus. Based on these problematic prevailing circumstances, coupled with the fact that ethnographers' long relationship with the research participants engenders familiarity that empowers the development of trust and better quality first-hand information generation, all their identifying features must be removed from the research records (Henn et al, 2009: 94; Creswell, 2007: 18; Wallen et al, 2001: 478). Furthermore, Henn et al (2009: 95) maintain that the identifying features to be removed includes participants' names, their organisations' names, geographic locations, their work stations and any other characteristics likely to aid their identification. This is particularly due to the nature of critical ethnography.

## 5.2 CRITICAL ETHNOGRAPHIC RESEARCH

This qualitative ethnography subscribes to critical ethnography. The reason for this choice is principally predicated on the nature of the research problem under investigation. First and foremost, ethnography is generally suitable for studies that investigate problems bordering on such paradigms as power, resistance, dominance, suppression, oppression, alienation and marginalization (Creswell, 2007: 70). This explains why this thesis subscribes to critical ethnography. This is because critical ethnography calls for emancipation from marginalization and oppression. In Creswell's (2007: 70 & 75) words, critical ethnographic researchers are somewhat politically minded researchers who through their research, speak out against inequality, victimisation and hegemony. Therefore, the target of critical ethnography is to highlight issues that empower transformation of the society through equitable development and peace-building. For example, understanding why beneficiaries of the Niger Delta environment degrade their benefactor will engender peace and harmony evolution. Not surprising therefore, Creswell (2007: 22) describes critical ethnography as a tool that eradicates the constraints of unjust structures that prohibit development by triggering political debate and discussions that empower changes to occur. This is the real reason why this study is investigating the degradation of Bayelsa State and the entire Niger Delta environment. Critical qualitative ethnography is done to understand complex and detailed facts about a problem from the silenced voices, through talking to them in their homes and work stations. This explains why critical ethnography serves the interest of this study in making the society a better place for all.

Because the critical ethnographic paradigm is amenable to addressing issues hinging on marginalization, alienation, domination, suppression and oppression (Creswell, 2007: 21), it has this important orientation of emancipation and reformation with which it changes the frustrating situation surrounding the respondents that necessitated this study. For speaking for the voiceless and the downtrodden in the society, it is useful in this crusade to understand why the beneficiaries of Bayelsa State (Niger Delta) environment are degrading it. They dig deep into the core causes of a problem and find the way to free those in bondage.

This is why they provide answers to such questions as why people respond the way they do to circumstances affecting them. For example, they answer the question why people respond to frustrations through aggression, and why the environment is degraded by the very people who benefit most from it, even when they know that their action is depriving others of their livelihoods. The findings of this study may help in changing the present frustrating situations that cause aggression and conflict in the region. In doing this, it would save foreign capital investments in oil facilities and equipment located in Bayelsa State and the entire Niger Delta region, the precious lives of the expatriate oil workers, the MNOCs' profits, the Nigerian government's foreign exchange earning capabilities, the smooth flow of oil and gas to the international energy market and equally important, the environment for the sustainability of the oil-bearing communities in Bayelsa State and the entire Niger Delta region. Those are the goals of the critical qualitative ethnographic paradigm. It seeks to make the world a better place for all, especially the oppressed.

These exigencies of the ethnographic nature of qualitative research (Maxwell, 2004: 36), guided by the researcher's experience during data collection and analysis, may influence the modification of the research problem and questions to reflect a better and more meaningful paradigm (Creswell, 2007: 19). This occurred during my research. The research problem as contained in the letter of introduction from Nottingham Trent University (see appendix "B") had to be modified as a result, to find a more suitable worldview or paradigm that would do justice to the research problem. This development culminated in the decision to use critical qualitative ethnography and the choice of the research site where the ethnography was conducted.

### **5.3 RESEARCH SITE'S ICE BREAKING**

On successful identification of the research site as Bayelsa State, and after detailed discussion with the academic supervisory team, an introductory letter was issued. This solicits the prospective respondents to cordially assist the research effort and carefully declares the purpose of the study (see appendix B). Creswell (2007: 123-124) argues that such letters from universities act as door openers for the researcher in the field. Since I was fully aware of the sensitivity and the complexities of doing

detailed ethnographic enquiry in conflicted zones (Buckley-Zistel, 2007: 8; Denskus, 2007: 5; Vasilachis de Gialdino, 2011: 2), this culminated in the recruitment of research assistants experienced in such situations to help out. The research assistants are Sam and Kate. Asika (2004: 106) notes the importance of re-training the research assistants irrespective of their qualifications, in order to suit the purpose of the research. The assistants were given adequate orientation on the requisite procedure for the present study. Asika observes that the characteristics of research assistants should be clearly identified to show their suitability for this responsibility (Asika, 2004: 106).

Table 5.2: RESEARCH ASSISTANTS' DEMOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION

| Name | Gender | Age | Qualification | State of Origin |
|------|--------|-----|---------------|-----------------|
| Sam  | Male   | 27  | BSc           | Bayelsa         |
| Kate | Female | 26  | HND           | Bayelsa         |

Table 5.2 shows that two research assistants were recruited for this study. Both are graduates. While Sam holds a Bachelors of Science Degree (BSc) in Economics, Kate is a holder of a Higher National Diploma (HND) in Fine and Applied Arts. While Kate is a young woman of 26 years, Sam is a young man of 27 years and both of them are indigenes of Bayelsa State. Male and Female genders were chosen to suit the exigencies of the different configurations of the society. If it came to a point where a woman's influence was necessary to break the ice, Kate would do the job. Where a man was needed, Sam was there to ensure the success. That they are both from the state was a big boost to the study, because they speak the language and know the culture of the place. In addition they were shown the importance of being courteous to the respondents because of the sensitive nature of the research and gaining access to the research site.

## 5.4 CULTIVATING FIELD ACCESS

Nigeria's Niger Delta is a very large geo-political zone with nine distinct states (NDRDMP, 2006: 50) and 184 local government administrative areas. This is problematic for my research. For obvious reasons, it is not feasible to study the

entire population of these nine states and all the local government administrative areas in the region, within the scope of this qualitative ethnography. To solve this problem, the method of sampling the population was introduced. Other problems associated with ethnographic researchers on empirical research activity include comprehending the unfamiliar population and the atmosphere of the fieldwork environment, development of access to the prospective study population and establishing a bond with them. Invariably, getting unfamiliar prospective respondents to open up to a stranger (researcher), with their life stories and personal experiences relevant to the study, means that their trusts must be gained (Byrne, 2001: 2).

This was not an easy task to accomplish in a strange and conflict-torn environment where every person is appraised with great suspicion. In corroboration, Berg (2007: 184) posits that access to research sites means the process of gaining entry, or getting into a selected ethnographic research site. Ostensibly, because people guard jealously their privacy, particularly in conflict zone, Berg observes that the process of gaining access or entry into the research site can be very problematic. For Denskus (2007: 5), “it is entangled in uncertainties of not knowing what is round the corner, where you are going, if you will meet dragons or angels”. Furthermore, the horror of having to experience people who lived through horror and making them re-live the horror by asking questions about things that are better forgotten makes sense to Buckley-Zistel (2007: 8). On this basis, she concludes that, “conducting ethnographic field research soon after conflicts is both academically and personally challenging”. These problematic challenges explain why some very frustrating months were spent cultivating access to the research site through constructive contacts with relevant individuals and groups. The essence of this access was to meet the population to be sampled.

## **5.5 SAMPLE, SAMPLING & SAMPLE TYPE**

The key research problem investigated within this thesis hinges on the cross accusations of frustrations arising from the insecurity created by the effects of the environmental degradation, which triggers aggression and conflict. This invariably indicates that it is essential that the sample involves individuals or groups who have

a degree of affinity and or interaction with the environment on a daily basis. It equally needs to include those responsible for making decisions concerning the environment. This is because the quality of the selected sample to a large extent determines the quality and the relevance of the data collected (Asika, 2004: 41). Therefore, Asika exhorts that carefully choosing respondents who are knowledgeable about the research problem under investigation is a good step in the right direction. Following the same line of argument, Schwandt (2007: 269) and Asika (2004: 46) observe that, “samples based on non-probability technique, involving purposive and judgement sampling strategies, allow researchers to use their judgement in selecting respondents capable of supplying data that can give reasonable, requisite and relevant answers to research questions”.

Premised on this advice, journalists, academicians, health workers, community leaders, rights agitators, school teachers, farmers, fishermen and women, NGO officials, oil multinational officials, government officials and other knowledgeable members within the three main actors in the conflict were interviewed and included in the focus group discussions during fieldwork. Furthermore, a non-probability sampling technique saves time, money and energy (Asika, 2004: 47). The opposite of non-probability sample selection method is the probability or random method. They form the two methods of selecting samples from a population. Whilst a probability selection method uses randomness whereby members of the population have an equal chance of being selected as samples, non-probability does not (Asika, 2004: 42 & 45). This is because non-probability uses purposive and judgement methods that target only knowledgeable samples.

Dwelling on the importance of sample size in qualitative research, Saunders et al (2003: 45) exhort researchers to exercise wisdom in sample size selection because when the size is too large, it may result in wasted effort, time, resources and money. Corroborating this, Neuman (2006: 74) argues that a reasonably sized sample engenders optimum contribution from and active participation by all respondents. On this basis, I did not consider it wise to encourage passive participation on the part of the respondents by including people who would be there, just for being there.

Besides being counterproductive, the exigencies of the sensitivity of the conflict zone were amongst other considerations. However, Creswell and Plano-Clark (2011: 174) observe that qualitative researchers usually use small samples because their target is to gain maximum and comprehensive information from them. Ostensibly, it is futile to study a large population without making meaningful use of them. It is better therefore, to use a manageable sample of the population and put them to a very good use.

That explains why qualitative researchers, according to Creswell and Plano-Clark (2007: 33), try to explore and extract the knowledge of the participants' perspectives on the research problem comprehensively. Another importance of sampling, which means taking a small sample of the population, is that it gives quicker results and allows for better supervision than studying the whole population (Asika, 2004: 40). Thus, Bayelsa State was created in 1996 out of three Local Government Areas (LGAs) in the old Rivers State namely, Brass (BALGA), Yenagoa (YELGA) and Sagbama (SALGA). These three acronyms: "Balga", "Yelga" and "Salga" were combined to get the name, Bayelsa. These three LGAs were divided into eight different LGAs for the new Bayelsa State. In 1999, these eight LGAs were further divided into 32 LGAs. In the light of the limited resources available for this study, it was not feasible to study the entire 32 LGAs in Bayelsa State. Therefore, resorting to purposive sampling technique, some communities were sampled as shown in Table 5.3 below.

**Table 5.3: SAMPLED COMMUNITIES IN BAYELSA STATE**

| LGAs     | ACRONYM | COMMUNITIES                                     |
|----------|---------|---|
| AKASSA   | AKALGA  | Ogbokiri  |
| BRASS    | BALGA   | Twon, Ewoama, Odioama, Okpoama, Mbikiri, Dieama |
| EKEREMOR | EKELGA  | Ekeremor, Norgbene,                             |

|                  |         |  |
|------------------|---------|--|
|                  |         | Ogbotobo, Oweigbene, Tamogbene, Ngoro  |
| KOLOKUMA/OPOKUMA | KOLGA   | Kaiama   |
| NEMBE WEST       | NEWELGA | Ogbolomabiri, Bassambiri, Nembe, Okoroba, Burukiri, Elemuama                 |
| OGBIA            | OGBALGA | Ogbia, Oloibiri, Imiringi, Otuokpoti, Idema, Emeyal, Otabagi                 |
| YENAGOA          | YELGA   | Akaba, Atissa, Ekpetiama, Bomoudi, Opolo, Okutukutu, Tombia, Yenagoa, Famgbe |
| SAGBAMA          | SALGA   | Sagbama  |
| SOUTHERN IJAW    | SILGA   | Oporoma, Amassoma  |

From Table 5.3 above, all samples in Bayelsa State were drawn from a total of 9 LGAs and a total of 39 communities. With reference to the analysis in Table 5.4 found on page 132, which summarises the interviews, apart from the 6 interviews conducted in Lagos State and Port Harcourt in Rivers State, all other interviews were conducted in 9 LGAs and 39 Communities in Bayelsa State. The total of 42 individual in-depth interviews (IDIs) and 10 focus group discussions (FGDs) as seen in Table 9, involved a total of 82 participants. The importance of this analysis is to show what was feasible within the limited finances and time available for this study.

Historically, since Shell was the first multinational oil corporation to discover oil in Nigeria, particularly in Bayelsa State, and also is one of the biggest in Nigeria, the research team using purposive sampling technique decided to commence the empirical fact-finding exercise from Shell. This is because according to Creswell and

Plano-Clark (2007: 112; Schwandt, 2007: 269; Asika, 2004: 46), “qualitative researchers predominantly use purposive sampling. It enables them to select participants that are experienced and knowledgeable in the phenomenon that is of interest to them”. Invariably, this is very appropriate because it will amount to a total waste of time, energy and resources to select participants who have nothing interesting to contribute about the research topic. After selecting an ethnographic research site, it is important to gain access to it properly (Byrne, 2001: 1). “Ethnographic research is a collaborative endeavour”, suggests Byrne, who argues that without the consent of the members of the culture that interests you, your project would not be possible.

Obtaining such consent is crucial by announcing and explaining your purposes and intentions to everyone you observe, interview, or survey. This will make you a credible and ethical researcher. “If gaining access to the site depends on obtaining permission from a person who is in charge, identify and contact that person first” (Byrne, 2001: 2). This was exactly what the letter from Nottingham Trent University did. It sought that consent by announcing and explaining the purpose and intentions of the study to all the prospective participants. Armed with this letter, the research team visited the zonal headquarters of Shell in Port Harcourt, Rivers State. However, after exhausting all possible avenues to gain access into the company, the team was referred to Shell’s headquarters in Marina, Lagos State. On arrival at Shell’s headquarters, the research team was once more referred elsewhere, to obtain clearance and approval from the Department of Petroleum Resources (DPR) in Victoria Island, Lagos State. With the introduction letter, application for approval to interview some employees of Shell and the DPR was made (see appendix C).

The DPR, as a Federal government agency, has the responsibility of monitoring the activities of the multinational oil corporations in Nigeria. This fact indicates that the Department of Petroleum Resources has a common characteristics and affinity with the research problem under investigation which is the degradation of Bayelsa State

and the entire Niger Delta environment. This leads to the demographics of the population. Asika (2004: 104 & 107) argues that the nature of the population needs to be known as they give relevance and credibility to the study as well as helping in the choice of sampling technique. In Asika's words, such demographic characteristics as the age, sex, education, occupation and number of the respondents are vital to the credibility of the study (Asika, 2004: 104). Ethnographic tools for data collection are discussed next.

## 5.6 TYPES OF ETHNOGRAPHIC DATA GATHERING TOOLS

The success of every field research to a large extent depends on the suitability of the tools used for data collection. In this qualitative ethnography, the data collection methods adopted include unstructured In-depth Interviews (IDIs), Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and Participant Observation (PO). In Genzuk's (2003: 10) words, ethnography's cardinal data collection tool is observation which may include interviews, and focus group discussions. This accounts for why Creswell (2009: 214-15) opines that a researcher can gain broader perspectives on a phenomenon as a result of the application of various techniques in the one study. Consequently, O'Cathain et al (2010: 1149) argue that ethnography enables ethnographers to triangulate issues, by gathering detailed data from different perspectives. They do this by using such tools as observation, and interviews including focus group discussions for a comprehensive understanding of the circumstances under investigation. The triangulation of these heterogeneous or multiple methods of data collection empowers the probing of divergent dimensions of the research problem deeply and rigorously (Savage, 2006: 384; Silverman, 2000: 8; Savage, 2000: 330).

Before the commencement of the interviews, potential research participants received a copy of the introductory letter from the Nottingham Trent University. This letter was usually accompanied with a written request soliciting their participation (see Appendices C; E; F; G). The fieldwork was conducted in Nigeria between May and

October 2012. The interviews, focus group discussions and the observations were all planned around the participants' availability. This means that there was no time preference for the sessions. Some sessions took place in the morning. Some took place in the afternoon and evenings while some lasted till midnight. Sessions were held on any day of the week that suits the participants. Some sessions took place at the participants' places of work, others in their homes and neutral places such as hotels. This flexibility in arranging the sessions encouraged a good number of the participants to get involved since they were planned not to conflict with their official and private activities.

These ethnographic research data collection techniques adopted here gave the respondents the freedom and the relaxed atmosphere to adopt a conversational attitude. The unstructured nature of the entire sessions ensured that misunderstood questions were reframed for better comprehension. As well, vague opinions of the respondents were probed for further clarifications. This is the very essence of qualitative research; it is interested in what people think and feel about an event that has occurred concerning them, and goes further to question why it happened the way it did (Seers, 2012: 2; Morse, 2002: 875). It is interested in peoples' senses, in their accounts of personal narratives, in their life stories and life experiences (Morse, 2005: 859). It is also interested in their different knowledge, viewpoints and practices and in what people think and what that thinking means, implies, and signifies (Morse, 2002: 875). According to Silverman (2000: 89) it takes interest in the actors' language, and in their forms of social interactions. Qualitative research is both interpretive and inductive (Maxwell, 2004: 36), therefore, it explains, defines, clarifies, elucidates, illuminates, constructs, and discovers new knowledge from respondents' knowledge (Morse, 2004: 739). In doing all these, it allows the respondents to freely express their feelings, knowledge, views, perspectives and opinions concerning the research problem to their satisfaction. This relaxed and empathic relationship between the researcher and the respondents, allows the respondents to freely express their deep felt opinions and feelings on their circumstances, also enables the researcher to uncover hitherto hidden issues vital to the research problem.

The in-depth nature of the qualitative research data dictates the necessity of a relatively smaller sample population (Creswell and Plano-Clark, 2011: 174). This explains the importance of the purposive sampling technique that allows the researcher to select knowledgeable participants on the issues concerning the research problem (Creswell and Plano-Clark, 2007: 112; Creswell, 2007: 119). Denzin and Lincoln (2005: 3) suggest that qualitative ethnographers study their respondents in their natural settings where they live and work by interpreting things according to the meanings the respondents associate with them. Creswell (2007: 37) argues that qualitative ethnographers gather data from the natural field where the respondents experienced the source of the research problem. In other words, ethnographers do not manufacture situations by taking respondents to the lab or sending out instruments for them to complete. Rather, qualitative ethnographers visit the actual scene of the problem to see things for themselves, and talk to the real actors directly to gather first-hand information about their problem in a holistic manner.

Because the qualitative ethnographic research method is people oriented, its techniques of data collection are centred on natural ethnographic human settings, rather than on artificially constructed and manipulated contexts. Ethnographic research entails that the ethnographer participates in people's daily lives for a period of time, watching what happens, listening to what is said, asking questions, and studying documents. In other words, collecting whatever data are available to throw light on the issue(s) with which the research is concerned. This is done through extended observation by immersion in the daily activities of the respondents (Creswell, 2007: 69). This explains why Creswell (2007: 125; Genzok, 2003: 10) submit that ethnography is crucially a multi-method form of research in which observation, in particular, is on the front burner followed by interviewing and focus group discussions. This is primarily because the process of qualitative research is emergent (Creswell, 2007: 125). Invariably, this shows that the original research plan may be modified in response to the exigencies in the research field, as earlier indicated. The tools are as discussed below.

### 5.6.1 IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS (IDIs)

The art of interviewing is simply a conversation with the specific purpose of gathering information (Berg, 2001: 66). They are a social interaction between two or more humans, where knowledge is generated (Kvale, 1996: 42). Interviews are legitimate research methods of data collection for ethnographers (O' Reilly, 2005: 112). There is no particular, generally acceptable way of interviewing (Genzuck, 2003: 6). However, unstructured interviews with open-ended questions that encourage detailed responses are generally the most favoured approach in qualitative ethnography (Konicki Di Iorio, 2005: 19). This method of interviewing enables the respondents to tell their stories at their own pace, in their own ways, within their own time frames and most importantly, in the comfort of their natural settings (Gubrium et al, 2001: 324). Cohen et al (2000: 280) recommend that interviews are better begun with soothing and friendly questions to put the respondents at ease. Doing the opposite might result in an abrupt disruption of the session, because it is a privilege for others to tolerate your intrusion into their private and intimate thoughts and time. Neuman (2006: 92-93; Thompson et al, 2001: 138) argue that the interview remains the most effective method of gathering first-hand data and in-depth understanding of another person's knowledge and experiences. Consequently, it supplies enough credible data about people and their circumstances (Henn et al, 2006: 14). Therefore, each session and the participants should be treated with care.

This raises the issue of the respondents' anonymity and confidentiality. As Oliver (2003: 79) contends, all research participants have a right to anonymity and confidentiality that goes beyond merely changing their names. Cohen et al (2000: 142) put the onus of protecting the respondents from any possible harm due to their participation in the study, squarely on the researcher. For Burgess (1984: 204), every care needs to be taken to ensure that adequate protection is given to the identities of the participants. Berg (2001: 39) emphasises that social scientists have an ethical obligation to their study populations, because they delve into their private social lives. Thus, their confidentiality must be protected to ensure that no harm comes to them. Berg adds that since most ethnographic research involves human

subjects, researchers must give considerable thought to the ways in which they can protect the subjects from harm and injury. Besides this, Sarantakos (2005: 20-21) exhorts researchers to guarantee confidentiality of the data collected during the interview process. In keeping with this, I signed a memorandum of confidentiality for the management of Shell in Lagos, Nigeria (see Appendix "D"), and to protect the participants from any harm. I accepted their request for anonymity due to the sensitivity associated with conflict zones and the nature of the research problem. The anonymity acts as elixir that enables the participants to speak from the depth of their hearts, while volunteering sensitive information. Invariably, this means that any details that might lead to identification of the participants have been deleted from this thesis.

On approval of the interview request by DPR (see Appendix "C"), senior Executives of DPR were interviewed at length. On returning to Shell headquarters in Marina, Lagos State from DPR in Vitoria Island, Lagos State with the approval, Shell's Management made me sign the memorandum of confidentiality mentioned earlier. After that, a member of the management granted the research team an interview and subsequently through the strategy of snowballing (Berg (2001: 33), they made arrangements for another interview to be held with the management of Shell in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State. While waiting for this arrangement to return to Bayelsa State for interview with the Yenagoa based Bayelsa State management of Shell, arrangements to interview the management of a Human Rights Organisation, the Civil Liberties Organisation (CLO) in Ikeja area of Lagos State were ready. On conclusion of the interview with the CLO management, they linked the team with the management of a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State, the Environmental Rights Action (ERA).

On arrival at Yenagoa, Bayelsa State capital, Shell's Management was contacted and an appointment was made for an interview. After this interview, the management invited the research team to a meeting between Shell in Bayelsa State with the local communities' leaders in the state. This meeting proved very profitable as this offered the research team the singular opportunity of meeting these leaders in one place. This culminated in arrangements being made to visit the communities for interviews.

During this fieldwork, the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Dr Goodluck Ebele Jonathan was on a state visit to Bayelsa State. This attracted the women leaders in the state to Yenagoa to receive the President, and it presented another profitable opportunity for the research team to meet with these women leaders. But most unfortunately, security officers on instruction from top government officials restricted the movement of the research team amongst the women leaders for security reasons. Eventually, a Special Adviser to the State government granted the team an interview. After this, the management of the NGO: ERA was contacted and interviewed in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State. They linked the team with the Management of the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) in Port Harcourt, Rivers State. The NDDC referred the team to the office of the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP) in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, after interview with them. Members of MOSOP were interviewed coupled with a focus group discussion (FGD) session with them. For the summary of the fieldwork interviews, see Table 5.4 below.

**Table 5.4: SUMMARY OF FIELDWORK INTERVIEWS**

| Designation                               | In-depth Interviews (IDIs) | Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) | Number of Participants |
|---|----------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| Agitators/Rights Campaigners or Militants | 11                         | 1x 4Respondents                | 15                     |
| Community Leaders                         | 13                         | 00                             | 13                     |
| Farmers/Fishermen & Women                 | 00                         | 8 x 4Respondents               | 32                     |
| Government Officials                      | 10                         | 1 x 4Respondents               | 14                     |
| Human Rights Organisations/NGOs           | 6                          | 00                             | 6                      |
| Shell                                     | 2                          | 00                             | 2                      |
| <b>Total</b>                              | <b>42</b>                  | <b>10</b>                      | <b>82</b>              |

From the summary of fieldwork interviews in Table 5.4, it can be seen that a total of 42 individual in-depth interviews were carried out. The breakdown indicates that a total of 11 individual in-depth interviews were conducted with the Agitators or Rights Campaigners or what some scholars call militants. A total of 13 interviews were conducted with the Community Leaders. There was no in-depth interview with the Farmers/Fishermen and women. A total of 10 in-depth interviews were conducted with Government officials. From the Human Rights Organisation/NGOs, 6 interviews were conducted while 2 interviews were conducted with Shell management.

I found the interview sessions very scary as well as interesting. This is because I had one-on-one interviews with the members of the dreaded Movement for the Emancipation of Niger Delta (MEND), the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP) and the Ijaw Youth Council (IYC). All the security agencies in Bayelsa were cautious about granting interviews because of the security threat posed by the Boko Haram Islamic sect's activities. These activities were being interpreted in Bayelsa State as a calculated attempt by the people of Northern Nigeria to derail the administration of Dr. Goodluck Jonathan, who hails from Bayelsa State. This is one of the challenges which Buckley-Zistel (2007: 8) argues is synonymous with conducting ethnography soon after extreme conflicts. However, the experience with these militants deepened the understanding of the Niger Delta conflict as an off-shoot of the Nigerian-Biafran civil war. The interviews were recorded and written up soon afterwards together with notes taken during the interviews. The participatory observation is discussed next.

### **5.6.2 PARTICIPATORY OBSERVATION (PO)**

The art of observation as a research data gathering instrument is, specifically an academic surveillance undertaken by a researcher, to isolate salient values about the study sample that may evade recognition through verbal communication alone. Because qualitative ethnography places a high premium on the comprehensiveness and magnitude of its data, it employs the salient quality of observational technique to complement the efforts of other tools such as in-depth interviews and focus group

discussion, in order to achieve that. Announcing the participation of the research team neutralises any negative feeling their presence would have created, thereby enabling the research team to immerse themselves in the subjects being observed. The significance of these tools combination or triangulation lies in Patton's (2002: 264) postulation that "For everything that is noticed, a multitude of things are unseen. And, for everything that is written down, a multitude of things are forgotten".

The power of this scholastic surveillance or observation during a qualitative ethnography, acts to legitimize respondents' declarations concerning environmental catastrophes such as water contamination, fish tasting awful due to contamination and death of farm crops from oil spillages and gas flares in Bayelsa State. The importance of the examination of these physical realities is because ethnography is encapsulated in naturalism. In corroboration, Asika (2004: 17) argues that participant observation empowers the ethnographer to monitor both behavioural and non-behavioural activities of the sample subjects. While the non-behavioural observation records physical conditions, the behavioural observation records non-verbal activities. Invariably, this may be the explanation for Seale (2004: 230) to advocate the combination of these tools to achieve maximum results.

This follows the argument that discarding any of the tools, makes the resulting data lack details and validity. Therefore, to achieve comprehensive data compilation, for this thesis, I employed this participant observation tool, which Genzuek (2003: 6) contends is the hallmark of ethnography. Taking residence amongst the study population, enabled me as researcher, aided by two research assistants, to observe the devastating effects of environmental degradation on the health of the study population. Asika (2004: 17) argues that participant observation entails the researcher getting fully involved while recording his observations simultaneously. Both the behavioural and non-behavioural activities observed by the research team form the raw data gathered. The discussion on the focus group discussions comes next.

### 5.6.3 FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS (FGDs)

Focus group discussion is an unstructured, rapid assessment ethnographic data gathering tool used while discussing chosen topics, moderated by the researcher (Kumar, 1987: 43). FGDs emphasise the pooling of thoughts by respondents (Seale, 2004: 197). While it enjoys this advantage, it lacks the privacy enjoyed by the individual in-depth interviews (O' Reilly, 2005: 129). Arguably, FGDs galvanise and stimulate new ideas which act as icebreakers during discussion to electrify, draw out and motivate various thoughts and information from others to promote collaboration that enriches data, although they lack the intimate details derivable from IDIs (O' Reilly, 2005: 131). The sample size plays a very important role in the effectiveness of the FGDs as data gathering tools. Lewis (1992: 418) suggests that groups of four to six respondents are most effective in ensuring active participation of all respondents. Adhering to this, my research assistants and I recruited four respondents for each FGD. This process of effectively interviewing four respondents at once saved both time and costs in comparison to IDIs. Besides, using a very large group in FGDs could inhibit the possible contribution from some participants. In a focus group there is a free discussion whose aim is to generate information on the topic of discussion in a cooperative and collaborative effort to get evidence of what happened. This collaboration is a huge advantage over individual interviews as co-participants in group interview cover angles forgotten by others.

From the summary of the fieldwork interviews in Table 5.4 above, it is seen that a total of ten (10) focus group discussion sessions were conducted. The breakdown of the sessions indicates that one session was conducted with the Agitators/Rights Campaigners or the militants while another one session was conducted with the Government Officials. The other eight (8) sessions were conducted with the farmers/fishermen and women. This group constitutes the most important group because their sources of livelihoods have a direct link with the environment. This explains why the bulk of the FGDs were done with them. The Government officials have the decision-making responsibility as well as monitoring the conduct of the MNOCs in relation to the environment. This was the explanation for including them in

the FGDs. The Agitators have serious affinity with the environment because their parents, wives, brothers and sisters are either farmers or fishermen and women. The Community Leaders are equally farmers and fishermen and women, but their additional responsibility of community leadership made it impossible to group them together at any one time or place. This explains why the IDIs were suitable for them. The importance of this analysis is to show justification for application of FGD on a particular group of respondents and not with another. With the respondents' consent, the sessions were recorded for later transcription. The sessions were moderated by the author while the research assistants observed and took notes.

## **5.7 DATA ANALYSIS**

The mass of data collected through method of triangulation involving in-depth interviews (IDIs), focus group discussions (FGDs) and participant observation (PO) as discussed in this chapter 5, are analysed in Chapter 6 to provide solutions to the concerns raised by the research questions. Relevant descriptive demographics of the sample are also in chapter 6.

## CHAPTER 6

# SEARCHING FOR KNOWLEDGE THROUGH RESEARCH DATA ELUCIDATION

### 6.0 OVERVIEW

In chapter 5, the research methodology adopted for this study was discussed in detail. In this chapter 6, the respondents' demographic profiles, and data analysis are discussed commencing with the demographic categorization of respondents. In qualitative research, data analysis starts with clear establishment of the respondents' demographic characteristics (Asika, 2004: 105).

### 6.1 DEMOGRAPHIC CATEGORIZATION OF RESPONDENTS

Qualitative ethnographers pay close attention to the details of the respondents participating in the study through participant observation (O'Cathain et al, 2010: 1148). In his own opinion, Asika (2004: 104) posits that the minute details of the respondents' demographic information indicate rigor and depth of the study. Besides that, it gives the reader privileged information about the composition of the studied population, thereby leaving absolutely nothing to the imagination. This invariably allows them to make informed judgement about the credibility of the study. To do this, Table 6.1 below shows the gender distribution of the sample population for this study.

Table 6.1: RESPONDENTS' GENDER DISTRIBUTION

| Respondents' Demographic Features | Number of Respondents |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| GENDER:                           | -                     |
| Male                              | 70                    |
| Female                            | 12                    |
| <b>Total</b>                      | <b>82</b>             |

Table 6.1 shows that the total number of males that participated in this investigation is 70, while a total of 12 females participated. This brings the sum total of the respondents to 82. The preponderance of male participants in this study is tied to the particular challenges associated with the sensitivity of conflict zones. As Vasilachis de Gialdino (2007: 6) observes, carrying out ethnographic empirical work in rural areas in the states of Africa, means walking on narrow paths, visiting from one homestead to another and knocking on non-existent doors. This depicts the scenario where the women folk especially, due the effects of the conflict, are not too willing to be at ease with strangers. Stories of rape and general violence against women in conflict zones by security agencies are rife in the region. However, the presence of the female research assistant, Kate was of immense help in convincing the number of female respondents that did participate in this study. This leads to another important issue of age distribution of the samples as displayed in Table 6.2 below.

Table 6.2: RESPONDENTS' AGE DISTRIBUTION

| Respondents' Demographic Features | Number of Respondents |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Respondents' Age Distribution:    | -                     |
| Up to 35 years                    | 15                    |
| 36 – 45 years                     | 36                    |
| 46 – 55 years                     | 20                    |
| Over 55 years                     | 11                    |
| <b>Total</b>                      | <b>82</b>             |

The analysis of the respondents' age distribution displayed in Table 6.2 shows that the ages of the respondents in the sample were right across the mature age range from 35-55 years and a little above. The largest number of respondents occurs in the age bracket of 36-45 years. This age group accounted for as many as 36 respondents. The age group of 46-55 years produced a total of 20 respondents. The number of respondents that aged over 55 years was only 11. The number of respondents for 35 years and under was 15. This shows that the bulk of the respondents come from the mature age bracket of between 36-45 and 46-55 years.

While respondents in these age brackets produced a total of 56 respondents, those up to 35 years and those above 55 years accounted for a total of 26 respondents. The importance of this analysis is that all the respondents were of sufficiently mature age and sound mind to participate in this study. As Asika (2004: 104) points out, this gives credibility to research studies. The next thing to be considered is the respondents' educational distribution on display in Table 6.3 below.

Table 6.3: **RESPONDENTS' EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION DISTRIBUTION**

| Respondents' Demographic Features | Number of Respondents |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Educational Qualification:        | -                     |
| University Education              | 22                    |
| Secondary Education               | 45                    |
| Primary Education                 | 15                    |
| <b>Total</b>                      | <b>82</b>             |

From the analysis of the educational distribution of the respondents in Table 6.3, it is clear that a total of 22 respondents achieved University education. In the second row are those respondents with Secondary education. This group of respondents are 45 in number. The last row is for the respondents with primary education. In this group, there are a total of 15 respondents. What can be inferred from this educational distribution of the respondents is that the largest bulk of the respondents are armed with college education. The total number in this group is 45 respondents. This group is followed by the number that achieved university education, a total of 22 respondents. The least are those in the primary education group. This group are just 15 in number.

The significance of this analysis is that the generality of the population of the respondents that took part in this study are educated. This eradicates the problematical phenomenon of language barrier faced by the researcher as a non-indigene, irrespective of the presence of the research assistants. This is the positive

effect of using the non-probability method of sample selection. The non-probability method makes use of purposive or judgement technique of sampling. This usage of non-probability method of sample selection receives justification from Creswell and Plano-Clark (2007: 112). Others argue that qualitative researchers primarily use purposive sampling technique as it enables them to use their judgement in selecting participants, who are experienced and knowledgeable in the phenomenon, that is of interest to the researchers (Schwandt, 2007: 269; Asika, 2004: 46; Creswell, 2007: 119). However, language barrier was responsible for non-inclusion of samples without the benefit of primary education. This is because ethnographic study lays emphasis on the in-depth meaning of the respondents' narratives in order to gain insights into the phenomena of interest (Durojaye, 2012: 5; O'Cathain et al, 2010: 1148). The sensitivity of this requirement could not be sacrificed on the interpretation and translation of research assistants. Therefore a medium that will guarantee a true representation of the respondents' meaning was to use English language. This leads to the consideration of the years of experience distribution of the respondents on display in Table 6.4 below.

Table 6.4: RESPONDENTS' YEARS OF EXPERIENCE DISTRIBUTION

| Respondents' Demographic Features | Number of Respondents |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Years of Experience Distribution: | -                     |
| 0 – 5 Years                       | 3                     |
| 6 – 10 Years                      | 25                    |
| 11 – 20 Years                     | 37                    |
| Over 21 Years                     | 17                    |
| <b>Total</b>                      | <b>82</b>             |

Analytically, data on display in Table 6.4 categorically shows that the respondents have a variety of reasonable years of practical experience, ranging from 5 years to 21 years and above in their various fields of specialisation. Basically, no respondent from the selected sample had less than 4 years of experience in their chosen profession. However, only as few as 3 respondents had 5 years of practical

experience in the practice of their profession. Apparently, a total of 17 respondents had acquired over 21 years of practical experience in their fields of human endeavour related to the environmental issue. This is very important because what is under investigation here is environmental degradation by the major beneficiaries of the environment. Thus, as many as 25 respondents from the sampled population had acquired a total of between 6 years to 10 years' experience in their areas of specialisations concerning the environment. The bulk of the selected sample numbering 37 respondents have been in the practice of their profession with connection to the environment from 11 years to 20 years. Invariably, the question of the respondents' experience is considered of tremendous importance to qualitative researchers by scholars.

As both Creswell and Plano-Clark (2007: 112; Schwandt, 2007: 269; Asika, 2004: 46; Creswell, 2007: 119) observe, a wealth of practical experience in the respondents' various fields of profession is a pointer to the fact that they have been tested over-time and therefore can confidently and reasonably speak about such a profession. It is obvious that expertise can be developed over years of veritable experience in a particular profession. These years of experience distribution analysis from Table 6.4 is indicative of the fact that the sampled respondents are experienced enough to creditably speak for their profession in relation to the environment. Equally, this analysis points to the fact that the respondents' many years of experience, show them as responsible adults who are very articulate with their thoughts on the phenomenon being investigated. These are the factors that influenced the selection of this sample. It would be a waste of time and resources to select samples that will not be articulate enough over the phenomenon of interest. It is now apropos to look at the respondents' designation distribution as displayed in Table 6.5 below.

Table 6.5: RESPONDENTS' DESIGNATION DISTRIBUTION

| Respondents' Demographic Features              | Number of Respondents |
|--|-----------------------|
| Respondents' Designation Distribution:         | -                     |
| Farmers/Fishermen/Women                        | 32                    |
| MNOCs Managers                                 | 2                     |
| Human Rights/ NGOs                             | 6                     |
| Community Leaders                              | 13                    |
| Government Directors                           | 14                    |
| Agitators/Rights Campaigners: IYC; MEND; MOSOP | 15                    |
| <b>Total</b>                                   | <b>82</b>             |

Data analysis of the designation distribution of the total of 82 respondents that took part in this study as displayed in Table 6.5, categorised the respondents according to their respective professions or interest groups that are considered relevant to this study (Creswell, 2007: 119). As highlighted earlier, the sample would be considered relevant to this study if their profession or interest group is directly involved with the environment on daily basis or have the responsibility of making decisions concerning the environment. In this respect therefore, all the respondents are considered to be people who either have direct involvement with the environment as their source of livelihoods, or else are concerned about the health or well-being of the environment as NGOs, rights agitators, the national government and the oil multinational corporations. In this connection therefore, a total of 32 farmers, fishermen and women were sampled as people with direct involvement with the environment on daily basis. For this group of respondents, the environment is their only source of livelihoods.

The oil multinationals are the next group of respondents who have direct involvement with the environment on daily basis as the source of their profit [livelihoods]. In this group, 2 respondents were interviewed. The next group is the human rights organisations and the NGOs who, though, not directly involved with the environment as their source of livelihood, are concerned about the insecurities created by the environmental problems. Therefore, the well-being of the environment is their concern. In this group, there were 6 respondents. Next are the Community Leaders. Most of them are farmers, fishermen and women but have the additional responsibility of co-ordinating the affairs of the communities with special reference to the environment. From this group, a total of 13 respondents participated in this study. The next group of respondents is made up of government officials. They are mostly charged with the responsibility of making decisions concerning the environment and of monitoring the activities of the oil multinational with special reference to the environment. In this group, there were 14 respondents. The last group is made up of the agitators or the rights campaigners or what some scholars call the militants. In this group, a total of 15 respondents participated in the study. This group includes the memberships of the Movement for the Emancipation of Niger Delta (MEND); the Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP), and the Ijaw Youth Council (IYC). The IYC is the national co-ordinating body of all the various agitating groups or rights campaigners in the region.

Data analysis process involves data preparation, data tabulation, data presentation and descriptive analysis (Asika, 2004: 126). Furthermore, besides involving data preparation, tabulation and presentation, Yin (2003: 109) argues that it embodies examination, categorisation and finally its analysis. Data preparation comprises transcribing the recorded interviews, field notes and observation notes, editing them and coding them. The process of editing entails correcting all errors in grammar, spelling and construction to reduce inconsistency and render the data readable and meaningful (Asika, 2004: 110-111). Tabulation means presenting the data in tables for easy comprehension. Analysis is the descriptive analysis of the data for easy comparison while making logical inferences. Descriptive analysis may either be

qualitative or quantitative which is used to verbally summarise generated data or information. A good example involves stating without tables that so, so and so percentages of the participating organisations were in manufacturing, commerce, in service organisations, and in government services or ministries. This is descriptive verbal analysis with some quantitative information. However, stating that the majority of the participating organisations were in service and government while others were in manufacturing is descriptive analysis without quantitative information. This descriptive analysis without quantitative information is clumsy and therefore, not the best way to do analysis (Asika, 2004: 118). This obviously has implications for this study as it tries to avoid this clumsiness in data analysis by using tables. Instead of tackling the research questions now, it is considered more appropriate to present the data analysis first, because the result of the analysis would be used for solving the research questions. Thus, here comes the research analysis below.

## 6.2 DATA ANALYSIS AND PROCEDURES

Because there are no prescribed post-positivist ways to analyse qualitative data, data collection is an integral part of the analytical procedure. Qualitative data evolve from the systematic collection of extensive narrative data (non-numerical data), in order to gain insights into the phenomena of interest. Such phenomena of interest include people, objects or events, through its analysis with the aid of coding (Durojaye, 2012: 5). Data analysis is essential because, if collected data were to be left in its raw stage after collection, as audio recordings, or pages of transcripts, the time and resources invested in them would be wasted. Analysis is therefore, what gives the collected data the ability to say something meaningful to the researcher, the respondents and the society at large. This is why the analytical stage is about the most important part of the research process. Data codification officially marks the end of the data collection process, but equally marks the beginning of the emergence of data categorisation. This is because the codification of data breaks the whole bunch of collected data into smaller fragments from which important categories, themes and patterns give birth to the research findings. Ryan (2006: 93-95) posits that this process is often daunting, especially if you have pages of interview or focus-group transcripts or other documents to work with. The complete

process of analysis requires that the data be organised, scrutinised, selected, described, theorised, interpreted, discussed and presented to the public. It involves examining the meaning of people's words or actions to make explicit the knowledge that is in them.

To obtain this knowledge, Ryan (2006: 96) believes that "the purpose of the research predominantly gives a focus to the analysis. And this is where the research questions come in. The analysis has to make links between what you have found in your data and the questions that led you to undertake the research in the first place. Therefore, all the insights or understandings that you present from the research should throw some light on the research questions as a kind of boomerang indicating validity". In the opinion of Ryan, "the first step in analysis is called coding, that is, reading your data and developing a set of categories, themes or basic organising ideas. Names are given to these categories and used to label sections of the data. This initial coding is essential because it is really just about sorting your findings into themes. Then list the topics and sub-topics and divide your transcripts or documents into sections based on these topical headings" (Ryan, 2006: 98). Data analysis is a continuous phenomenon in qualitative ethnographic research which requires good coding practice to be fulfilled. By converting the mass of data items generated from participant observation, focus group discussions and in-depth interviews from this study into the form suitable for analytical instruments, coding ensures clarity. It does this through data coding process that groups responses from research respondents into categories that bring together similar ideas, concept or themes that have been discovered in the analytical process.

This justifies Spradley's postulation that data analysis is an exploration for patterns, themes and even categories (Spradley, 1980: 85), while the process of coding, argues Seale (2004: 306), constitutes a practical technique of ensuring the emergence of those very crucial themes, categories and patterns that empower logical inferences. Also Rubin (1983: 20) agrees and argues that qualitative research data analysis is predominantly "An effort to categorize, summarize, and seek patterns and relationships within the information collected". This is similar to Marshall and Rossman's (2006: 156) proposed sequential process of data analysis

for qualitative research involving: organizing the data; generating categories, themes, and patterns; coding the data; testing the emergent understandings; searching for alternative explanations; and writing the report. This offers the explanation as to why Østberg (2003: 38; Huberman & Miles, 1994: 10-12) opine that the coding process assigns meaning to chunks of data. Appraising the transcripts of respondents' interviews, I noticed that participants' portrayals of environmental degradation within the Niger Delta region and particularly in Bayelsa State reflected elements of economic, water, food, health, and socio-political insecurities and consequently conflict. This is particularly so because the joint venture partnership of the MNOCs and their host government has frustrated all the peaceful efforts made by the OBHCs to find an amicable solution to the problem. Once this was recognised, a return to the transcripts highlighted references to the Nigeria-Biafra civil war and its consequences on the Biafran enclave of Bayelsa State (Niger Delta).

However, data codification is a critical step towards data analysis (Seale, 2004: 306). A stage by stage method of data analysis posits Burnard (1991: 463), assumes that interviews are recorded in full and each recording is transcribed as the basic rudimentary stage of data analysis. Ostensibly, Burnard appears to be describing the stages followed in conducting the analysis in this current study. This is because the raw data from the fieldwork were meticulously transcribed and fully re-examined for consistency. Miles and Huberman (1994: 10) contend that the qualitative analysis approach (sometimes termed 'Transcendental Realism') is an analytical approach that focuses on three components that occur simultaneously throughout the analysis. They are firstly Data Reduction which emphasises the way in which the transcribed data is analytically coded (reduced) without losing the context. It is a "form of analysis that sharpens, sorts, focuses, discards, and organises data so that conclusions can be drawn" (Miles and Huberman, 1994: 10). Secondly, there is Data Display, which moves the analysis forward with the use of displays (diagrams, charts, models). It runs alongside the data reduction component as part of the analysis, and in addition forms part of the data reduction. Thirdly, there is Drawing Conclusions, a component which also happens continuously throughout the process (Stokes, 2013: 179-180).

An experienced researcher can decide to code anything which he considers to be of help in the data analysis (Durojaye, 2012: 219). The qualitative researcher usually pays attention to the natural settings in which the phenomena of interest occur by capturing the reality in the form of texts, used for drawing conclusions or making inferences. Equally, data refer to facts, ideas or knowledge that are useful in answering research problems (Durojaye, 2012: 54). For data analysis to be effective, the issue of data codification must be properly done. Data codification simply implies the development of signals or symbols to aid data items' identification or categorization. The actualisation of this is particularly assisted by Durojaye's four classifications of data namely: nominal data, ordinal data, interval data and the ratio data. Of these classifications, this thesis is more inclined to co-opting the nominal data which bear direct reference to "name bearing". Besides that, nominal data are specifically for identification and categorization purposes during data codification towards effective data analysis (Durojaye, 2012: 179). Thus, the name bearing characteristics of the nominal data ensures that each data item is specifically and correctly placed into named categories according to their common or shared elements (Asika, 2004: 112-113). For example, women who are different in many ways could be assigned to the same category based on their shared gender (Durojaye, 2012: 54-55).

Coding is a research technique applied specifically to manage the large volumes of data through refinement and manipulation into a meaningful order (Punch, 2005: 55). In that vein, it requires the researcher to read the data and highlight existing relationships amongst the various data items and even extract themes, patterns, and categories in a systematic manner. Each relationship is coded with a word or short phrase that suggests how the data inform the research objectives (Richards, 2005: 86). Organising the data into categories in accordance with the emergent relationships helps to generate findings that transform raw data into new knowledge. This is done by engaging in continuous, painstaking analytic processes throughout all the different stages of the research (Thorne, 2000: 68; Seers, 2012: 3). Drawing from Richards (2005: 87), qualitative coding is performed to enable the coder to gain insights into relationships between categories; to develop theories about the

relationships; to enable comparisons between phenomena; to fine tune categories into different dimensions with repeat coding; to reflect on what segments say about a category and to search for blends or combinations of categories.

As Durojaye (2012: 215) suggests, all the data that I collected from the fieldwork were carefully transcribed, read, edited, proofread and checked for completeness and accuracy to aid full comprehension of the respondents' story lines. Guest et al (2012: 15–16) succinctly contend that the qualitative data analysis process consists of reading through textual data evolving from the transcribed interviews and observational notes. Comprehension of the respondents' story lines is enhanced through subjecting these transcribed data to thorough examination via the application of open coding, which is better referred to as 'line-by-line coding'. This involves assigning conceptual labels, better referred to as codes, to each word or sentence of relevance made by the respondents during the interviews. The labelled or coded data with similarities are grouped together to form conceptual categories which further transforms into themes. Thereafter, I developed a safe and clear procedure for handling and storing the emerging categories and themes by creating filing systems in which the sorted data were stored for easy access. The grouping of the data into similar categories proved very helpful in this analysis, because of their relevance to providing solutions to the dimensions of the research problem and the research questions. Asika observes that generated data are either used to test hypothesis or to answer research questions depending on whether your research project and your approach is inductive or deductive (Asika, 2004: 105).

Invariably, after this analysis, the findings were employed in answering the research questions one after the other. Where possible, relevant tables are used to show how the analyses in the tables suggest answers to the research questions or the hypotheses (Asika, 2004: 105; Durojaye, 2012: 214). This leads to the development of theories and concepts as the analysis progresses through careful interpretation and comparison of the data. Strauss and Corbin (1998: 123) state that focused or selective coding, axial coding and theoretical coding are more advanced mechanisms of data codification because they scrutinize the relationships existing

between categories. In summary, coding is used to identify subjects that are significant to the respondents. These subjects are assigned conceptual labels to transform them into codes. Some of these codes invariably develop similar characteristics enabling them to be grouped together into more abstract categories and themes. The interpretation of this outcome results in the evolution of new knowledge. Thus, it can be safely argued that coding crystallizes problems, issues, concerns and matters of importance to those being studied. However, I did not use the axial and theoretical coding systems because their characteristics are not amenable to the demands of this study. Rather, comparisons between respondents' statements, and the emerging categories were undertaken to form an opinion on the findings. To complement this analysis, a choice of analytical method needs to be made. For this study, the typology analytical method as described by Berg (2001: 188) has been selected as seen in section 6.3 below.

### 6.3 TYPOLOGY ANALYTICAL METHOD FOR ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY

Scholars of diverse inclinations have come to accept the fact that there are no 'quick fix' techniques in qualitative analysis. This is because "there are probably as many different ways of analyzing qualitative data as there are qualitative researchers doing it" (Lacey and Luff, 2001: 3 cited in Durojaye, 2012: 213). As a confirmation, Patton succinctly states that "because each qualitative study is unique, the analytical approach will equally be unique" (Patton, 2002: 433). Obviously, Patton is right because qualitative research according to Creswell (1994 cited in Durojaye, 2012: 186) is divided into five different types. They include Ethnography, Case Study, Grounded Theory, Phenomenology and Biography. Definitely, all these types of qualitative research will subscribe to a different analytical culture. For instance, Berg (2001: 166) posits that qualitative researchers use both content, thematic and typology analytical methods. Typology analytical method is, according to Berg (2001: 166) a systematic method for classifying similar events, actions, objects, people, or places, into discrete groupings for analytical purposes. Furthermore, David Morgan (1988) lists ethnographic summaries as one of the most familiar means of analyzing

qualitative data. It involves the use of quoted (phenomenological or emic) statements to capture a more elaborate or comprehensive range of ideas (Durojaye, 2012: 212). Generally, Thorne argues that ethnographic analysis uses an iterative process to transform ideas from data. It does this by sorting and sifting through data to detect and interpret categories and contradictions to generate conclusions about what happened and why (Thorne, 2000: 72).

Other procedures deployed for qualitative data analysis include the Broad Levels of Analysis, better known as the Content Analytical method. This analytical method consists of simple counting of the frequency with which certain words or phrases occur in the data item. However, the research paradigm of content analysis refers more accurately to Beverly Hancock's use of it as 'thematic analysis' (Lacey and Luff, 2001: 4 cited in Durojaye, 2012: 213). This brings us to the research paradigm of Thematic Analysis as the next qualitative analytical method of data analysis. Invariably, content analysis is arguably the simplest method. Using this method, the researcher evaluates the frequency and saliency of particular words, phrases or ideas within the raw data in order to identify keywords or repeated ideas. LeCompte and Schensul (1999: 86) argue that whilst content analysis is both efficient and reliable, its usefulness for the ethnographer is limited because it fails to take into account the context within which the data was generated. Thematic analysis in contrast, moves beyond counting words and focuses on identifying and describing implicit and explicit ideas and themes.

Ostensibly, the difference between content analysis and the thematic analysis is that while the former revolves around words or phrases, the latter goes beyond words, and focuses on sentences or paragraphs. Thus, just as Lacey and Luff (2001: 4) observed above, it is just a thin line that separates the two qualitative data analytical paradigms (Durojaye, 2012:213). As an indication that there exists a plethora of techniques of data analytic methods as numerous as there are qualitative researchers, Seidel (1998 cited in Durojaye, 2012: 213) developed a useful model to explain the basic process of qualitative data analysis. The model consists of three components namely: Noticing, Collecting, and Thinking about interesting paradigms in the data. These three parts are interlinked and cyclical, argues Seidel. For

example, Seidel observes that, while thinking about things concerning the data, you notice further things and collect them. Seidel likens the process to solving a jigsaw puzzle. This leads to the consideration of the Typology analytical method mentioned above.

As Berg (2001: 166) posits, the typology analytical technique is a systematic method for classifying similar events, actions, objects, people, or places, into discrete groupings. For example, McSkimming and Berg in 1996 did a study of gambling and gaming in rural American taverns. After more than six months of ethnographic observations in the field, they found four major types of tavern patrons: Regular drinking patrons; Regular gaming patrons; Regular gambling patrons and Transient patrons. According to Berg (2001: 166), McSkimming and Berg found the Regular drinking patrons to be individuals who regularly sat at the bar and chatted among themselves as they consumed several alcoholic beverages. They were highly in-group oriented and would not speak with outsiders (transient patrons). This is typical of an ethnographic report; it specifically describes the culture of these regular drinking patrons as being 'in-group oriented'. In the same vein, they found the second group of Regular gaming patrons to be those individuals who sporadically consumed alcoholic beverages, but primarily socialized with others involved primarily in playing darts or billiards. Furthermore, note the attention the ethnographers paid to the very intimate culture of this group. This particular sample engaged sporadically in alcohol drinking, but spent more time in socialising with dart or billiards players. This is the 'ethnography' in this ethnographic finding which embellishes the report of ethnographers.

With the remaining two groups of patrons, McSkimming and Berg's findings crystallises the significance of participant observation in ethnographic research. It did this by establishing the similarities and differences between the Regular gambling patrons and the gaming patrons. While the similarities are that they both indulge in sporadic alcoholic beverages consumption, the findings specifically highlighted the fact that the gambling patrons regularly placed wagers (of cash, drinks, or other valuable items) against the outcome of a dart or billiard game. This crystallises the ethnographic contribution to literature by McSkimming and Berg's findings. However,

the last group of patrons classed as the Transient patrons, are individuals who drifted into and out of the tavern scene, sometimes returning for a second or occasionally a third visit, but not with any sort of regular pattern of attendance. Specifically, the findings pointed out that the Transient patrons were excluded from conversations among regular drinking patrons, but were permitted to game and gamble occasionally with others. This exclusion tendency is based on the fact that they lack the necessary emic culture of the in-group tradition. This is why I adopted the typology analytical method to govern data analysis part of my thesis.

Clearly, McSkimming and Berg's (1996) typology permitted them to see various distinctions between the various people who frequented the tavern. For example, regular drinkers were more interested in maintaining friendships with one another and discussing family activities than with establishing new friendships or light social banter. Such observations permitted McSkimming and Berg to better understand some of the social roles and interaction patterns that they observed among people moving through the social world of the tavern. Typically, researchers follow a basic three-step guideline for developing typologies. Firstly, they assess the collected material and then seek out mutually exclusive categories. Secondly, researchers ensure that all of the elements being classified have been accounted for (an exhaustive grouping of elements). Thirdly, researchers examine the categories and their contents, and make theoretically meaningful appraisals. The use of mutually exclusive categories assures that every element being considered appears only in a single category (Berg, 2001: 168).

However, Berg (2001: 167) observes that while the typologies analytical method may seem like oversimplification of social life, this is what makes them attractive. They permit the researcher to present data in an organized and simple fashion, allowing the reader to better understand the explanations offered as interpretation and analysis of the typology scheme. A major goal of typologies, then, is to provide additional understanding of the material collected during the course of the research. All these are what recommended this typology analytical method for this study. Having seen the adopted analytical method for this study, it is time to see if the data

was either manually or with the aid of computer analysed as presented in section 5.4 below.

## 6.4 “COMPUTERS DO NOT ANALYSE DATA, PEOPLE DO”: A CASE FOR MANUAL DATA ANALYSIS

Contrary to the existence of a plethora of computer assisted qualitative data analysis software, Durojaye (2012: 215) argues that “in the course of analyzing qualitative data in terms of themes, concepts, ideas, or interactions or the processes, you have to do the thinking and the analysis yourself. This is because there is no computer software that can actually do the thinking and interpretation of the collected data for you”. However, in the debate on the usefulness of computer aided data analysis or otherwise, Seale (2004: 316) argues that more data can be coded, contextualised and analysed in the time available, and more refined coding systems can be developed. Bazeley (2007: 9) counters that with the argument that “it does create another layer of interpretation between the data and the reader”. Furthermore, Bazeley (2007: 2) claims that Nvivo 7 (computer software) has many advantages, one of which is that it prevents degeneration into anecdotalism, and enhances the validity of data. For Bryman (2004: 420; Seale, 2004: 317) it guarantees transparency in the process of analysis.

However, categorically, Berg (2001: 2) argues that qualitative research cannot be analyzed by running computer programmes. His argument is based on the fact that qualitative research methods and analytic strategies are not associated with high-tech society in the ways that quantitative techniques may be. Earlier, Weitzman and Miles (1995 cited in Berg, 2001: 261) declared that, “There is no computer program that will 'analyze' your data”. Emphatically, Weitzman and Miles without equivocation declared that, “Computers do not analyze data; people do”. Invariably, the influence of these computer programmes is restricted to sorting, coding, storage, and retrieval of data (Seale, 2004: 317). Besides those activities, the researcher still has to listen to all the recordings, transcribe, read, edit, and proof-read all the transcripts from this qualitative database, comprising all interview transcripts, focus group discussion

transcripts and the participant observation transcripts (Bazeley, 2007: 10; Berg, 2001: 33).

Furthermore, computer programmes are flexibility resistant (Bryman, 2004: 419), which does not permit the researcher the freedom to adopt another bearing after coding. This being the case, the extent of application of computer assisted data analysis programmes in my study was restricted to word processing. Furthermore, Ryan (2006: 98-99) argues that, “You can get computer packages to do this kind of sorting for you, but we advise against them, especially for student researchers. This is because it helps to be able to see and touch the processes and outcomes of sorting, and these are hidden from you when you use a computer to identify themes. Your senses are blunted by the technology, and you often miss out on making links between categories. With the more hands-on paper approach, it is more likely that you will see commonalities”. Capitalising on Berg (2001: 240), the manual analytical processes that I undertook for my study are as displayed in Table 6.6 below.

Table 6.6: **QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYTICAL STAGES**

| ANALYTIC STAGES | ANALYTIC ACTIVITIES   |
|-----------------|---|
| RAW DATA        | Collected raw data are transformed into text through transcription of the field notes and the recorded verbal communications with the aid of computer word processing programmes. |
| DATA CODING     | Transcribed texts are sorted and organised accordingly and coded systematically to become meaningful.   |
| THEMES          | Examination of the coded data culminates into the development of analytical tags in the form of categories or themes.   |
| COMMONALITIES   | The developed or resulting analytical tags are thematically and systematically  |

|             |  |
|-------------|--|
|             | organised, establishing resemblances, similarities, commonalities or differences.                            |
| EXAMINATION | Commonalities or differences are critically examined culminating in the development of significant outcomes. |
| OUTCOMES    | These outcomes are interpreted as the findings of the thesis.  |

The contents of Table 6.6 substantiate Thorne’s (2000: 68) claims that “to generate findings that transform raw data into new knowledge, a qualitative researcher must engage in active and demanding analytic processes throughout all the phases of the research”. Corroborating this, Huberman & Miles (1994: 10-12) declared that data analysis consists of three systematic and simultaneous actions flowing from start to finish of the study. These actions are data reduction, data display, and conclusions and verification. Data reduction necessitated by their usual size is predicated on simplification and transformation into manageable and meaningful order so as to empower the emergence of useful themes and patterns by coding analytically. Data display entails its presentation as an organized, compressed assembly of information that permits conclusions to be analytically drawn. This involves the use of displays such as tables, diagrams, charts, and models as part of the analysis. This shows that all the tables in my study are analytical tools. Therefore, determining what to sample or not, materials to include or exclude, and how to arrange the presentation of data constitute analytic decisions made by the researcher. All these explain why data analysis in qualitative ethnography is usually a continuous process. In this research, data analysis is concentrated on making sense of the prevailing accounts of the reality from the claims of the respondents during fieldwork interviews. This also includes what I observed as a participant observer during the field study, for purposes of logical inferences.

Moreover, from the analytical culture displayed in Table 6.6 above, it is clear that the data that was gathered from IDIs, FGDs and PO were painstakingly listened to and meticulously manually transcribed from the audio-recorded equipment. Subsequently, the transcribed data were further subjected to analytical processing

through the aid of the computer Microsoft Word processor. With the exception of this application of the computer Microsoft word processor, every other stage of this analysis such as listening to all the recordings, reading, editing, and proof-reading all the transcripts was manually executed. This is because scholars such as Weitzman and Miles (1995; Berg, 2001; Seale, 2004; Bryman, 2004; Bazeley, 2007 and Durojaye, 2012) concur that a computer's capability as far as data analysis is concerned, is limited and therefore, not of much use. In such circumstances, continuation with such a device would deny me the opportunity to follow the relevant thematic segments of the text (data).

Most importantly, the intellectual stimulation provided by the manual exercise involved in this qualitative analysis would have been lost. The degree of intellectual stimulation, the manual application of coding, and the identification of the emerging thematic categories for this study are not worth sacrificing for the exposed weaknesses of the qualitative computer software packages. All these informed the choice of manual analysis over the computer software aided data analysis together with the fact that Ryan (2006: 98-99) actually advised "students against using them". Now that all the vital components of data analysis and its presentation have been conducted via the Demographic categorisation of the respondents in section 6.1; Data analysis and its procedures in section 6.2; Typology analytical method for ethnographic study in section 6.3 and "Computers do not analyse data" in section 6.4, it is time to discuss the findings.

## 6.5 CONCLUSION

The chapter has continued the data analysis began in the previous chapter during data collection. It commenced the analysis by examining the demographic categorisation of the respondents. In the words of O'Cathain et al (2010: 1148) this is very vital in data analysis. Within the confines of the demographic distribution, the respondents' gender, age, and educational qualification were discussed to enhance the validity of the analysis. It is important to emphasise that due to language barrier, samples without the benefit of at least primary education were not included in the

study. The reason being that ethnographic research, according to Durojaye (2012: 5; O’Cathain et al, 2010: 1148) lays emphasis on the in-depth meaning of the respondents’ narratives in order to gain insights into the phenomena of interest. The sensitivity of this requirement could not be sacrificed on the interpretation and translation of research assistants. Therefore a medium that will guarantee a true representation of the respondents’ meaning was to use English language.

It also considered the disadvantages of using the existing plethora of computer assisted qualitative data analysis software, which Durojaye (2012: 215) argues cannot do the thinking and the analysis for you, and chose the manual analysis instead. Specifically, Seale (2004: 317) states that invariably, the influence of these computer programmes is restricted to sorting, coding, storage, and retrieval of data only. Thus, as a justification for this my decision to adopt manual analysis, Weitzman and Miles (1995 cited in Berg, 2001: 261) declared that, "There is no computer program that will 'analyze' your data". Emphatically, Weitzman and Miles without equivocation declared that, "Computers do not analyze data; people do". With respect to Weitzman and Miles, I categorically tabulated all the stages of data I went through to arrive at the findings.

The chapter equally discussed the Typology Analytical Method for ethnographic research as the adopted mechanism for this analysis amongst others. Its simplicity and thoroughness is its advantage over other methods. Next, in chapter 7 the respondents’ narratives are discussed.

## CHAPTER 7

### THE PERCEPTION OF BAYELSA [NIGER DELTA] ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION BY BENEFICIARIES

#### 7.0 OVERVIEW

In Chapter 6, the data analysis was discussed in detail and would be used afterwards to answer the research questions in an attempt to solve the research problem. In this chapter 7, respondents' perceptions of the dynamics of environmental degradation were employed to critically interrogate why the major beneficiaries are degrading their benefactor. Participants were generically asked questions from different dimensions of the phenomenon that enabled them to explain what they consider to be the probable reason for the degradation of their environment by its major beneficiaries and how this impacts their existence. These narratives demonstrate that the ruling military regime, who conducted the war, saw Bayelsa State's (Niger Delta) resources as Biafran, and therefore, considered them as "spoils of the war". From the participants' perception, this "spoils of the war" syndrome created a disparity in the developmental structure between the defeated Biafran side and the victorious Federal side. This is confirmed by a study conducted by Irobi (2010: 46), which argued that the government used the oil wealth from Niger Delta to develop some parts of Nigeria, but neglected the Southern part defeated in the war.

To broaden this existing developmental gap, "the regime in 1969 finally removed or abandoned the principle of derivation which, before the emergence of crude oil as the core revenue earner for the nation, was adopted as a means of revenue allocation in the country. Under this revenue framework, regions retained 50% of revenue derived from them" (Ambaiowei, 2014: 2; Klieman, 2012: 18; Pavsic, 2012: 1; Ojeleye, 2011: 144; Ekanade, 2011: 77; Ngomba-Roth, 2007: 192). This was abandoned with the advent of crude oil found in the defeated Biafran territory. This further disadvantaged the already skewed developmental structure adopted by the ruling military regime against the defeated side in the civil war. This chapter thus engages in the discourse of the participants' estimation of why their environment is

being degraded, and how this developmental disparity politically, economically, and socially, marginalised and deprived the oil-bearing communities of Bayelsa State (Niger Delta) from the wealth sourced from their ancestral homeland.

The focus of this study being the understanding of what motivated the beneficiaries of the Niger Delta environment to degrade it, bearing in mind that this threatens the very existence of the oil-bearing communities, is the marked departure of this present study from others before it. This chapter therefore shifts the scholarly debate on the Niger Delta to investigating critical issues surrounding the paradigm of environmental degradation by the beneficiaries and the challenges this poses to the day-to-day life of Niger Delta oil-bearing communities. The dimensional impacts of environmental degradation by beneficiaries will be in the next section.

## 7.1: THE DIMENSIONAL IMPACTS OF ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION BY BENEFICIARIES

The participants' description of the visible signs of degradation of their environment and its effects on their general economic, social and political activities reflects the significance of nature and environment for the different dimensions of their existence. These dimensions are economic security, health security, food security, social and political security which offer the framework for comprehending the tacit relationship existing between the oil-bearing communities of Bayelsa State (Niger Delta) and their environment. The first section of this chapter explores the economic insecurity dimension, which consists of the aspects of the security that seeks to bind the community together. The economic insecurity dimension of environmental degradation is reflected in perceptions of how the oil-bearing communities are impacted and struggle to cope with this development. The participants' descriptions of how the economic insecurity engendered by the environmental degradation empowers frustration-dynamics to convert powerful energies into aggression and violent conflicts are examined first.

The next section explores how the food insecurity as a consequence of the environmental degradation described by the respondents has turned the region into a conflict zone. The second half of the chapter explores respondents' description of examples of the health insecurity dimension within their region. The responses are quoted with reference to the respondents' code distribution as seen in Table 7.1 below. Analytical explanation of the respondents' code distribution shows that the Agitators/Rights Campaigners or Militants are coded as "AGR<sub>CM</sub>"; the Community Leaders are coded as "CL"; the Farmers/Fishermen and Women are coded as "FFW"; the Government respondents' are coded as "Go<sub>S</sub>" for State Government and "Go<sub>F</sub>" for Federal Government]; the Human Rights Organisations/NGOs are coded as "HRNGO" while the Multinational Oil Corporations are coded as "MN". "FGD" is for the focus group discussions.

**Table 7.1 RESPONDENTS' CODE DISTRIBUTION**

| <b>RESPONDENTS</b>                    | <b>CODES</b>   |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Agitators/Rights Campaigner/Militants | AGR <sub>CM</sub>  |
| Community Leaders                     | CL   |
| Farmers/Fishermen/Women               | FFW  |
| Government                            | Go <sub>S</sub> = State Government; Go <sub>F</sub> = Federal Government |
| Human Rights Organisations/NGOs       | HRNGO  |
| MNOCs                                 | MN   |
| FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS               | FGD  |

Source: (2012 Fieldwork)

Tables 7.2 to 7.7 show the individual respondent's code distributions. But as seen in chapter 5, Henn et al (2009: 95) maintain that to ensure that absolutely no harm comes to the respondents due to their participation in the research; all identifying features to be removed from the study include their names, their organisation's names, geographic locations, their work stations and any other characteristics that may aid their identification. For this reason, the personal details are deleted from the individual respondents' code distributions contained in Tables 7.2 to 7.7 below. Thus,

only the codes and the dates of the interviews are shown. Respondents' names and interview locations as well as others are expunged from this study.

**Table 7.2 AGITATORS' RESPONDENT CODE DISTRIBUTION**

| CODE                 | INTERVIEW DATE                 | INTERVIEW LOCATION                       |
|----------------------|--------------------------------|--|
| AGRCM <sub>1</sub>   | August 13 <sup>th</sup> 2012   | ██ |
| AGRCM <sub>2</sub>   | August 13 <sup>th</sup> 2012   | ██ |
| AGRCM <sub>3</sub>   | August 15 <sup>th</sup> 2012   | ██ |
| AGRCM <sub>4</sub>   | August 15 <sup>th</sup> 2012   | ██ |
| AGRCM <sub>5</sub>   | August 18 <sup>th</sup> 2012   | ██ |
| AGRCM <sub>6</sub>   | August 19 <sup>th</sup> 2012   | ██ |
| AGRCM <sub>7</sub>   | August 28 <sup>th</sup> 2012   | ██ |
| AGRCM <sub>8</sub>   | September 6 <sup>th</sup> 2012 | ██ |
| AGRCM <sub>9</sub>   | October 4 <sup>th</sup> 2012   | ██ |
| AGRCM <sub>10</sub>  | October 6 <sup>th</sup> 2012   | ██ |
| AGRCM <sub>11</sub>  | October 9 <sup>th</sup> 2012   | ██ |
| <b>Total No.: 11</b> | <b>00</b>                      | <b>00</b>                                |

Source: (2012 Fieldwork)

**Table 7.3 COMMUNITY LEADERS' RESPONDENT CODE DISTRIBUTION**

| CODE                        | INTERVIEW DATE                  | INTERVIEW LOCATION |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------|
| CL <sub>1</sub>             | August 17 <sup>th</sup> 2012    | 🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘         |
| CL <sub>2</sub>             | August 20 <sup>th</sup> 2012    | 🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘         |
| CL <sub>3</sub>             | August 25 <sup>th</sup> 2012    | 🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘         |
| CL <sub>4</sub>             | September 4 <sup>th</sup> 2012  | 🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘         |
| CL <sub>5</sub>             | September 5 <sup>th</sup> 2012  | 🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘         |
| CL <sub>6</sub>             | September 10 <sup>th</sup> 2012 | 🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘         |
| CL <sub>7</sub>             | September 11 <sup>th</sup> 2012 | 🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘         |
| CL <sub>8</sub>             | September 15 <sup>th</sup> 2012 | 🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘         |
| CL <sub>9</sub>             | September 16 <sup>th</sup> 2012 | 🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘         |
| CL <sub>10</sub>            | September 18 <sup>th</sup> 2012 | 🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘         |
| CL <sub>11</sub>            | September 18 <sup>th</sup> 2012 | 🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘         |
| CL <sub>12</sub>            | September 19 <sup>th</sup> 2012 | 🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘         |
| CL <sub>13</sub>            | October 10 <sup>th</sup> 2012   | 🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘🐘         |
| <b>Total Respondents 13</b> | <b>00</b>                       | <b>00</b>          |

Source: (2012 Fieldwork)

**Table7.4: FOCUS GROUP (FGD) RESPONDENTS' CODE DISTRIBUTION**

| <b>CODE</b>            | <b>INTERVIEW DATE</b>          | <b>INTERVIEW LOCATION</b> |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
| FFWfgd <sub>1</sub>    | July 28th 2012                 | 獠獠獠獠獠獠獠獠獠獠獠獠              |
| FFWfgd <sub>2</sub>    | August 12th 2012               | 獠獠獠獠獠獠獠獠獠獠獠獠              |
| FFWfgd <sub>3</sub>    | August 13th 2012               | 獠獠獠獠獠獠獠獠獠獠獠獠              |
| FFWfgd <sub>4</sub>    | August 16th 2012               | 獠獠獠獠獠獠獠獠獠獠獠獠              |
| FFWfgd <sub>5</sub>    | August 17th 2012               | 獠獠獠獠獠獠獠獠獠獠獠獠              |
| FFWfgd <sub>6</sub>    | August 26th 2012               | 獠獠獠獠獠獠獠獠獠獠獠獠              |
| FFWfgd <sub>7</sub>    | August 30th 2012               | 獠獠獠獠獠獠獠獠獠獠獠獠              |
| FFWfgd <sub>8</sub>    | September 2 <sup>nd</sup> 2012 | 獠獠獠獠獠獠獠獠獠獠獠獠              |
| GoFfgd <sub>9</sub>    | September 5th 2012             | 獠獠獠獠獠獠獠獠獠獠獠獠              |
| AGRcmfgd <sub>10</sub> | October 8th 2012               | 獠獠獠獠獠獠獠獠獠獠獠獠              |
| <b>Total 10 Groups</b> | <b>00</b>                      | <b>40 Respondents</b>     |

Source: (2012 Fieldwork)

Code Explanations: The AGRcmfgd<sub>10</sub> refers to Agitators' focus group discussion; GoFfgd<sub>9</sub> refers to Government officials' focus group discussion; and FFWfgd<sub>1</sub> refers to Farmers/Fishermen & Women focus group discussion. Thus Farmers/Fishermen & women, the Government officials and the Agitators are the three groups that participated in the focus group discussions (FGD).

**Table 7.5: GOVERNMENT RESPONDENTS' CODE DISTRIBUTION**

| CODE                        | INTERVIEW DATE                | LOCATION   |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|------------|
| GoS <sub>1</sub>            | June 25th 2012                | 🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵 |
| Gof <sub>2</sub>            | June 25th 2012                | 🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵 |
| Gof <sub>3</sub>            | June 28th 2012                | 🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵 |
| Gof <sub>4</sub>            | July 28th 2012                | 🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵 |
| GoS <sub>5</sub>            | July 29th 2012                | 🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵 |
| GoS <sub>6</sub>            | August 25th 2012              | 🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵 |
| Gof <sub>7</sub>            | September 14th 2012           | 🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵 |
| GoS <sub>8</sub>            | October 15 <sup>th</sup> 2012 | 🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵 |
| GoS <sub>9</sub>            | October 17 <sup>th</sup> 2012 | 🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵 |
| Gof <sub>10</sub>           | October 19 <sup>th</sup> 2012 | 🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵 |
| <b>Total Respondents 10</b> | <b>00</b>                     | <b>00</b>  |

Source: (2012 Fieldwork)

**Table 7.6: HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANISATIONS/NGOs RESPONDENTS' CODE DISTRIBUTION**

| CODE                       | INTERVIEW DATE                  | INTERVIEW LOCATION |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------|
| HRNG <sub>1</sub>          | July 29 <sup>th</sup> 2012      | 🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵         |
| HRNG <sub>2</sub>          | July 27 <sup>th</sup> 2012      | 🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵         |
| HRNG <sub>3</sub>          | August 18 <sup>th</sup> 2012    | 🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵         |
| HRNG <sub>4</sub>          | August 22 <sup>nd</sup> 2012    | 🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵         |
| HRNG <sub>5</sub>          | September 16 <sup>th</sup> 2012 | 🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵         |
| HRNG <sub>6</sub>          | October 4 <sup>th</sup> 2012    | 🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵🐵         |
| <b>Total Respondents 6</b> | <b>00</b>                       | <b>00</b>          |

Source: (2012 Fieldwork)

Table 7.7: MNOCs RESPONDENTS’ CODE DISTRIBUTION

| CODE                       | INTERVIEW DATE               | INTERVIEW LOCATION |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------|
| MN <sub>1</sub>            | August 5 <sup>th</sup> 2012  | 狮狮狮狮狮狮狮狮狮狮         |
| MN <sub>2</sub>            | August 10 <sup>th</sup> 2012 | 狮狮狮狮狮狮狮狮狮狮         |
| <b>Total Respondents 2</b> | <b>00</b>                    | <b>00</b>          |

Source: (2012 Fieldwork)

## 7.2: THE ECONOMIC INSECURITY DIMENSION OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION

This section considers the effects of the huge human insecurities created by the environmental degradation through the economic insecurity dimension from the perspectives of the participants. The participants depict their experiences as “very challenging” in a “harsh economic hardship” within a life-changing situation caused by oil exploration activities. The uncertainty as well as the vulnerability of the precarious situation of their only source of livelihood made the participants to describe themselves “as refugees in their own homes”. They described how their inability to attract succour from the government, the multinational corporations, the legislature, the judiciary and the security agencies, made their “home-bred refugee status” the worst in the world. The first response of many participants was to mention the economic insecurity, as the most visible impact of the environmental degradation in the region. For instance:

Uhh! Waking up one morning to discover that you have nothing to do to put food on the table for the family is most discomfoting. The suddenness without warning at all is the most shocking aspect of the entire life-changing situation. Suddenly, your aged parents desire to go to the hospital for medical attention, your wife waits for money to go to the market with, the children need to go school and you have absolutely no answers to all these problems because of the

environmental degradation (FFWfgd<sub>3</sub>). Uhhmm, you cannot plan anything because you are not sure of anything. This is frustrating and when there is no hope of changing the misfortune, it degenerates to madness in the form of aggression (FFWfgd<sub>7</sub>).

As these respondents describe, the deprivation of their economic sources of livelihood through the degradation of the environment subjects them to a very critical situation. Other participants conclude that they are devastated and heart-broken as a result of the deprivation leading to the loss of their means of survival. What (FFWfgd<sub>3</sub> and FFWfgd<sub>7</sub>) described above is in consonant with the declaration of Fanon (1968). Fanon argued that so long as this frustration psychology prevails, the oppressed is in a state of permanent tension, and his immediate dreams are that of switching roles and positions with his tormentor – the oppressor (Fanon, 1968 cited in Bulhan, 1985: 213). It is logical that switching such precarious frustrating positions can only be achievable through aggression and violent conflict. Ostensibly, the adjoining quotes clearly delineate the respondents' desolation and emotional upheaval over their plight.

Family is 100% the most significant issue on our minds at this problematic time. We are distraught and broken-hearted that we are incapacitated and cannot provide for our families (CL<sub>13</sub>). There are many failed-families that are wrecked due to the stress and frustrations the environmental degradation exposes them to. These are the toughest times of our lives (CL<sub>10</sub>). Erm, the grim determination of the single mothers [widows] amongst us to survive, have forced them into the despicable trade of selling their bodies to put food on the table for their families. Oh, this unfortunate disorientation that is dangerously frustrating has exposed us to suffer in pain and misery. Hhmm, our young girls are dropping out of schools due to unwanted pregnancies procured in the process of trying to earn daily bread because of their parents' failure because of environmental degradation. Uhhmm, the boys are seeing all these hardships and it compounds their frustration (CL<sub>1</sub>; AGRCM<sub>4</sub>).

Given that the boys are seeing the frustrations caused by the NG and the MNOCs, Willow (2014: 244) warns that the difficult situations faced by people who may not find alternative adjustable positions to support their families, leaves them no other option than to express their frustration through aggression. And from all indications, it can be argued that if there is no smoke without fire, therefore, wherever and whenever there appears smoke, it would be expected that fire would be lurking there, unless it is put out by the fire fighters. In the same vein, the descriptions contained in the quotes above are very frustrating. If nothing positive is done to stop it from igniting, it's most likely to culminate into aggression and violent conflict from the thickening cloud. Amsel (2006: 28) just like Berkowitz (1989: 65) demonstrates that frustration is the matrix on which aggression and violent conflicts are formed. It is therefore, not surprising that Olawuyi (2012: 3) argues that for "oil exploration to be considered sustainable, it must lead to financial returns and profits to local entities as well as a positive balance of payments and technology transfer. It must lead to improvements in the economic activities in the resource-based country and the economic development of the host country. It should also result in the emergence of clean and efficient technologies in the host country". However, from the stories of the participants in this current study, as indicated above, these expectations are so far, yet to be achieved.

The result is a strained relationship between the stakeholders in the oil exploration in relation to the poverty of the participants in the study, due to environmental degradation by the beneficiaries. For instance, from Table 7.8 below, Emmanuel found in his study, that oil industry activities are the "root causes" of environmental degradation (ECCR, 2010: 54) and that the environmental degradation from gas flaring, oil spillages and water contamination are the "immediate causes" of poverty and hunger through loss of livelihoods as a result of unemployment amongst the OBHCs in the entire region (ECCR, 2010: 55). With the findings of Emmanuel's research, it is clear that oil industry activities which Olawuyi (2012: 3) argues should trigger financial benefits and general improvements in the economic activities in the resource-based country, have instead aggravated poverty and hunger amongst the indigenous people. Participants' narratives in the subjoined table give a detailed

account of this economic failure experienced by the people due to oil industry activities.

**Table 7.8: PROBLEMS & CAUSES OF NIGER DELTA CRISIS**

| <b>Problem Requiring Immediate Attention</b>           | <b>Immediate Causes</b>   | <b>Underlying Causes</b>  | <b>Root Causes</b>                         |
|--|---|---|--|
| Poverty and Hunger                                     | Environmental Degradation [Gas Flaring, oil Spillage, Soil Degradation & Water Pollution  | Poor Environmental Performance & Lack of Enforcement of Standards and Regulations | Oil Industry Activities                    |
| Unemployment   | Loss of Livelihoods   | Major Arable Land Acquisition & Lack of Adequate Compensation                     | Oil Industry Activities                    |
| Underdevelopment                                       | Lack of Social Infrastructure, Corruption and Lack of Rule of Law   | Ethnicity-Based Politics and Lack of Patriotism                                   | Poor Governance                            |
| Low Life Expectancy[High Maternal and Child Mortality] | Widespread Transfer of Bacteria, Viruses & Parasites, Contaminating Water Resources, Soil & Food. Air Pollution from Gas Flaring, Water Contamination from Oil Spills | Water & Sanitation Crisis. Local Air Pollution<br>Poor Diet and Poor Health       | Oil Industry Activities<br>Poor Governance |

|                           |   |  |                         |
|---------------------------|---|--|-------------------------|
| Environmental Degradation | Depletion of Flora & Fauna<br>Air Pollution & Water Contamination | Destruction of Habitats<br>Gas Flaring & Oil Spillages | Oil Industry Activities |
|---------------------------|---|--|-------------------------|

Source: Emmanuel (ECCR, 2010: 54-55)

From the narratives of other participants, it was gathered that:

The contemporary economic hardship being experienced in Bayelsa state [Niger Delta] now is not different from what obtained during the Nigeria-Biafra civil war. During the war, most families were wrecked as most women and girls were abducted and commandeered by the advancing federal soldiers as their wives irrespective of whether they were married women or single girls (AGRCMfgd<sub>10</sub>). Under this present dispensation of the oil multinational regime, the expatriate oil workers with their affluence have taken over our wives thereby producing masses of broken homes. Our young girls' futures are being wasted due to the high incidence of unwanted pregnancies attributed to their illicit relationships with the wealthy expatriate oil workers. All these are occurring because hardships created by the crude oil exploration and exploitation-induced environmental degradation deprived their parents and husbands from exercising their rights to work. It is obvious that the civil war is not yet over, taking cognisance of what we are still witnessing (AGRCMfgd<sub>10</sub>).

Banigo (2008: 352) completely agrees with AGRCMfgd<sub>10</sub>, CL<sub>13</sub>, CL<sub>10</sub>, CL<sub>1</sub> and AGRCM<sub>4</sub> that "The war is not over". Banigo argues that it is totally appalling that several decades after the Nigerian civil war, Niger Delta, Nigeria's economic power station is in abject squalor. From the narrative above, it was pointed out to the participants that their analogies of the war time issues with the contemporary times, when the women are abandoning their families out of their own volition, as against when they were commandeered, were different. They were quick to reply that:

The situation forcing the women to abandon their families was the creation of the civil war. Niger Delta was part of Biafra and the military government that emerged from the war confiscated our lands

and mineral resources and allowed the MNOCs free reign to degrade our environment without prudence. The military elites were the same soldiers that took our women during the war. They know that we are farmers and fishermen and women. They equally know that degrading the environment would cause poverty and hunger in this area which will force the women into prostitution. This is why the war is not yet over (AGRCMfgd<sub>10</sub>). In his own narrative, AGRCM<sub>4</sub> argues that the civil war is still being prosecuted through our environmental degradation. Demonstrating their conviction over the issue, AGRCMfgd<sub>10</sub> and FFWfgd<sub>2</sub> argue that, “If anybody thinks that the war is over, let the person provide the answer to why the principle of derivation that was 50% was suddenly stopped when our oil started earning huge revenue for the nation. In corroboration, CL<sub>1</sub> asked “Why was the derivation principle not stopped when groundnut and other agricultural products were earning enough revenue?”

Interestingly, the respondents did not wait for the researcher to provide the answer to the above question concerning the non-abrogation of the derivation principle, while groundnut and other agricultural products from the ruling majority ethnic groups earned enough revenue, before coming up with the answer themselves. In their answer, FFWfgd<sub>2</sub> argued that:

The ruling majority ethnic groups did not abrogate the derivation principle then because they benefited hugely from it, to the tune of 50%, as the producers of the agricultural products earning the revenue. AGRCMfgd<sub>10</sub> claims that contrarily, the advent of the crude oil from the minority ethnic group changed the whole equation. Incidentally, Niger Delta was located in the Eastern region (then Republic of Biafra). To defeat Biafra, Niger Delta’s crude oil was confiscated by the federal government. To add to that, CL<sub>10</sub> argues that, our land was also seized. Incidentally, in that war, starvation was openly used as a weapon. That weapon is still in operation in the Niger Delta.

The participants were asked to explain how starvation is still in operation in the Niger Delta and what link exists between that and the war. From their narratives, AGRCM<sub>1</sub> contends that:

In Bayelsa State just as in the whole of the Niger Delta region, we are predominantly farmers and fishermen and women because of the nature of our environment. This means that we depend solely on nature for our survival. As a matter of fact, “Anything that affects the environment negatively, directly affects our collective existence” (FFWfgd<sub>7</sub>). The environmental degradation in the Niger Delta is directly linked with our starvation. It causes our farm crops to fail and destruction of our fishing business. The air we breathe is polluted and our sources of drinking water are contaminated. All these point to one thing, and that is the continuation of the war-time policy of starvation (CL<sub>9</sub>; FFWfgd<sub>1</sub> & HRNG<sub>6</sub>). Insisting that the Nigeria-Biafra war is still on, the AGRCMfgd<sub>10</sub> asked, “If the civil war is over, why is the constitutional provision that the environment should be protected, not being implemented in the Niger Delta? If the war is over, why would the government whose responsibility it is to protect its citizens, use the security agencies to kill civilians who peacefully protest against the pollution of their air, water, farm lands and fish ponds?”

Clarifying the respondents’ narratives above, Opukri and Ibaba (2008: 180) clearly identified the sources of the indigenous population’s means of livelihood to be fishing, farming, trading and hunting, all of which are dependent on the environment. This therefore, indicates that the environment is very critical for the survival of these populations. Therefore, its degradation militates against their existence. No wonder the participants are agreed that Bayelsa State [Niger Delta] is not being treated as a full-fledged member of the Nigerian nation. They argue that the evidence for this is abundant. For example, the participants noted that it was unfortunate that the military government after the Nigeria-Biafra civil war ensured that all the revenue accruing to the nation from the crude oil sourced from Bayelsa State [Niger Delta] was used for the development of other parts of the nation. This involved especially those parts that were not considered part of the Biafran enclave. They pointed to the massive

amount of infrastructural developments witnessed by cities such as Lagos, Kano, Kaduna, Abuja and others while the entire Niger Delta remained predominantly undeveloped and impoverished. Their arguments run thus:

We are obviously seen as second class citizens in this country because of the war. This country derives its wealth from our land and our resources, but turns round to kill us through the degradation of the very source of our existence. Yes! This is the truth (CL<sub>13</sub>; CL<sub>5</sub>; AGRCM<sub>7</sub> & FFWfgd<sub>2</sub>). The fact is, AGRCMfgd<sub>10</sub> argues, "if a man deprives you of access to your inheritance or takes your right without your consent, he has killed you. If a man takes your property, abducts your wife or induces her to abandon her matrimonial home, he has killed you. This is because from 1970, when the war was officially declared over, till now, how many people with the geographical identity of Niger Delta are owners of or are operating oil blocks in this country?" Furthermore, the FFWfgd<sub>2</sub>; CL<sub>5</sub> & AGRCMfgd<sub>10</sub> contend, "We are the people suffering from all the effects of the oil industry pollution, while others are enjoying what is actually our birthright. Do you see why everything around us is practically a constant reminder to us that the civil war is still on?"

Intrinsically, from these participants' narratives, it can be seen that the neglect and subsequent degradation of the environment that means life to the OBHCs of Bayelsa State (Niger Delta), is perceived by the people as a continuous war policy of the NG against the Biafran enclave of Bayelsa State (Niger Delta). They contend that since starvation was a popular policy utilised as a weapon of war by the military regime, the degradation of their environment which bears similarity with starving the erstwhile Biafran enclave of Niger Delta is a continuation of the war by other means. Starvation translates into impoverishment which aggravates the human insecurities triggering frustrations engendered by environmental degradation. The underground current of abandonment and despair in the region offers this as the only plausible explanation for why a major beneficiary of the environment is, as Owolabi (2012: 49) concludes, carelessly degrading the environment. This prompted Dafinone (2008

cited in Aghalino, 2011: 3) to visualise that as the probable understanding for the continuous degradation of the environment by the beneficiaries.

The seriousness associated with this problem was perceptible from the long duration of unplanned silences which some participants kept before responding to this question concerning the economic insecurity dimension of the environmental degradation. Finally, when the ice was broken, their groaning voices were noticeably full of torment while describing how frustrations brought about by the actions of some beneficiaries from the Bayelsa State (Niger Delta) environment were allowed to breed aggression and violent conflict. The participants argue thus:

Can you beat a child and forbid him from crying to express his grief under normal circumstances? Water means life to the fish. If you remove that fish from water, what do you expect? A patient that requires a life supporting machine to survive would be frustrated when deprived of that machine, especially if he thinks that, that is his birth right. Do you not think so? (FFWfgd<sub>7</sub>; AGRCMfgd<sub>10</sub>).

When implored to be more specific about what all these complex thoughts and questions are driving at, their responses were brief and specific.

We are suffering because of the civil war. This means that the civil war is still on (FFWfgd<sub>7</sub>; AGRCMfgd<sub>10</sub> & CL<sub>13</sub>).

How is that possible? The war officially ended in 1970. I pointed out to the respondents that in 2012, that is exactly forty-two years later, why are they still saying that the war is still on?

Oh! The confusion that arose between the governments of the Republic of Biafra, the Federal Republic of Nigeria and the MNOCs over the payment of oil revenue and taxes is the bone of contention. The MNOCs' decision to pay to the government of Biafra, because Bayelsa (Niger Delta) where the oil reserves are found are in Biafra, resulted in the use of the 1969 Petroleum Decree to confiscate all the

mineral resources in the region (HRNG<sub>2</sub>). Subsequently, CL<sub>2</sub> states that the Land Use Decree of 1978 converted the lands in the Niger Delta region to become the exclusive property of the NG. The result is the government's apathy in the protection of the Niger Delta environment which has severe economic security problems for the region (AGRCM<sub>11</sub>).

Drawing from the foregoing participants' narratives, it is understandable that the NG metaphorically beat the OBHCs when it enacted the Petroleum Decree and the Land Use Decree. Both decrees robbed the communities of their rights to ownership of their land and natural resources both of which are against the principles and practice of federalism. Following the metaphors used, it means that the OBHCs are the fish that the government separated from the water, the source of their existence. As farmers and fishermen/women, the OBHCs are the patient, whose life supporting machine was detached, leaving them dejected and frustrated to fight for survival. The expression "fighting for survival" meant the aggression the people resorted to when the full implications of the governments' action became obvious to them. The people expressed their frustration by promulgating the Kaiama Declaration (KD) 1998. The KD was to repudiate and repel the decrees that empowered the degradation of their environment and the economic insecurity it creates. However, the government's response to the Declaration was the militarization of the region and military aggression against it. That offers an explanation for the participants' perception that the war has not ended.

Interestingly, it became apparent that most of the responses of participants from the government quarters were influenced by to whom they owe allegiance. Noticeably, those participants whose allegiance lay with the State government were slightly inclined to vouch for the State. The same thing was noticeable with those participants whose allegiance lay with the Federal government. It is clear that there are some political problems between the two quarters coded as "GoS" for those on

the State government's side while "GoF" refers to those on the federal government's side. For instance, the participants from the State government quarters (GoS) argue that:

It is crystal clear that something is inherently wrong with the political system of this nation. Look, natural justice demands that if you use another man's property, you should pay for what you use. If you rent a government property and you default in rent payment, the government will take actions to recover its property or at least to ensure prompt payment of rent at the appropriate time. The Federal government forcefully took over our lands and our natural resources to appease the MNOCs (GoS<sub>1</sub>). That notwithstanding, the geography of our landscape indicates that the whole of Niger Delta is waterlogged. This signifies that dry land for agricultural purposes is too scarce for a people that are wholly dependent on environment for their livelihood. The scarce land situation has been worsened by the government's unrestricted appropriation without compensation. Whatever is left from this, is further damaged by the oil exploration activities of the MNOCs (GoS<sub>5</sub>). The result of this is massive unemployment for our youths. All these are why the youths are resolute in obtaining justice (GoS<sub>9</sub>).

The failure of the government to honour us as the original owners through payments of compensation is the main problem. The quest for compensational justice was what made the youths organise the promulgation of the Kaiama Declaration to reassert and reclaim their rights. The Declaration asked the government and MNOCs to negotiate with them or leave their property for them (GoF<sub>10</sub>). Can anybody in his or her right senses blame the youths for fighting for posterity in this civil war that has refused to end? Look at what they

did with the revenue-sharing formula. Are we not Nigerians or is Niger Delta not a Nigerian territory? Those are the issues that the youths want to re-write in the annals of the history of this nation to bring the war to its conclusive end (G<sub>0</sub>S<sub>5</sub>).

However, the participants on the other divide of the political system, those with allegiance to the Federal government, are diametrically opposed to the other camp's postulation. They maintain that there is no war in Nigeria. For them:

Nigeria cannot be at war with itself. This is because the existence of Biafra ended a long time ago, in 1970. It is unfortunate that there exists the problem of environmental degradation and its accompanying challenges (G<sub>0</sub>Ffgd<sub>9</sub>). However, G<sub>0</sub>F<sub>7</sub> argues that, this problem is mostly attributable to criminality by some elements in the society. Some criminals, who are desirous of making easy money, do not consider the effects of what they are doing on the poor innocent masses of Bayelsa (Niger Delta region). The occasional spillages due to oil industry operational failures cannot be used as a barometer to signify that the Niger Delta region is neglected and marginalised (G<sub>0</sub>F<sub>7</sub>).

Reacting to this, the G<sub>0</sub>F<sub>10</sub> (HRNG<sub>4</sub>; AGRCMfgd<sub>10</sub>; CL<sub>12</sub> and FFWfgd<sub>7</sub>) were quick to challenge the position of the G<sub>0</sub>Ffgd<sub>9</sub> and G<sub>0</sub>F<sub>7</sub> by using the 1983 annual report of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) to advance their argument. The NNPC is a Federal government's agency and in its 1983 report strongly criticised both the NG and the MNOCs for devastation of the environment (Owolabi, 2012: 50; Courson, 2009: 7; Dafinone, 2008 cited in Aghalino, 2011: 3). The AGRCMfgd<sub>10</sub> argues that "The foundation and cornerstone of our security is dependent on the security and wellbeing of our environment. The environment grows our food, supplies us with fish, meat, herbal medicines, energy and our economy. All these have been sacrificed because the government prioritized its rapid economic growth over our environmental objectives. Our environmental security indicator should

prioritise the health of our rivers, our farms, our air, plants and animals. This is because the sustainability of our development and improved lives depends on these natural resources”.

The economic security implication of this NNPC report is that oil spillages cause overwhelming and permanent harm to the environment which includes plants, animals and humans. This invariably results in loss of income and means of subsistence for individuals and companies in the commercial fishing, shrimp, and oyster industries. According to Olawuyi (2012: 5-6), this affects farmers, hunters, fishermen/women, charter boat operators, owners of hotels, tourist management agencies, rental property owners, and other businesses in coastal resort areas. Drawing from the NNPC report, the government’s and the MNOCs’ apathy to the destruction of the only means of subsistence of the OBHCs in Bayelsa State (Niger Delta), may have been responsible for the perception that the civil war is still on amongst the participants.

The research participants from the MNOCs contend that the peculiar nature of crude oil exploration involving oil and gas production, transportation and shipment of hydrocarbons, as well as refining in extremely difficult geographies and environmentally sensitive regions, cause environmental issues. All this exposes the environment and its constituents to a plethora of risks including process safety incidents, effects of natural disasters, social unrest, personal health and safety lapses, and crime. In accordance with their narratives:

In the event of any devastating incident occurring, especially an explosion or hydrocarbon spill, human fatalities may occur coupled with environmental harm, loss of livelihoods, and joblessness within the host communities. Erm, such unfortunate incidents impact seriously on our collective reputation as multinational oil corporations. This is why we do everything within our powers to ensure that our facilities are kept to the optimum standards to forestall any eventualities (MN<sub>2</sub>). Uhhmm, this exposes the grievous dangers inherent in sabotaging and vandalising oil facilities. However, irrespective of whether the cause of such

misfortune is due to sabotage, crude oil theft, operational failures, accidents or corrosion, we endeavour to promptly and effectively clean-up spills from such sites to avert more problems such as human fatalities, joblessness and loss of livelihoods (MN<sub>1</sub>).

Furthermore, our business units are explicitly charged with the administration of rapid oil spill responses in accordance with the stipulations of our operational guidelines within the orbits of the laws of Nigeria. This extends to all our offshore installations which are fortified with adequate arrangements and facilities to respond rapidly to any spill occurrence. The facilities include spill containment resources such as containment booms, collection vessels and aircraft. We are equally linked with other oil spill service providers such as the oil spill response organisations for emergency purposes (MN<sub>2</sub>). Furthermore, we operate the Subsea Well Response Project, an industry co-operative effort to enhance global well-containment capabilities in addition to ensuring strict maintenance of site-specific emergency response plans in the event of an onshore spill (MN<sub>1</sub>). However, due to our commitment to both the good of our host communities and the environment, we dutifully ensure that prompt and thorough clean-up exercise is conducted so long as it emanates from our facilities without minding what its cause was. For instance, consequent upon the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) report on oil spills in Ogoniland being released in 2011, we have established an independent scientific advisory panel to review all practices with regards to rehabilitation and remediation of oil spill sites in the whole of the Niger Delta Region. Equally, in response to the UNEP report, the government has instituted the Hydrocarbon Pollution Restoration Project (MN<sub>2</sub>; G<sub>o</sub>Ffgd<sub>9</sub>).

It is commendable that the multinational oil corporations recognised the fact that crude oil spillages occur during oil operations and the economic insecurity that it creates within the host communities. But the testimony of the NNPC report 1983, as a national oil corporation that works closely with the MNOCs, contradicts their

postulation with regards to environmental remediation. Rather, the NNPC testimony supports the position of the OBHCs which claims that the MNOCs' and the NG's indifference to their environmental degradation is due to a hidden political agenda. This agenda is interpreted to be the continuation of the civil war policy of using hunger and starvation as war policy. If all the claims of the MNOCs are correct and effective, why would the NNPC, which is in a Joint Venture with the MNOCs on behalf of the government, be making such serious allegations? Equally, that the allegation was levelled against both the government and the MNOCs by NNPC appears to vindicate the position of the OBHCs. Thus, it proves that Bayelsa State (Niger Delta) environment is being degraded by its beneficiaries. This economic insecurity dimension of the environmental degradation has direct relationship with the food insecurity dimension engendered by the degradation which is considered in the next section.

### 7.3 THE FOOD INSECURITY DIMENSION OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION

Food, its provision and availability has never been a luxury, but habitually, a necessity. It is not therefore surprising that Amartya Sen notes that, "A person is reduced to starvation, if some changes either in his endowment (e.g., alienation of land, or loss of labour power due to ill health), or in his exchange entitlement mapping (e.g., fall in wages, rise in food prices, loss of employment, drop in the price of the good he produces and sells), makes it no longer possible for him to acquire any commodity bundle with enough food (Amartya Sen, 1986: 15). To him, the problem of food security is not about the food supply failure. Rather, it is more about food access, instead of food supply (Amartya Sen, 1980: 618). With "feeding the world in the 21st century", Stedman et al (2009: 28) argue that the number of people desirous of food but who do not get enough to eat on a regular basis is astonishing and alarming at over 800 million. Alexander (2010: 5) claims that a total of 265 million sub-Saharan Africans are suffering from chronic hunger and malnutrition. This

number, she argues, is more than four times the size of the entire population of the United Kingdom, adding that by 2020, according to estimates, the numerical strength of those suffering from chronic hunger and malnutrition will double, should the present trend remain unchallenged. This estimation did not however take into consideration the effects of the oil industry induced environmental degradation in Bayelsa State (Niger Delta). Had this been done, a better picture of the challenging situation in the region would have emerged.

There is little doubt that this factored seriously in Mehra et al (2009: 5) worrying that the alarming incidence of a globally skyrocketing rise in food prices has as a consequence added well over a hundred million people to the already more than a billion people that are chronically hungry the world over. This situation, bad as it is, is sure to be aggravated by the plight of the indigenous oil-bearing host communities being forced to abandon their occupation because of dire conditions created by the oil industry exploration and exploitation activities in Niger Delta. This is because the close relationship between environment and human well-being is demonstrated by the effect which land pollution and its scarcity has on food production. Food insecurity as a consequence of scarcity of land for agricultural production leads to health insecurity. It weakens the economy due to an unhealthy workforce, and heightens the degree of maternal and child mortality rate and low life expectancy. This same vicious-circle continues with water contamination and air pollution which is detrimental to both human and marine life. This threat aggravates human insecurity by enabling the frustration-dynamics to convert distressed but powerful energies in the Niger Delta into aggression and violent conflict.

But, what is food security? And what has it got to do with Bayelsa State (Niger Delta) environmental degradation? Answering the second question first, Stedman et al (2009: 30) say everything. Food insecurity has everything to do with environmental degradation, because the state of the Niger Delta's food security is tied to the

healthy or otherwise of their environment. A healthy economy, according to Amoako (2000: 15), is dependent on the health of the populace (citizenry) empowered with safe and nutritious food. Borrowing a leaf from the superior opinions of both the United Nations' Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Stedman et al (2009: 28-29) postulate that, when at all times, people have both physical and economic uninhibited access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary requirements for healthy and active life, together with farmers and fishermen earning considerable income from their efforts, then, and only then do we have food security. This is the connection that Bayelsa State (Niger Delta) environment has with food security. With environmental degradation engendered by oil industry activities in Bayelsa State (Niger Delta), achieving food security is seemingly impossible.

This means that chronic state of food insecurity therefore, is tantamount to the citizenry being vulnerable to famine, hunger, undernourishment, malnutrition and death (Danaher et al, 1995). The impact of this on the Bayelsa State (Niger Delta) existence is imagined to be massive. This caught the imagination of Turner (2009: 201) when he argues that food insecurity comprises water deficit and or pollution, environmental degradation including infestation of earth with landmines all of which combined together militate against food production. Water pollution for instance, kills the fishes while landmine infestation kills the farmer himself. All affect the existence and livelihoods of the oil-bearing communities negatively and are counterproductive to the principles of food sovereignty and food justice. These two frameworks see food as a basic human right which nobody should live without due to economic constraint or social inequalities (Mehra et al, 2009: 105).

For food security to be realised, the availability of food shall not only remain without any restraints but shall equally be accessible totally by the populace, contends Ian Angus (2008: 57; Amartya Sen, 1980: 618) with his work on capitalism, agribusiness and the food sovereignty alternative. Anything short of this argued landscape or scenario will be tantamount to vulnerability of the populace to hunger and famine. Knowing as Naylor and Falcon (2008: 6) do, "when we allow cars to compete with people for food", hell, for instance, will be let loose. No doubt, corn-based ethanol is a renewable fuel meant to reduce the dependence on imported oil. But, does

anybody care how many lives will be lost because of this preference of corn-oil driven American energy self-sufficiency policy? In Bayelsa State (Niger Delta) the stiff competition between food security and oil production with particular reference to environmental degradation, culminates in aggravated human insecurities in the region. This totally disregards the combined definition of food security by FAO and USDA. To these international organisations, food should not only be sufficient but there should not be restricted access to it. Moreover, the farmers and the fishermen/women must earn reasonable income for their efforts (FAO, 2006: 17). With this in mind, the participants' narratives will be used to understand the full impact of the food insecurity dimension of the environmental degradation on the oil-bearing communities of Bayelsa State.

#### 7.4 THE PARTICIPANTS' NARRATIVES ON THE FOOD INSECURITY DIMENSION OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION

The research participants in this present study feel very strongly about the food insecurity dimension of the oil industry induced environmental degradation in Bayelsa State (Niger Delta) region. The participants' comparison of this food insecurity engendered by the MNOCs' activities and the use of hunger or starvation as a weapon of war during the Nigeria/Biafra civil war influenced their passionate sentiment that the war is still on. The apparently unconcerned attitude of the authorities over the continued degradation of the Niger Delta environment coupled with the fact that they are aware that it threatens the existence of the people, accentuates this sentiment. Clearly unhappy about the state of affairs in the region, the participants grumblingly explain:

Mr. Researcher, we want you to pay attention to what we want to tell you now, because, it is very important. You have been with us in this community for a couple of days now and our people respect you and do whatever they can to assist you to achieve your objective. Since your stay with us, you have watched us every day as we go out into the sea to search for fish and you see us come back with almost nothing. This is not usually the case. This was caused by pollution

from oil spillages (AGRCM<sub>8</sub>). According to CL<sub>11</sub>, these spillages kill the fish and in most cases drive them away out of our reach. That is why we sit here gloomily most of the day, not knowing what to do. Not knowing how to face our families with another day's story of a fishless hunt. Our life depends on this. The worst is that "Feeding our children and other extended family relations is dependent on what we catch during the day's hunt. Meanwhile, the people responsible for our sufferings are sitting comfortably in their air conditioned offices from which they draw fat salaries at the end of every month. Mr. Researcher, our beginning of the month and the end of our every month is here. Our salaries come from here – the river" (FFWfgd<sub>3</sub>).

Furthermore, FFWfgd<sub>8</sub> argues that "To make matters worse, faced with the least discomfort; you see the government officials and the MNOCs workers demonstrating for pay rise or other issues. But we, farmers, fishermen and women, to whom do we demonstrate to show our problems when we fail to catch fish? But the AGRCM<sub>11</sub> contends that when our problems are caused by the actions of the multinationals that keep drawing their fat salaries irrespective of the huge deprivations their actions are putting us through, the story changes. We try to peacefully demonstrate just like the government and the oil workers do, to show our disenchantment with what is happening. Then the government deploys the police and the soldiers to shoot at us. What have we done differently?"

"Mr. Researcher, listen very well", the AGRCMfgd<sub>10</sub> began. "The government is not paying us salaries at the end of every month and neither are the oil multinationals. They put us out of work through their industrial operations and they even want to take away the right

to freedom of speech from us. We can't even say, what you have done is killing us". "Yes! That is true", the FFWfgd<sub>1</sub> argues. "The NG and the MNOCs want us to die in silence. This tells us that there is more to the whole story than the government and the MNOCs are willing to say. Otherwise, how can the government see that its innocent citizens are being threatened with hunger and starvation, and all it can do is, send its security agents to inflict even more deadly pain than what the MNOCs have done?" Ostensibly, CL<sub>2</sub> in corroboration with the HRNG<sub>5</sub> state that, that was the same system the government used against the youths when they took a stand on the Kaiama Declaration. Instead of listening to the grievances of the people, the government resorted to shooting unarmed youths of Niger Delta. Do you not actually see that we are still at war?

Oh, the environmental degradation has destroyed our fishing businesses that supply food and other nutrients required for our healthy existence. It has contaminated the water for all our domestic usages. Our crops are failing because the farmlands are destroyed (CL<sub>9</sub>). All these mean that we have no food to maintain our existence. This is apparently not different from what happened during the challenging days of the civil war. All these frustrations are what drove our people into thinking that it is better to die fighting for justice than to die of hunger in silence (FFWfgd<sub>2</sub>). The situation is a "double tragedy" (AGRCM<sub>3</sub>).

As I was confused by what was meant by the theory of "double tragedy", the participants were asked to clearly explain this issue. Their explanations argue that:

Erm, the war situation we are in, left us with no good option. Either way, we are faced with death. See, if we fight for environmental

justice, we shall die. Also, if we abstain from fighting and keep silent, we shall equally die of hunger. So, it is better to die fighting than not. You cannot afford not to fight in that situation (AGRCMfgd<sub>10</sub>). Uhhmm, their pollution drove away the fishes and killed others. Those that were not killed, were contaminated and therefore, unfit for human consumption. All our crops in the farms were affected by pollution. In the face of all these stress, they did not offer us alternative source of livelihoods. You can see the double tragedy (AGRCM<sub>3</sub>). They destroyed our traditional source of livelihoods through the chemicals discharged into the environment during spillages. Besides that, they refused to offer us employment in their companies. How do they want us to survive? Have you seen what we are saying? They planned to starve us to death just as it was done during the war. It is not hard in that difficult scenario for us to see that their hidden agenda is to wipe us out to enable them to take over the entire Niger Delta (AGRCMfgd<sub>10</sub>). According to CL<sub>7</sub>, this is why the agitation received such a massive followership because everybody is affected. Look at this scenario, while we, the people of Bayelsa State (Niger Delta) where the oil comes from, are wallowing in unemployment, poverty and hunger caused by our government's support to the policy and activities of the MNOCs, the government took away all the petrochemical ancillary companies that should have offered employment to us, if they were located in Niger Delta, to other parts of Nigeria. Does that not amount to neglect and robbery to us? Tell me, even if you are not a Nigerian, if this happened to you and your people in whatever place you are from, how would you and your people feel? Would you people feel happy and pat the

government and the MNOCs on their backs and tell them well done?  
(FFWfgd<sub>5</sub>).

Honestly speaking, these questions caught me off guard and I was dumbfounded for some minutes whilst searching for the best way to answer these questions. To avoid unnecessary escalation of the situation, I replied that I understood their plight. This challenging situation invariably affects the question of food security amongst the population. The farmers and the fishermen are the direct sources of food supply to the immediate population. Amartya Sen (1980: 618) observes that what accentuates food insecurity is not food supply failure, but its inaccessibility. Clearly, in the case of the Niger Delta, it is a combination of both supply failure, as well as inaccessibility. For instance, when they are put out of employment, its implications for the wider population of Bayelsa State (Niger Delta) are obvious. Invariably, drawing from the theoretical argument of the conflict theory of Dollard et al (1939), frustration-aggression theory, a generation of unemployed youths translates into an army of poverty stricken, hunger afflicted and frustrated people ready to explode into aggression.

Furthermore, locating petrochemical companies outside the geographical area of Niger Delta where the oil is found as alleged by the research participants, contributed in no small measures in aggravating the incidence of food insecurity in the region. Going by the definition of food security offered by the FAO (2006: 17) and Steadman et al (2009: 28-29), there should not exist any form of restricted physical and economic access to not only sufficient food, but also safe and nutritious food. It equally contends that the people should be able to earn considerable income to facilitate their unrestricted economic access to safe food. Thus, the location of the petrochemical subsidiary companies outside the Niger Delta places physical restriction on the peoples' access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food. It equally deprives them of the opportunity to earn considerable income thereby restricting

them economically from having unrestricted access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food. Invariably, this act indicates that while the Niger Delta region is not considered fit to enjoy the economic benefits accruable from proximity to such petrochemical companies, the region is however fit to suffer the effects of environmental degradation from crude oil spillages and gas flares while other areas reap the benefits of their sufferings. To this, the participants reacted thus:

No, enough is enough. We have sacrificed enough for the enjoyment of others. To all that, we say, 'NO'. What is the essence of life, if it is not worth living? If they feel that we can't have it, not even them, not anybody is qualified to have it. We have had enough of the neglect, exclusion and marginalisation of the region since the end of the civil war (AGRCM<sub>8</sub>). The attitude of exploiting the resources of the Niger Delta region to develop other parts of Nigeria especially the victorious side is consequent upon seeing the resources as spoils of the war. If this is not the case, what other plausible reason can be advanced for the glaring marginalization and injustice that took place in this region? Imagine, they took possession of our lands, hijacked our resources, why not at least use part of the money earned from the resource to give us (Niger Delta) a sense of belonging? (FFWfgd<sub>3</sub>). As a Niger Delta man, after visiting Abuja, and realising that it was built with our resources, you become simply angry. Any foreigner that visits Abuja and then comes to Niger Delta will be hard to be convinced that Niger Delta is part of Nigeria, how much more saying that the wealth used in creating the wonders in Abuja came from Niger Delta (AGRCMfgd<sub>10</sub>).

These very strong sentiments inform their decision that the resources of the region that would have guaranteed food security for them, were considered as spoils of war because as they argued;

Why else would they completely neglect the area as if it does not exist within the geographical space of Nigeria in terms of development? (CL<sub>5</sub>).

Comparing the magnitude of development in Abuja and in other parts of Nigeria considered as the victorious side with the Niger Delta can only add to the equation that the region was on the wrong side during the civil war. Even if the resources were considered spoils of war, the people of the region normatively expected the government to come to their rescue when pollution from oil spillages and gas flares was playing havoc in the region. Moreover, some legislation existed that could have put this degradation of the region to a stop, but the political will to execute and implement it seemed to be non-existent to the OBHCs. This disappointment by their own government became a fertile ground for the transformation of frustrations to aggression and violent conflict.

However, this developmental laxity and marginalisation of the Niger Delta region results in the aggressive pollution of land, air and their water which is of significant concern to the population. This is because a significant portion of the population of the Bayelsa State and the entire Niger Delta region in general are farmers and fishermen and women who depend on land and water for their livelihood. Therefore, whatever affects their environment negatively has grievous implications for their food security and the general wellbeing of the population. To appreciate the gravity of this problem, one has to take into consideration the fact that people in the employ of government and the multinational oil corporations members of staff do not in any way depend on the environment directly for their livelihood. Their sources of livelihood are secured.

Therefore, they refuse to acknowledge fully the importance of environment to the poor farmers and fishermen and women whose entire world revolve around nature. If

they do, they will understand better the degree of deprivation the farmers and fishermen and women are being put through by the policies and activities of the MNOCs and the government. For instance, the inadequate land left after the MNOCs' acquisition of our lands through the Federal government, are despoiled by incessant oil spillages usually trapped under the soil from years of uncleaned spillages kills off our crops. The heat from gas flare is unfriendly to crop cultivation and production. All these aggravate the incidence of food insecurity as a result of environmental degradation. This usually culminates in a year's supply of food being often destroyed by just a minor leak of oil, debilitating the farmers and their families who depend on the land for their livelihood (Olawuyi, 2012: 7). The next section is the conclusion.

## 7.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter predominantly with the assistance of the participants' narratives discussed the economic and food insecurity dimension of the environmental degradation and how the frustration and the deprivations they create trigger aggression and conflict in the region. The economic insecurity dimension of the environmental degradation was used by the research participants to illustrate the degree of despondency the indigenous oil-bearing host communities are subjected to. Crude oil spillages that occur rampantly in the region (UNEP, 2011; Amnesty International, 2009; World Bank, 2006), have resulted in the loss of their employment through which they earn a decent living. The rapidity, intensity and the sustainability of the implications of the economic insecurity dimension of the environmental degradation is responsible for the conclusion of the participants that their plight is linked with the Nigeria-Biafra civil war. The economic hardship brought about by the degradation is the reason the participants concluded that the war is still on-going. Furthermore, the food insecurity dimension of the environmental degradation has inflicted devastating blows to the indigenous oil-bearing host communities' well-being.

The economic insecurity ensured that even if there was food, financial power with which the food would be purchased has been affected by the economic insecurity. This therefore, accentuates the incidence of food insecurity. Environmental

degradation reduces the fertility of the soil which impacts negatively the propensity for the soil to support and promote availability of food. Such non-availability of food, leads to the development of malnutrition and other diseases and eventually death. This does not refer to human deaths alone, it equally affects the death of plants and animals who all depend on the environment for their survival. Such a chaotic atmosphere breeds frustration that leads to aggression and violent conflicts in the region. Since it was the military regimes that prosecuted the civil war, and used starvation as a weapon of war, the effects of the environmental degradation easily propagated the perception that that policy is still in operation. This however, created an atmosphere conducive to the transformation of their frustration into aggression and violent conflicts.

Ostensibly, what the participants attributed to be the reason for the beneficiaries of the Niger Delta environment to engage in the degradation of their benefactor, is a policy of punishment that will mean a total defeat of Biafra. Therefore, the degradation of the Biafran enclave of Niger Delta's environment (NDE) is directly linked with the civil war policy of using starvation as a weapon. They found the environment to be a very easy conduit for spreading agents of death through water, air and soil poisoning. Both water and air are very crucial for preservation of life, therefore, anything that interferes with their unrestricted supply without contamination or poisoning, is quickening the process of their death. These research participants believe that that was what is being done with the environment of the former Biafran enclave. Above all, it is understandable that as a population that is predominantly engaged in farming and fishing as their major occupation, the degradation of their land (soil) would completely devastate the entire population. The participants concluded that this was why the environment was used as means of delivering the deadly weapon of starvation against the population. Without their soil, how can the farmers be productive which would enable them to effectively challenge the effects of food insecurity? So, the absence of fertile soil as a result of environmental degradation, ensured that the policy of starvation as a weapon of war is totally effective.

The next chapter will evaluate how the health, water and socio-political insecurity dimensions of the environmental degradation of the Bayelsa State (Niger Delta), influenced the transformation of the frustration created by these insecurities into aggression and violent conflict. They will help to explain why the major beneficiaries of the Bayelsa State (Niger Delta) environment are degrading their benefactor. This, however, is based on the research participants' narratives drawn from the personal insights they gained directly from the phenomenon under investigation as members of the sample population. The examination of these issues in the next chapter throws more light onto why frustration brewed by these phenomena explodes into aggression, and perpetuates the perception that the degradation of their environment is linked to the civil war. Based on this, they even contend that the Nigeria-Biafra war is still continuing with the environment of Niger Delta serving as the war theatre. Chapter 8 evaluates impacts of insecurity dimensions of environmental degradation with the analysed respondents' narratives.

## CHAPTER 8

### EVALUATING IMPACTS OF INSECURITY DIMENSIONS OF ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION WITH RESPONDENTS' NARRATIVES

#### 8.0 OVERVIEW

Previously, Chapter 7 employed the participants' narratives to examine the economic and food insecurity dimensions of environmental degradation in Bayelsa State (Niger Delta) and how the frustrations they engendered triggered aggression and violent conflicts. This chapter 8 also uses the participants' narratives to evaluate the impact of health, water and the socio-political insecurity dimensions of the environmental degradation on the oil-bearing host communities of Niger Delta. The discussion starts with the health insecurity dimension of the environmental degradation.

#### 8.1 THE HEALTH INSECURITY DIMENSION OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION

The state of health of the citizenry of any nation is a veritable report card on the viability or otherwise of their economy. On the other hand, a healthy economy is ostensibly dependent on the health of the populace (citizenry) that constitutes the workforce required by a vibrant economy to triumph. This is invariably dependent on whether the prevalent food policies promote either food security or food insecurity as a matrix for an optimal contemporary economy or otherwise. Therefore, the main motivational focus of this section is the detailed analysis of the health insecurity dimension of the environmental degradation of Bayelsa State (Niger Delta). Environmental degradation is a major driving force militating against food security. This is because food security is agriculture-based, and agriculture is an entirely land and water based economic activity. In this respect, therefore, anything that

negatively affects these paradigms invariably affects food security. Conversely, food insecurity aggravates malnutrition and general health insecurity sentiments.

Drawing from this, Olawuyi (2012: 4) observes that environmental sustainability translates into the use of the environment and its elements in a way that preserves its capacity to serve both the present and the future generations. Olawuyi did not stop here, but goes further to argue that “the present generation should not while satisfying its needs, compromise the environment’s ability to satisfy the needs of the future generations. Understandably, while Olawuyi is worried about future generations’ needs, the present generation’s ability to satisfy their basic human needs from their environment has already been compromised through environmental degradation. Since according to NNPC report (1983; World Bank, 2006; Amnesty International, 2009) the Bayelsa State (Niger Delta) environment is already compromised, it means that the survival of the future generation is totally threatened. The implication of this is that the environment has lost its ability to sustain its population due to its unhealthy nature. This state of the environment cannot support food security. When this happens, it aggravates health insecurity within the environment.

The gravity of the danger of health insecurity as a result of what environmental degradation portends for the society, is what the United Nations Article 192 of the Law of the Sea Convention (UNLOSC, 1982), tries to resolve by making it obligatory for states to “protect and preserve the marine environment from pollution of any type (Gjerde, 2013: 170). However, the testimony of the NNPC (1983) shows that the Nigerian state has not lived up to the expectations of the United Nations Article 192, which results in the Niger Delta’s environment being degraded. For instance, the sources of drinking water and water used for other crucial domestic purposes have been contaminated by oil, with serious health implications for the inhabitants of the region. Studies have shown that over 3,000 inhabitants of the Niger Delta have died from drinking such contaminated water (Olawuyi, 2012: 6). These are some of the adverse implications of health insecurity as a result of environmental degradation. As noted previously, due to the backwardness of the region manifesting in dire lack of infrastructures such as health facilities, the people have resorted to using the

mangrove forests and the rainforest as their sources of herbal medicine supply. Unfortunately, this very important rainforest, which formerly covered about 7,400 km<sup>2</sup>, has completely vanished due to oil industry induced environmental degradation. Correspondingly, the mangrove forests which are vital for the healthy existence of the constituents of the environment have not been spared either by this problematic pollution. It acidifies the soil, thus halting cellular respiration and starving plant roots of oxygen (Olawuyi, 2012: 9). To this, the research participants argue that:

Oil industry has completely changed our lives. The way we see it, the ruling elites have not built health facilities for us here. This leaves us to contend with what our environment provides us in the form of herbal medicine from the biodiversity. But all these plants that supply us with herbal medicines are being destroyed by pollution and constantly mowed down for oil industry construction activities (HRNG<sub>3</sub>).

From the research participants' response above, it is clear that the lack of modern health infrastructures has compelled the people to exploit this natural approach of primary healthcare delivery services for the treatment of a variety of ailments. However, instead of allowing authorities such as the National Agency for Food, Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) to undertake the improvement, promotion and preservation of these medicinal plants and their traditional knowledge systems for sustainable exploitation and commercialisation, to boost not only the local, but also the national healthcare delivery system and the national political economy, they are being destroyed by oil exploration practices that are antagonistic to international best practices. This is despite the concern shown by Professor Abayomi Sofowora, the former Chairman of the World Health Organisation Regional Expert Committee on Traditional Medicine. Professor Sofowora argues that "improvement, regularisation, standardization, promotion and preservation of herbal/traditional or

alternative/complementary medicine and its knowledge will accentuate the practice of health security”.

Professor Sofowora’s concern is rooted in the fact that the World Health Organisation (WHO) is “aware that more than 80 per cent of the population of Africa depends on traditional medication” (Ikhilae, 2014: 1). The foregoing fact offers an explanation for why many parts of the world that are conscious of how improved knowledge of traditional medicine can empower health security are interested in the safety, efficacy, quality, availability, preservation and further development of this method of primary healthcare delivery services. For instance, in countries like China, India and Thailand, the global herbal/traditional or alternative/complementary medicine market currently has an annual turnover of \$100 billion (Ikhilae, 2014: 2). Conversely, Nigeria which is blessed with a very rich biodiversity of plant life is sacrificing this on the altar of crude oil exploration and exploitation. The different types of high quality medicinal plants found in Nigeria include *Moringa Oleifera*, *Hibiscus Sabdariffa*, *Zingiberofficinale*, *Vernoniaamygdalina* (Bitterleaf), *Ocimumgratissimum* (Scentleaf) and *Telfeiriaoccidentalis* (Ikhilae, 2014: 2). The neglect of this sector of the nation’s national political economy militates against the health security of the oil-bearing communities in Bayelsa State (Niger Delta). This arouses feelings of undeniable tensions on the already strained relations between the stakeholders in the conflict. The participants put it this way:

We cannot deny the fact that crude oil exploration and exploitation is a very delicate enterprise. The delicate nature of this enterprise means that the stakeholders which include the environment will be affected both negatively and positively. The negative aspect of this delicate enterprise may result in spillages due to various factors such as sabotage, crude oil theft, operational failures, accidents or corrosion (MN<sub>2</sub>). This awareness made us have clear requirements and procedures designed to prevent such spills. That includes the multi-billion dollar programmes that are underway to maintain and improve our facilities and pipelines. Our business units are responsible for organising and executing oil spill responses in line

with our stipulated operational guidelines in compliance with the national legislation. Most importantly, all our offshore installations have plans in place to respond rapidly to a spill occurrence and are usually backed with enabling spill containment resources such as containment booms, collection vessels and even aircraft (MN<sub>2</sub>).

Emphasising the importance of social licence from the host communities towards the successful and smooth operation of the crude oil enterprise, the participants argue that no MNOCs can deliberately cause oil spillage to occur. The MN<sub>1</sub> maintains that:

In our efforts to ensure a pollution free environment, we are equally linked with other oil spill service providers such as the Oil Spill Response Organisations for emergency purposes. Moreover, we operate the Subsea Well Response Project, an industry cooperative effort to enhance global well-containment capabilities in addition to ensuring strict maintenance of site-specific emergency response plans in the event of an onshore spill. All these demonstrate our commitment to ensuring sustainable oil exploration with little or no negative impact on the environment. However, MN<sub>2</sub> contends that because accidents are beyond our control, we endeavour to combat such when it occurs, to reduce its impact on the environment and the people. For example, consequent upon the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) report on oil spills in Ogoniland released in 2011, we have established an independent scientific advisory panel to review our practices with regards to rehabilitation and remediation of oil spill sites in the whole of the Niger Delta region.

Reacting to the problematic issue of gas flaring that has repeatedly defied dates fixed by the government to end gas flaring in the country, the MNOCs argue that it is not as simple as it is made to appear. This project is really capital intensive and can only be done with good planning. The MN<sub>1</sub> maintains that:

Gas flaring or burning off gas in our upstream business no doubt contributes to greenhouse gas emission. This is why we are willing and ready to work with our partners to end this issue as soon it is possible to have all our facilities completely fitted with gas capturing infrastructure. One problem militating against this is the question of insecurity and more importantly the issue of lack of partner funding. According to MN<sub>2</sub>, “We are in a joint venture which means that projects are to be jointly financed and executed. But where there is a problem of funding from the partners, the projects will invariably be affected. These complexities are not known by the public. What happens is that once there is a problem, fingers are usually pointed at the MNOCs. Improvement in this area will see the MNOCs meeting their targets”. This gas capturing project, the MN<sub>1</sub> argues, is for instance, a multi-year programme that involves the installation of new gas-gathering facilities and to repair existing facilities damaged at the height of the conflict. When these things are completed, they will effectively combat the problems of gas flaring and most importantly improve the health security of our host communities.

Reflecting on the general situation prevalent in the Niger Delta in relation to health security issues affecting their host communities as a result of oil industry activities, the participants explain that:

Hmm, generally speaking, security is a problematic issue threatening the smooth relationship between the MNOCs and their host communities. Because we are aware that the delicate nature of crude oil enterprise can affect economic security, health and food security, we put all those measures already mentioned into place as a safety-valve. But what aggravates this problem is the issue of criminality or the presence of the ‘third party’. This third party organise themselves into dangerous groups propelled by greed to vandalise and sabotage oil facilities. Some of them engage in sabotage just to attract cleaning contracts from the MNOCs. They

are merely concerned with making easy money without considering the effects their actions have for the economic, food and health security of the entire population of the OBHCs (MN<sub>2</sub>). Unfortunately, when such occurs, other innocent people who do not know what exactly happened, usually blame the MNOCs for all crude oil spillages. Because we are aware the damage this does to our collective reputation as MNOCs, we irrespective of the cause of any crude oil spill from our facilities, ensure that prompt and thorough clean-up exercise is conducted. We cannot deny that accidents occur, but the rate of sabotage is becoming very alarming (MN<sub>1</sub>). The G<sub>o</sub>Fgd<sub>9</sub> argue that there are so many illegal crude oil refinery locations within the MNOCs' host communities. But each time spillage happens, the public are quick to associate the spillage with the MNOCs that own the facility from which the leakage comes. What they do not know is that many of those are the handiworks of criminals. Sometimes when our members of staff respond to arrest spillages, the criminals prevent them from carrying out their duties because they expect to benefit from it. So, most times insecurity in the host communities perpetrated by the criminals aggravates the state of the food, economic and health insecurity caused by environmental degradation.

Notably, responding to these narratives above, the CL<sub>7</sub>, AGRCM<sub>11</sub> and FFW<sub>9</sub> made the following clarifications that add to the understanding of how and what causes environmental degradation. According to the CL<sub>7</sub>, AGRCM<sub>11</sub> and FFW<sub>9</sub> clarifications, environmental degradation in Bayelsa State (Niger Delta) is predominantly caused by oil industry activities, thus:

Uhhmm, the MNOCs and its joint venture partners may want you to think that crude oil spillages in the Niger Delta are predominantly due to the 'third party or sabotage'. Unfortunately, that is wrong. The typical methods of environmental degradation are caused by ships

when they wash out their tanks or dump their bilge water, oil tank ruptures, or a ship sinks. Others are crude oil well blowouts, pipeline breaks, ship collisions or groundings, overfilling of gas tanks, leaking underground storage tanks, and oil-contaminated water runoff from streets and parking lots during rain storms (FFWfgd<sub>7</sub>). Other sources according to (CL<sub>3</sub>) include crude spills from disused and abandoned old crude oil wells and from old, outdated and deteriorated facilities. However, major environmental pollutions occur during crude oil transportation by oil tankers' loading and unloading operations during which the crude oil mixes with the sea and undergoes a series of chemical reactions. Some of these chain reactions result in oil evaporation, spreading, emulsification, dissolution, sea-air exchange and sedimentation (AGRCM<sub>11</sub>).

In this process, the gaseous and liquid components evaporate, while some get dissolved in water and even oxidize. Others undergo some bacterial changes and eventually sink to the bottom. This contaminates the soil with a serious negative effect on the environmental well-being. The evaporation of some particles of the spilled crude oil pollutes the air and makes breathing difficult and hazardous, while the dissolved components emulsifies water, reducing its oxygen content which impacts aquatic life perilously (CL<sub>3</sub>). You can see why oil spills are very difficult to clean up, because while some are floating on the surface of water bodies, others are carried by the wind, currents and tides, while the rest sank into the bottom of the sea. Oil spills can be partially controlled by chemical dispersion, combustion, mechanical containment and adsorption. They all have destructive effects on coastal ecosystems and therefore are agents of death (HRNG<sub>2</sub>).

Despite all these detailed clarifications, the MNOCs and NG research participants in this study confirm that they are still doing what they can to ensure that they meet a range of environmental and social challenges associated with their profession. According to them, this is done by practical demonstration that they can operate

safely and manage the effects which the oil production activities can have on the host communities. They put it in the following way:

Oil exploration and exploitation is our professional business. And we have been in this oil profession long enough to understand that failure to work together with our host communities, has a lot of bitter business consequences. This is why we work with communities, business partners, non-governmental organisations and other bodies to address potential impacts and share the benefits of our operations and projects. Invariably, this helps us to retain not only our social licence to operate but also our legal licence, by ensuring proper maintenance of the safety and reliability of our operations (MN<sub>2</sub>). For the MN<sub>1</sub>, “We are involved in a lot community development projects that will reduce the impact of health insecurity as a result of oil production activities. The MNOCs grant a variety of scholarship programmes for the children of our host communities. The impact of health insecurity is managed by supplying the affected communities with food supplies and water for their domestic uses pending when the spillage is contained”.

The MN<sub>2</sub> claims that through the memorandum of understanding (MoU) signed between the OBHCs and the MNOCs, the host communities are much more involved in the selection of projects and their management. We try to maximise the advantages inherent in the use of the latest technology available in the oil and gas industry to minimise the impacts of our operations on the host communities. This technology has enabled us to take precautions to ensure the adequate protection of the water table from the effects of chemicals used in oil exploration. Apart from this, the MN<sub>1</sub> states that, “we take time to conduct comprehensive analysis of seismic, geologic and geophysical data to establish the historical seismicity of areas before embarking on drilling. Moreover, oil and gas wells are protected with steel casing, cement and double subsurface barriers to avert

leakages into the water table. All these are targeted to avert the incidence of health insecurity within the host communities because their good health and general wellbeing are important to us”.

According to G<sub>o</sub>Ffg<sub>o</sub>, another way of achieving health security for the host communities is through the environmental impact assessments (EIA). This is conducted before the approval of projects to show clearly their likely environmental and health impacts. Although, it must be admitted that in some occasions, due to unforeseen circumstances, there has been the incidence of health hazards as a result of oil operations. But it should be noted that everything in the books is done to minimise the effects of such accidents on the health of the host communities.

Significantly, both the MNOCs and the NG respondents have tried to show that the health security of the IOBHCs is important to them, and that they have been doing things necessary to promote their health security. Invariably the promotion of this health security impacts positively on the economic and food security of the OBHCs. This is because all of them are linked. If the OBHCs’ health security is tackled, it translates into economic and food security of the OBHCs. If this is to be believed, why would the MNOCs complain that its partner which is the NG is starving it of funds? Does it mean that the MNOCs are defaulting in its remittances of oil profits taxes and royalties to the NG? Assuming that this is not the case, why would the NG starve its partner, the MNOCs of funds that are vital for completion of projects that will end the problematic issue of gas flaring and environmental degradation? The significance of this question lies in the fact that non provision of this fund triggers environmental degradation which engenders economic, food and health insecurity amongst the OBHCs. Frustrations arising from such issues culminate into aggression and violent conflict (Ibaba, 2011; Ojakorotu, 2009; Savo Heleta, 2009; Dollard et al, 1939; Berkowitz, 1993; Burton, 1997; Gurr, 1970).

Reacting to this problematic issue of under-funding of projects that are supposed to bring to an end the question of environmental degradation, the research participants submit that:

Hmm, there is a reason for every action on earth. You are carrying out this research for a reason known to you. We are participating in this research for a reason known to us. The agitation in Bayelsa State (Niger Delta) is for a reason. So, the under-funding or starvation of projects meant to check environmental degradation in Bayelsa State (Niger Delta) is for a purpose (AGRCMfgd<sub>10</sub>). Look at it this way, oil is being produced every day, and it is being sold every day. The MNOCs pay their dues as and when supposed. Then why would they not finance the projects that will benefit the OBHCs? The answer lies in the Biafran project. This is why the civil war is still not over. The calculation is that environmental degradation engenders economic, food and health insecurity. This simply translates into starvation which was one of the weapons used in prosecuting the war against the Biafran project (AGRCMfgd<sub>10</sub>).

Consequently, above all, human health and general well-being deteriorate fast when they come in contact with oil spills and other sources of environmental pollution including gas flares. According to the participants in this research, oil industry induced environmental pollution is having debilitating effects on their health. The HRNG<sub>5</sub> argues that:

The high expectations of better living conditions expected to come from the presence of the MNOCs were short lived. This is because as soon as crude oil leaked into the environments, everything changed. It killed, poisoned or contaminated and drove the surviving fish populations further away from the OBHCs' reach. The situation became critical because it rendered the OBHCs economically

unviable through joblessness that impacted the wellbeing of our populations (HRNG<sub>5</sub>). The children were mostly the hardest hit group. Most of the few fish caught were contaminated with high percentages of carcinogen poison. This made the children who were fed the fish, sick and many died. Those that were of school age could not go to school because of sickness when their parents could no longer foot the bills for their treatment. To compound these problems, CL<sub>4</sub> claims that Pregnant women developed complications resulting in miscarriages, stillbirth and in some cases infertility. Fishing implements such as nets were damaged by the crude oil (HRNG<sub>5</sub>).

Elaborating further on the negative impacts of environmental degradation on the health security of the OBHCs, the participants argue thus:

The worst is that the leaked crude oil permeated the water tables in Bayelsa State as well as in other Niger Delta states. This affected mainly the nursing mothers, pregnant women and babies. The baby's food is prepared with water from the contaminated source. Its drinking water is from the same source. The baby is bathed with the same water just as all the laundry is done with it. This afflicted the pregnant women, causing them to lose their pregnancies while nursing mothers lost their babies. All these compounded and exacerbated the frustration of the population (FFWfgd<sub>4</sub>). The worst thing is that the MNOCs do not clean-up spill sites. Some times when they do, it is not done immediately to avert misfortune within the OBHCs. In most cases they do not give professional treatment to their cleaning efforts. The incessant spillages have made most of our members abandon this job because there are no fish any more to catch. Now we spend a whole day in the water without anything to show for our hard day's job (FFWfgd<sub>7</sub>).

Buttressing the participants' complaints above with literature, Azizan et al (2013: 122) confirm that "Oil pollution causes both immediate damage and long-term harm to fish, agricultural lands and the health of the living environment. Furthermore, the Ecumenical Council for Corporate Responsibility (ECCR, 2010: 10) notes that a joint mission of Nigerian, UK and US environmental scientists regrets that the Niger Delta has become one of the most petroleum-polluted environments in the World with a record of about 13 million barrels (1.5 million tons) of oil spilled into the Niger Delta's environment during the past 50 years. Subsequently, in 2009, the Amnesty International also accused the MNOCs of human rights outrage because of the equivalent of at least nine (9) million barrels of oil spilled into the region's environment (Ubhenin, 2013: 182). The effects of all this on the life and livelihoods of the OBHCs is why the Human Rights and Environmental Activist, Oronto Douglas, argues that "the MNOCs are assassins in foreign lands. They drill and they kill in Nigeria" (Omotoso, 2013: 2). Omotoso observes that the MNOCs' mission is to maximize profit, suck and rape their hosts' natural resources with little or no regard for the environment" (Omotoso, 2013: 2).

The participants regretted that not even the government whose responsibility it is to protect and care for the citizens of this country are showing interest in their plight. They argue that being made redundant at a relatively old age makes it impossible to adjust to learning new trades.

Majority of our colleagues are jobless because of crude oil production and at this age, what else can we do? We are past the age of learning new trade. And even if you decide to retrain for another trade, the money is not there to facilitate it because of our poor plight. The youths are the worst because they don't find this profession attractive any more due to our experiences with spillages; therefore they are roaming the places without anything meaningful to do. The same thing is applicable to our farms. The meagre land left for us after the MNOCs' acquisition of our lands through the Federal Government, are despoiled by incessant oil spillages and its consequent pollution (FFWfgd<sub>s</sub>). Most of the farmers are idle

because of the effects of crude oil spillages on the farms. Pollution trapped under the soil from years as a result of uncleaned spillages kills off our crops (CL<sub>13</sub>). The heat from gas flare is unfriendly to crop cultivation and production as well as injurious to our health. For instance, most of the population are afflicted with asthma, breathing difficulties and pain, headaches, nausea, and throat irritation as well as chronic bronchitis. All these are as a result of exposure to dangerous chemicals used in oil exploration. Since farming and fishing are our major occupations and sources of our livelihoods, we are constantly exposed to these dangerous substances through open air gas flares and crude oil spillages (FFWfgd<sub>3</sub>).

The right to good health is a fundamental prerogative according to international treaties as well as national legislations. For example, the United Nations International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) recognizes the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health (Olawuyi, 2012: 10). According to Olawuyi, ICESCR states that everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of their families. This is to be guaranteed by the state through improvement of all aspects of environmental and industrial hygiene, as a matrix for environmental sustainability and the prevention of industrial and environmental health hazards. However, the participants in this research feel the failure of the state to protect their environment and save them from the insecurities created by environmental degradation is indicative of their marginalization. This feeling of exclusionism exacerbates the poor relationship existing between the government and the OBHCs. This condition drives the frustration-dynamics to transform distressed but powerful energies within the OBHCs into aggression and violent conflict. This is because frustration arises from the failure to achieve a goal, due to disappointments, unfulfilment, disorientation or inability to change a discomforting situation as a result of an intervening variable, such as the environmental degradation by oil industry operations. The participants contend that:

Our ugly experiences as farmers in Bayelsa State as in other states of the Niger Delta contributed in no less a way in raising the tension and frustration of the population. The crude oil destroyed our farmlands and rendered vast expanse of previously arable lands unproductive. This unproductivity led to poverty, hunger, and sickness. As a result, our young men that were engaged in farming became jobless and consequently suffered different afflictions due to lack of nutritious food (CL<sub>10</sub>). Ostensibly, this situation according to FFWfgd<sub>8</sub>, made the child mortality rate to double within a space of time. This was aggravated by the absence of adequate health institutions that could cater for the sick. The general lack of road which would have helped in taking the sick to far away health centres worsened the exacerbation of the frustration felt by our people. To worsen the situation, AGRCM<sub>3</sub> argues that the government and its joint venture partners, the MNOCs, are much more preoccupied with the pursuit of their economic interests derived from our crude oil, to the detriment of our people.

## 8.2 SOCIO-POLITICAL INSECURITY DIMENSION OF ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION

The socio-political benefits of a healthy environment obviously present huge prospects for boosting human, plant and animals' well-being through its various attributes. This is because the environment or the ecosystem embodies all the living and non-living elements that reside within it, including plants, animals, air, water (rivers, streams, lakes) and soil (Donohoe, 2003: 575). Therefore, to achieve sustainable development, the government should adopt a developmental process that meets the needs of the contemporary generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Sustainability therefore, means the use of the environment and its resources in the most meaningful way that

ensures the maximum delivery of political goods to the people. Notably, environmental degradation contributes greatly to the promotion of human insecurities arising from poverty, hunger, unemployment and loss of economic fortunes. Conversely, good governance is directly dependent on good environmental quality. Socio-politically, the environment symbolises life to the indigenous oil-bearing host communities owing to its interconnectedness with every aspect of human existence. The environment for instance, affects human, plant and animal health in many ways due to the degree of complex interactions between human health, plant health and animal health. For example, food comes directly with the aid of the environment that embodies water, air and soil. All of these are crucial for the existence of human, plant and animal. Invariably, if the environment is impeded in any way, it becomes unhealthy. Socio-politically, environmental unhealthiness spells doom for good governance and delivery of good political goods. Simply, this means anarchy in the society irrespective of the degree of its occurrence.

Olawuyi (2012: 15) observes that the World Health Organisation (WHO) contends that 13 million deaths annually are attributable to environmental burden of disease. However, what WHO has not recognised is the annual death of plants and animals that are equally attributable to environmental burden of disease, deforestation due to pollution, and bad governance. This is because, it is only when this is done that we can appreciate the full political and social dimension of environmental degradation. Further to this, Donohoe (2003: 574) notes that “For every gallon of petroleum drilled from the environment, distributed, and then burned in a vehicle, 25 pounds of carbon dioxide are produced, along with carbon monoxides, sulphur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide, and particulate matter”. These emissions wreck human and wildlife health sentiment, thereby accentuating the social problems in the society. As a matter of fact, environmental degradation is contributing to the continued marginalisation and exclusion of the OBHCs from participatory governance. Environment-related problems aggravate the issue of unemployment amongst the OBHCs. The loss of their source of livelihoods through crude oil spillages and gas flares force the frustration-dynamics to gravitate to aggression and violent conflict. Impoverishment from unemployment results in diseases that account for the deaths of children

(Olawuyi, 2012: 12). Therefore, environmental degradation is a driving force behind the rising tide of socio-political problems and unproductivity.

Socio-politically deprived regions of the world geographies are more often than not associated with the worst issues of environmental degradation. In such geographies, is where the world's notable multinational corporations are usually found because of their resource-extractive lucrative nature. Unfortunately, such resource-extractive industries that flock to such important topographies are usually pollution intensive industries. Expectedly, it is the general assumption that such pollution intensive industries should understand that it is part of their social responsibilities to ensure that pollution originating from their sites does not compromise the integrity and the well-being of the environment and that of the host communities. The significance of this is based on the appreciation of the critical relationship existing between the host communities' well-being and the environment that guarantees that. Grave socio-political challenges develop between these pollution intensive industries, the national governments (usually in alliance with the pollution intensive industries) and host communities, as soon as international capitalism begins to introduce policies that prioritise the well-being of the multinational corporations (pollution intensive industries) over that of the host communities and their environment.

This is invariably because the environment is equated to life within the indigenous host communities that depend entirely on the environment for their existence. Environment is at the centre of the indigenous peoples' economic, health, food and socio-political security. Therefore, whatever compromises the viability of their environment is directly depriving them of their much needed security and renders them vulnerable to insecurity. Reducing this threat of vulnerability to economic, food, health and socio-political insecurity is tantamount to preserving the integrity and the well-being of their environment. The bulk of the entire environmental rectitude is dependent on good governance that ensures integrated development planning across many sectors, including education, health and proper economic development. For Olawuyi (2012: 3), "compliance with social security by the multinational corporations is tantamount to oil exploration activities resulting in greater equity and improved quality of life in the resource-based country. It must alleviate the suffering

of the country by providing social infrastructures that were previously non-existent or inefficient. Examples include improved access to clean, affordable and sustainable water supply, and improved transportation through projects that emphasize efficiency and reduced reliance on fossil fuels”.

Environmental insecurity has made the OBHCs worry about their poverty, the hopelessness of their children’s future, their crops, their animals, and about their husbands’/wives’ general well-being. Will their wives, their husbands and their children return home or will they fall prey to the seductive influence of the external affluence represented by the expatriate oil workers? And above all, they worry much about money. Will they be able to find enough money with which to feed their families including the extended family memberships? This includes their medical bills, school fees and other ancillary needs. Environmental degradation not only lowers the quality of people’s lives, it also compounds their frustration that only finds expression in aggression and violent conflict. In the words of the participants’ narratives, they contend that:

Our environment is our means of survival. But sulphur dioxide and carbon monoxide among others are by-products of gas flare emissions that transform into dangerous chemical formulation known as acid rain when they mix with moisture in the air. The acid rain acidifies our fish ponds, the creeks, the soil, the forests, the lakes, our agricultural crops, the streams, and our sources of drinking water. This frustrates plants’ survival and they subsequently die while animals that depend on the plants for food becomes stressed, agitated and threatened (FFWfgd<sub>1</sub>). Markedly, this disorientates the environmental as well as our well-being while the political economy of the MNOCs responsible for these problems remains prosperous. Such emissions from the gas flare produce tiny particles of pollutants that contain such toxics as benzene, furans and dioxins (CL<sub>13</sub>). The AGRCMfgd<sub>10</sub> contends that all these toxics are deposited inside our

lungs through the polluted air we breathe. From our lungs the toxics start manifesting in different respiratory problems as asthma, bronchitis, even cardiac problems, cancer and premature deaths. This environmental air pollution equally enters our water systems through run-off during rains and engenders a number of communicable diseases such as typhoid, dysentery, cholera, yaw; malaria, yellow fever.

The participants explained that the scourge of crude oil spillages and gas flares has combined to turn their environment into a grave yard. They snuff life out of all the living components of their environment, thereby making life miserable for the people living in it.

Oh, the two problematic issues of oil spillage and gas flaring have combined together to cause instant environmental death in Bayelsa State (Niger Delta). This is because they induce the instant death of fish, wildlife population, and also the instant death of human population caused by oil facility explosions and oil fires, as a result of crude oil spillages. One of the two, especially, the sulphur dioxide emissions from gas flaring, is responsible for the malfunctioning of human haemoglobin and affects visibility, reduction of sunlight, irritation in the eyes, nose and throat (HRNG<sub>6</sub>). Pollutants such as sulphur dioxide enter the plants through the stomata leading to the destruction of the ability of the plants to make their food. You can see that environmental degradation is attacking us in several fronts. It attacks us by killing our crops, killing the fishes, killing other animals, defacing our houses and finally killing us - the indigenous members of the MNOCs' host communities. Our life is just as if we are living in the war front because at every point you turn, there is an attacking front; be it in our waters, in the air, on the soil, on our wildlife, on our

plants, on our animals and attacks on our collective persons (AGRCM<sub>8</sub>).

Participants from the FFW<sub>0</sub> and CL<sub>0</sub> expressed the fear that incessant pollution from oil industry activities has rendered their environment barren. They argue that their ecosystem is their only source of livelihood; this environmental degradation-induced barrenness spells doom for their well-being. From their narratives, the CL<sub>2</sub> argues that:

Constant pollution of our ecosystem by oil production activities has transformed our environment into an ecological dead-zone. Introduction of a variety of pollutants into our various waterways has created huge implications for the well-being of our ecosystem. One of such implications is the elevation of the water temperature to an uncomfortable degree that forces the fish population to leave the affected zone en masse, in search of cooler waters. Furthermore, FFWfgd<sub>7</sub> claims that the massive desertion of the fish population from such affected ecological zone is termed an ecological dead-zone. Alga blooms that develop as a result of water pollution, progressively diminishes the oxygen stock of the water. This forces the fish and other wildlife to suffocate and die as a consequence.

The participants expressed disappointment that they are deprived of the right to full enjoyment of the facilities that aid healthy living. Air, for instance, is vital for human existence, but the quality of air circulating in the Niger Delta is completely substandard due to pollution. This is militating against their healthy existence and productivity:

Our continued existence is dependent on the availability of clean air. All plants and animals in our environment need clean air to survive as well. But continuous gas flaring has made sure that our air is completely polluted which affects our well-being. Air pollution makes our environment insecure. Our children are more vulnerable to issues of air pollution because of the state of their immune system. Air

pollution therefore creates the favourable atmosphere for the development of different illnesses, such as asthma which in some cases leads to premature death. The doctors have confirmed that air pollution is responsible for the increasing cases of strokes, heart attacks, and irregular heart rates within our communities (AGRCM<sub>5</sub>). Yes! All gaseous pollutants that militant against development of humans and wildlife are allowed to afflict us. This makes us to think twice about whom we really are. How can the government permit such behaviour against us? For instance, everybody knows that air pollution creates carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrous oxide which aggravate the issue of global warming and climate change. Greenhouse gases collect in the atmosphere, forming a layer of reflective and absorbent materials that prevents some of the heat radiated by the sun from escaping the Earth's atmosphere, keeping the temperature sufficiently warm for plant and animal life to thrive. If this is known to be injurious to human health why is it allowed in Bayelsa State (Niger Delta)? (AGRCM<sub>5</sub>).

The uniqueness of all the environmental elements is what promotes the appreciation of the degree of the socio-political importance of the environment in enhancing the well-being of humans. But the threat to which the environment is subjected by degradation and pollution has kept the research participants worried. The FFWfgd<sub>4</sub> observes that:

Water just like the air is a vital component of environment for our survival. Both plants and animals require water just as they need air for their existence. We need to drink clean water and use the same for our various domestic chores. Water, a constituent of the environment is one of the most important world resources that nature freely supplies for the enhancement of our international political economy. This is because it is essential for human survival, plants and animals' healthy existence. Invariably, CL<sub>13</sub> states that water pollution therefore, has wide reaching socio-political implications for

us and the environment. For example, water pollution led to the presence of mercury in fish. This contamination has dangerously afflicted our children with different ailments. Mercury is dangerous for our women, both pregnant and nursing mothers. FFWfgd<sub>4</sub> notes that Mercury interferes with the development of the central nervous system in foetuses and young children, which has resulted in many long-term health problems within our communities. With the loss of our sources of livelihoods, it is a big problem for us to contend with these issues.

Besides that, HRNG<sub>2</sub> postulates that oil exploration involves clearing, cutting down and destruction of life saving forests. This deforestation promotes the destruction of trees whose natural function is to absorb carbon dioxide to help the biosphere. This important function performed by trees is now left undone, and this has led to huge increase in atmospheric carbon dioxide. Consequently this results in high emissions of methane, and nitrous oxides which cause average temperatures to increase. This creates the incidence of deadly heat waves enabling insects such as mosquitoes to live longer and breed faster. HRNG<sub>1</sub> claims that deforestation equally promotes the displacement of the wildlife that lived in the forests as well as the destruction of vegetation that once grew on the land. All these are agents of death through starvation and diseases, indicating that the civil war is still not over.

Basically, there are always two sides to every phenomenon. Sometimes when the socio-political advantages derivable from a phenomenon overwhelm the disadvantages, it becomes a fortune. Conversely, when the socio-political disadvantages from the phenomenon overwhelm the advantages, it becomes misfortune. Having the longest coast line in the Niger Delta region should have made Bayelsa state a very fortunate state, due to the huge riches and other advantages

derivable from being close to the Atlantic Ocean, but experiences have shown the participants in this research that, all that glitters is not gold. They explain thus:

Within the Niger Delta region, Bayelsa State has the longest coast line, about 203 kilometres open to the Atlantic Ocean. This fact renders all the villages around the bank of the Atlantic Ocean vulnerable to crude oil spillages in the ocean which serves as the major transportation route of crude oil. Such environmental calamity not only displaces the entire populations of the coastal areas, but also destroys the peoples' livelihood (AGRCM<sub>5</sub>). The seriousness of such environmental tragedy can only be understood by people like you who have come here to see things for themselves. Otherwise, when they hear it on the television or read it from the newspaper, the real effects of the oil industry induced environmental degradation will not be fully understood. For instance, when you read from the newspaper or hear it on television that our people change the roof sheets of their houses every now and then, the real implications will not be understood. But now, you have seen what acid rain does to our roofing sheets. Now, ask yourself how our people who have lost their sources of income will be able to change the roofing sheets of their houses, at least, every two years because of acid rain attack? (AGRCMfgd<sub>10</sub>) This is part of the frustrating situation whose despondency forces us into aggression. That is why we often speak of being in war because we have practically no life. We are constantly in fear of losing one thing or the other. The situation is too bad that we decided that it is better to struggle for posterity (AGRCM<sub>1</sub>).

Fig 8.1: SOIL CAKED INTO CRUSTS OF DRIED CRUDE OIL



Source: UNEP (2011) Environmental Assessment of Ogoniland. Nairobi, Kenya. [www.unep.org/oea/pdf/Niger\\_delta\\_byUN.pdf](http://www.unep.org/oea/pdf/Niger_delta_byUN.pdf).

This thesis is persuaded by these research participants' narratives to comprehend that Nigeria's obsession with the practice of mono-economic policy centred on crude oil exploration and exploitation has direct bearing on the perceptions of what the Nigeria-Biafra civil war was about. The participants argue that all the regions in Nigeria are endowed with resources that were used for the development of their various regions before the Nigeria-Biafra war. After the war, the government concentrated all its efforts only on oil, which is a non-renewable energy source. The participants contend that the aim of the authorities is to deplete the resources in the Niger Delta. The participants contend that:

In the 1960s, Nigeria practiced regional autonomy which is the fundamental tenet of federalism in a country with multi-ethnicities like

Nigeria. Unfortunately, in an effort to manage the war economy during the civil war, the military ruling class abandoned this principle of federalism for a unitary administrative system. So, the country still bears 'Federal Republic' in name only and not in practice. But instead of reverting to the autonomy of the federating units after the war in 1970, the government, rather, maintained the status quo. It even legitimised its powers to expropriate the resources of the federating units especially in the Niger Delta region, then a Biafran enclave (G<sub>0</sub>S<sub>1</sub>). While the military regime indulged in massive crude oil exploration and exploitation in the Niger Delta, resulting in an unprecedented degree of environmental degradation, the oil wealth was discriminatorily used in the massive development of the Nigerian side while the Biafran side was abandoned (G<sub>0</sub>S<sub>8</sub>).

This discriminatory massive exploration and exploitation of non-renewable resources from (Niger Delta) the Biafran side since after the war, indicates that the government has purposely preserved the various natural resources in all the Nigerian side of Nigeria. Most states in the Northern part of Nigeria are known to be endowed with solid minerals in commercial quantities including barite, gold, marble, bitumen, tantalite, dolomite, kaolin, bentonite, gypsum, uranium, limestone, iron ore, coal and others (G<sub>0</sub>S<sub>5</sub>). The clear political agenda is to finish the crude oil and gas in the Biafran side of Nigeria to ensure perpetual impoverishment of our region. As soon as our oil is finished, they will fall back on their preserved solid minerals. To us this is clear manifestation of the continuation of a war policy of starvation (AGRCM<sub>5</sub>).

AGRCMfgd<sub>10</sub> declares that "This is why we are talking about resource control. It will enable both the Biafran side of Nigeria and the Nigerian side of Nigeria to control their resources and use it to develop their areas as they see fit. They are against it because their interest is in making sure that our crude oil and gas reserves are depleted before they start developing their resources. This is the

problem we have in this country. How can you have something, and you leave it only to struggle over another person's property? That is greediness". According to AGRCM<sub>1</sub>, People who research into this problem usually ask us why we had to fight. How can we not fight? They are frustrating and infuriating us. They keep their resources and use our own to develop their places while we are in primitivity. This is not only re-colonialism but it is also re-slavery. These are why our people are fighting to free ourselves from the strong hold of oppression and to end the vestiges of the civil war.

Resource ownership and control should be seen for what many benefits it portends for this nation instead of the colonialism and slavery it is presently being used for in Nigeria. Rather than being connotative of fear, it should embody hope and progress (G<sub>0</sub>S<sub>9</sub>). Ostensibly, AGRCMfgd<sub>10</sub> asks, "If oil exploration and exploitation is not being politicised to achieve a hidden political agenda, why are the ground-nut pyramids that used to be the economic identity of the Northern Nigeria allowed to disappear? In those days, the practice of resource control increased the overall wealth of Nigeria through job creation, contracts, trades, industry and social services it empowered". G<sub>0</sub>S<sub>5</sub> observes that reverting to this system will empower the development and exploitation of the abandoned critical natural and human resources that nature endowed all the 36 states of this nation with. Therefore, the concept of trying to deplete the oil and gas reserves of Niger Delta to bring to fruition the policy of starvation as a war policy is counterproductive.

The G<sub>0</sub>F<sub>10</sub> argues that resource control is a good economic principle that empowers development, if it is planned and executed transparently. Transparency and accountability are the only trademarks that will guarantee the success of resource control, but definitely, not as it is presently being practiced. The point we are being persuaded to explain is that, if you are unable to transparently account creditably for ₦100 [Naira is Nigeria's official currency], what

is the guarantee that you will be able to manage ₦200 for the benefit of the masses? To drive home this point, some states in the Niger Delta are receiving as much as ₦30 billion (about £120 million) each month, based on the revenue allocation principle of derivation. The critical issue now is to find out what the leaders of these states have been doing with huge amounts of money received every month. A governor of such a state has a four-year tenure; therefore, he receives a total of ₦360 billion (about £1,440 million) from derivation principle every year. If you multiply this figure by four, you will see what he gets in the four years of his tenure. The question the G<sub>o</sub>F<sub>2</sub> is asking is, “How have these leaders fared with these huge funds in relation to the development of their states? If they could not account for these funds, how would they be able to manage the affairs of the resources they are fighting for?”

### 8.3 THE WATER INSECURITY DIMENSION OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION

The fears of major military threats against the secessionist republic of Biafra ended officially in 1970. Paradoxically, that marked the beginning of another era of environmental insecurity that militates against the integrity of human development linked to the degradation and depletion of freshwater resources in Bayelsa State (Niger Delta). The polarisation induced by water insecurity provides the lee-way to understand not only the frustration it breeds, but also the aggression and violent conflict potentially linked to the water insecurity dimension. For Grey and Sadoff (2007: 549; Webb & Iskandarani, 1998: 4), water security is the unrestricted access by all individuals at all times to sufficient and safe water for a healthy and productive life. Therefore, water is not only a natural resource, but also an economic commodity, and a human consumption good or entitlement (Webb & Iskandarani,

1998: 1). Furthermore, “Water is a source of life, livelihoods and prosperity. It is an essential input to all productions, in agriculture, industry, energy, transport, by healthy people in healthy ecosystems” (Grey and Sadoff, 2007: 547). The vision of the Global Water Partnership (GWP) is the possibility of a water secure world, where there is enough water for household needs, for social and economic development, and for ecosystems (Ait-Kadi and Arriens, 2012: 3). On this basis, consideration should be given as to how water as a resource, commodity and entitlement is linked to the local, national and international economy in different ways. For instance, countries that promote tourism as a vehicle for economic growth find their economies in peril when tourists learn that once-famous rivers and beaches are no longer safe for recreation (Ait-Kadi and Arriens, 2012: 4). Besides that, crude oil spillages filter into the water table with disastrous effects on fauna, flora, human health, and the soil, inducing increased water-related diseases, lower agricultural productivity, and low rural incomes. Frustration from these dire conditions is what triggers aggression and conflict between the degraders and the victims.

Perhaps of equal importance is an understanding of who stands to benefit from the insecurities and pain which the environmental degradation is inflicting on the indigenous OBHCs of Bayelsa State (Niger Delta). This is based on the philosophy that behind every smoke, there is fire. The literature argues that converting to modern technology, instead of indulgence in gas flaring, is too capital intensive and would eat deep into the profit margin of the multinational oil corporations (Alapiki, 2004: 244; JINN, 2011: 9 and Brown, 1990 cited in Obi, 2009: 77). Clearly, this argument simply indicates that it is to the pecuniary advantage of the oil corporations to persevere in the use of the obsolete technology that is detrimental to the well-being and health of the environment, indigenous OBHCs, plants and animals within the environment. Ostensibly, the participants hold differing views on this according to their different social and political dispositions. However, while the government and the MNOCs completely deny pecuniary implications for the degradation, the indigenous OBHCs maintain that it is basically so and even more. For AGRCMfgd<sub>10</sub>:

When you consider the methodology of the environmental degradation, it becomes apparent that two different motives are at work. For example, when crude spillage is allowed to go on for days, weeks and months without any efforts made to contain them, you notice that the motive is to inflict bodily harm and death within the population. This is the first motive. The other is when cleaning up is haphazardly done especially with incompetent workmanship, you see pecuniary motivations coupled with causation of bodily harm and death. Well, both motivations signify the continuation of the policy of starvation used freely during the war as official weapon of war against the non-combatants in Biafra. In CL<sub>2</sub>'s opinion, When the MNOCs opted to exploit the loopholes in the nation's legal system by choosing to pay meagre fines, rather than adopting environmental friendly technologies, what does that tell you?

Shell (2007: 25) claims that the MNOCs employ pipelines and asset surveillance contractors from the OBHCs traversed by oil facilities, to monitor these facilities on daily basis. Besides this, Shell argues that the MNOCs carry out daily over-flights of the pipeline networks to detect leakage points for immediate response; but regrets that armed gangs who are after clean-up contracts or higher compensations usually prevent the MNOCs' staff from entering such sites. "Such sabotage accounts for over 70% of oil spills from oil facilities while less than 30% could be attributed to operational failures in the last 5 years" (Shell, 2007: 25). This however, only partly explains why oil spillages are allowed to go on un-attended for days, weeks and in extreme cases, months.

On the other hand, in line with government regulation, a Joint Inspection Visit (JIV) comprising the relevant government agencies such as the Department of Petroleum Resources (DPR), the National Oil Spill Detection and Response Agency (NOSDRA), the State Ministry of Environment, the Police, the MNOCs and the representatives of impacted OBHCs visits the spill site as quickly as possible to establish the cause and volume of oil spilt. Amnesty International (2013: 15) contend that according to the Environmental Guidelines and Standards for the Petroleum Industry in Nigeria, clean-up of an oil spill should commence within 24 hours of the occurrence of the spill. But

due to the length of time it takes to assemble this JIV team, the spillage continues un-attended for as long as it takes to organise the team. As evidence, the Amnesty International (2013: 15) argues that “these JIVs are frequently carried out days – and in some cases weeks – after an oil spill occurs”.

Because usually, the Joint Inspection Visit (JIV) precedes clean-up, it is impossible to comply with the 24 hour deadline when JIVs are scheduled several days after the spill is reported, which is a contravention of the requirements of Nigerian regulations (Amnesty International 2013: 15). Providing further evidence of the apathetic approach of the MNOCs to immediate spillage clean-up, the Amnesty International (2013: 15) writes that during an interview on 7 May 2013 with the Director of NOSDRA in Rivers State, “A message from the Nigerian Agip Oil Company was received informing the Director of an oil spill incident. The text message stated when the JIV would take place (a date several days later) and notified the Director that his staff members should be ready to join the team at a given time. The Director confirmed that this is the usual procedure for a JIV”.

Clearly, a text message conveys the news of the fixture of the JIV several days later, during which the spillage continues un-attended. Apparently this delay is not caused by access restriction by armed gangs as the MNOCs claims. And after the JIV is eventually done to determine the cause and volume of the spillage, it takes some more time before repairs are carried out. Within this time frame, the spillage continues its destruction of the environment. The fact that NOSDRA, who by its name should be the one detecting oil spill is now being informed by the MNOCs and told when and where to join the JIV, confirms the claims of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP, 2011 cited in Amnesty International, 2013: 16) that:

Government agencies are at the mercy of oil companies when it comes to conducting site inspections. And, there is clearly a conflict of interest in a ministry (Department of Petroleum Resources) which, on one hand, has to maximize revenue by increasing production and, on the other, ensure environmental compliance.

Ostensibly, because there is no proper mechanism for detection of the commencement of oil spillages apart from physical identification, Amnesty

International (2013: 17) argues that such spills would have been flowing for days if not weeks before its detection. What this means is that generally, the day an oil spill is detected is usually assumed to be the day of its commencement. This administrative misdemeanour accounts for the large volumes of crude oil being spilled into the environment most of which the MNOCs attribute to sabotage. But, criticizing the MNOCs for attributing the spillages to sabotage and thereby taking advantage of the Nigerian law to avoid paying compensation, the Amnesty International argues that the MNOCs should be held accountable for not taking adequate precaution to protect their infrastructure thereby preventing sabotage. Attributing such vast proportion of spillages to sabotage is indefensible for responsible MNOCs (Amnesty International, 2013: 6).

Conversely, the other camp to the debate argues differently. Unfortunately, people who fail to look deep into how the affairs of oil production are run, may not appreciate the full complexity in the system. The MN<sub>1</sub> argues that:

Any business organisation that is interested in remaining operational would not for any reason want to antagonise its host communities because they are important to the continued smooth operation of our businesses in several ways. For MN<sub>2</sub> “No spillage is allowed unattended except where insecurity does not permit for rapid response. In such cases, negotiations are carried out to create a safe passage for our staff”. The GoFfgd<sub>9</sub> opines that Oil business involves a lot of complex technicalities and detailed planning for effective operation. For instance, conversion from one technology to another is programmed to be achieved in stages. For good result, this plan must be religiously followed for the safety of all. Furthermore, MN<sub>1</sub> reiterates that complying with the legal stipulations of Nigeria is a major part of our corporate social responsibility. No responsible business organisation would want to go contrary to the legal framework of its host nation, if it wants to remain operational within the confines of the territory.

## 8.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter has discussed the study participants' narratives as the basis for understanding why the major beneficiaries of the Niger Delta environment are degrading their benefactor. The objective was to see how these participants' narratives would help to provide illuminating answers to the research problem and it has clearly shown that the indigenous populations experience overwhelming feelings of frustration from the degradation of their environment. This study also shows with the aid of the participants' perception that the environmental degradation exposes the indigenous OBHCs to a range of human insecurities such as economic, food, health and socio-political insecurities which they attribute to be a continuation of the Nigeria-Biafra civil war policy.

The findings of this present study, which is resolute on Bayelsa State (Niger Delta) environmental degradation being a consequence of a hidden political agenda, is a departure from other contemporary findings from scholarships on environmental degradation induced by oil mining. From the participants' postulations, the hidden political agenda is a calculated effort to spite the Biafran enclave of Niger Delta in continuation of the war policy. Most post war policies of the military regimes seem to vindicate this claim whose aggravated frustration-dynamics trigger the aggression and violent conflict sentiments in the region. Arguably, the "no victor, no vanquished" declaration at the end of the civil war, as argued by this research participants, appear to be at cross purposes with the impacts of economic, food, health and socio-political insecurities occasioned by determined and steady degradation of the Niger Delta environment (Owolabi, 2012: 49; Dafinone, 2008 cited in Aghalino, 2011: 3). These insecurities are agents of disease, hunger, and death. Tolerating the continuation of these agents of death is what propagates the perception of a hidden political agenda in concert with the war time policy. The next chapter discusses the beneficiaries' environmental degradation to answer the research questions.

## CHAPTER 9

### COMPREHENDING BENEFICIARIES' ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION FROM RESEARCH QUESTIONS

#### 9.0 OVERVIEW

In chapter 8 respondents' perceptions of the dynamics of environmental degradation were employed to critically interrogate why the major beneficiaries are degrading their benefactor. But in this chapter 9, after detailed analysis of the collected data for this study targeted at providing solutions to the research problem by answering the research questions, the results of the analysis will be presented as solutions to the research questions. However, it is pertinent to re-call the aim of this study to guide the solutions being presented. The aim is to understand the socio-political dynamics motivating the major beneficiaries of Bayelsa State (Niger Delta) environment to degrade their benefactor. This is especially when it is argued that such acts threaten the very existence of the indigenous oil-bearing host communities (OBHCs) of Bayelsa State (Niger Delta). Doing this will lead to understanding how frustrations from the environmental degradation drive the cross accusations that culminate in aggression and violent conflict in the Niger Delta. Then, the code "RQ" as used in this context means "Research question" and it will be used throughout the presentation of the solutions to the research questions. The first research question "RQ1".

#### 9.1 RQ1: ARE MAJOR BENEFICIARIES OF THE BAYELSA STATE (NIGER DELTA) ENVIRONMENT DEGRADING THEIR BENEFACTOR?

The focus of this section is to use the result of the data analysis based on the strength of the respondents' narratives, to find the solution to the research problem. The research problem seeks to understand why the major beneficiaries of the Bayelsa State (Niger Delta) environment are degrading their benefactor. Notably, the

cross accusations of frustrations from the effects of the environmental degradation which the government's inability or lack of political will to address, has converted distressed but powerful energies into aggression. To arrest this situation, RQ1 wishes to know if the major beneficiaries of the Bayelsa State (Niger Delta) environment are degrading their benefactor. For clarity purposes, Ejibunu (2007: 35) declares that environmental degradation is the introduction of foreign substances into the environment. By this standard, the findings from the analysed data are positive that the environment of Niger Delta is being degraded. For example, (see chapter 7: Table 7.2.1 of respondents' code distribution).

To answer the RQ1, the FFW<sub>s</sub> declared: "Mr Researcher, you do not need a microscope to see that the lands bequeathed to our parents by our great, great grand-fathers to use for our sustainability as farmers have been destroyed by oil. On the other hand, CL<sub>2</sub> corroborates this by arguing that the rivers from which we depend on as the source of our fish as fishermen and women have equally been polluted. As a result we cannot any longer go on fishing expeditions and hope to return with anything. The few parcels of lands that are unaffected by crude oil spillages have been devastated by the effects of gas flare. This makes sure that nothing survives on any farm land within the vicinity of the location of such gas flare mechanisms. The worst is that gas flare pollutes the fresh air which leaves us breathing only contaminated air. This is responsible for various health related hazards prevalent in our region. To show that this blockade is a total war against our people, our only sources of good drinking water has been contaminated. This endangers the life of the entire region" (AGR<sub>CM4</sub>).

"To make matters worse, the government who is in a joint venture with the MNOCs degrading our environment as a result of which we are now unemployed, gave us no alternative jobs. The government allowed the MNOCs to destroy our environment (farm land), ensuring that we virtually have no means of livelihood. Does this not look to you as war? If you were to live here under these circumstances, won't you get frustrated, particularly when you are convinced that your natural environment has enough resources to ensure that you will not go hungry?" (AGR<sub>CM4</sub>; FFW<sub>s</sub>; CL<sub>2</sub>)

This finding was confirmed by the literature as contained in the NNPC 1983 Report (Owolabi, 2012: 49-50 see chapter 3).

## 9.2: RQ2: ARE CROSS ACCUSATIONS OF FRUSTRATIONS FROM ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION TRIGGERING AGGRESSION AND VIOLENT CONFLICT AMONGST THE ACTORS?

The findings of the data analysis based on the narratives of the research respondents were critically examined to isolate the possible answer to RQ2. The outcome of this exercise revealed that the cross accusations of frustrations from environmental degradation really triggered aggression amongst the stakeholders in the Niger Delta conflict. The OBHCs in Bayelsa State (Niger Delta) accused the MNOCs and its host government of being responsible for the environmental degradation breeding frustrations within the OBHCs. The MNOCs and its host government accused the OBHCs of disrupting their production with huge effects on their profits while the host government accused the OBHCs of starving it of funds for its budget implementation.

The OBHCs made several peaceful efforts through Bills of Rights and the Kaima Declaration to ensure that the problem was settled amicably. This fact is revealed in this excerpt: "As the frustrations from environmental degradation became unbearable through the instrumentation of non-violent protestations, we delivered several peaceful mechanisms to the government and the MNOCs. The peaceful mechanisms include a number of Bills of Rights of which the last was the Kaiama Declaration. These documents contain our demands and complaints against the government and the MNOCs. Rather than sit down to peacefully negotiate with us, the government's brutal response extended to military offensive against Odi town in Bayelsa State. They killed thousands of people while others were either maimed or displaced" (AGRCM<sub>3</sub>). This finding revealed that this is how the cross accusations of frustration from the environmental degradation triggers conflict amongst the stakeholders in the Niger Delta conflict.

The respondents concluded the findings thus: “The government has taken our land, oil and gas resources without any corresponding government presence in the form of infrastructures. To worsen the already bad situation, under the government’s watchful eyes, the MNOCs are degrading our environment, polluting our farms and air, as well as contaminating our water thereby aggravating our impoverishment (FFW<sub>10</sub>). The most annoying part is that when we complain about these frustrations, the security agencies are ordered to kill our people. This is why the conflict is endemic”. The implication of this is that the complaint is equal to the cross accusations. And whenever these cross accusations (complaints) are made, aggression is triggered (CL<sub>1</sub>). Therefore, frustration accusations trigger aggression.

### 9.3: RQ3: ARE THESE BENEFICIARIES ADVERTENTLY OR INADVERTENTLY DEGRADING THEIR BENEFACTOR?

From the result of the data analysis based on the respondents’ narratives, the phenomenon of advertent or inadvertent degradation of the benefactor is a very polemic paradigm. This is because a segment of the respondents argued strongly ‘for’, while the other segment equally made their case ‘against’. For instance, “No responsible oil corporation that wishes to remain in the business of oil and gas exploration will knowingly engage in pollution (MN<sub>1</sub>). Therefore, it is not plausible for anybody to adopt the view that pollution is advertently done by multinational oil corporations (GoF<sub>10</sub>). Apparently in reply to this, the other segment countered, “Knowing as we do, when a ship washes its tank in the seas, that is obviously an advertent act (AGR<sub>CM</sub><sub>8</sub>). The nation’s petroleum industry legislation allows ships to throw crude overboard for purposes of safety. This is also another case of advertent deed (FFW<sub>7</sub>). Besides these, if gas flare is allowed to go on incessantly when they are aware of its effects on the environment, is that not a case of advertent act? (CL<sub>13</sub>). If the government retains a legislation that imposes a penalty that is an equivalent of British 50 Pence sterling on a pollution offender of the multinational oil corporations’ stature, is that not an advertent act?” (HRNG<sub>4</sub>).

From the literature, Dafinone (2008 cited in Aghalino, 2011: 3; 2009: 58) opined that the degradation of the Niger Delta environment is not only deliberate but also incessant. “Negligence, insensitivity and unwillingness”, are how Owolabi (2012: 49) sees the degradation of the environment. This makes the people to ask rhetorically, “Can the government prevent the devastation against the OBHCs’ environment? To answer its own question, CL<sub>4</sub> says, “yes, it can”. But unfortunately the government has woefully failed to do so. This is why this study critically asks, why? For O’Neill (2007: 1), unequivocally, “Oil soiled and poisons everything in Southern Nigeria”. All these support the findings of the data analysis which point to the fact that the degradation is advertent. Concluding the section, the respondents argue, “If the degradation is not deliberate, why would they dispossess us of our oil, our land, stop the 50% revenue derivation enjoyed by others and pay no attention to devastation by MNOCs in our environment? Simply, the Nigeria-Biafra war is continuing in the Niger Delta environmental war-front or battle-field” (FFWfgd<sub>3</sub>; AGRCMfgd<sub>10</sub> & CL<sub>12</sub>).

#### 9.4: RQ4: DOES THE ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION AFFECT THE CAPACITY OF THE ENVIRONMENT TO PRODUCE CRUDE OIL AND GAS?

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that environmental degradation does not impair the ability of the environment to produce oil and gas. The finding was clear that if degradation was as a result of natural disaster, it could impair the capacity of the environment to produce oil and gas. It also made it clear that man-made degradation as obtains in the Niger Delta does not impair the ability of the environment to produce oil. The respondents argue that, “If the degradation impairs the ability of the environment to produce oil and gas, the NG and the MNOCs will not wait for anybody to tell them to be careful” (HRNG<sub>6</sub>). The problem is that the “implication is one sided. That is, it affects only the OBHCs” (FFW<sub>4</sub>). That is why the “NG and the MNOCs have no interest in stopping the degradation” (CL<sub>13</sub>). Adding their own voice, the AGRCMfgd<sub>4</sub> contends that “The only thing that affects the ‘quantity of oil and gas production’ is the conflict that the degradation generates, but not the ability of the environment to produce oil and gas.

“The environment does not know if there is conflict or not, therefore, it goes on producing what it can. What changes is that the conflict does not allow the MNOCs to continue operating as normal. It was actually the drastic reduction in the quantity of oil and gas produced during the conflict that forced the government to think of amnesty. The conflict succeeded in putting them out of business and therefore, lost their source of income for the first time in comparison to what we have faced for over fifty years of oil operation in Nigeria. We said, if we cannot have crops from our farms and fish from our rivers to eat and sell, the NG and the MNOCs will equally not have oil to sell. For once, they felt what we have feeling since 1956 when oil was first discovered in Oloibiri in Bayelsa State (Niger Delta)” (AGRCMfgd<sub>6</sub>). Bulhan warned about the psychology of oppression in 1985 when he said that the wish of the oppressed is to swap positions with the oppressor. Once the OBHCs applied this rule, the game changed in Niger Delta. So, the conclusion is that the ability of the environment to produce oil and gas is not impaired by degradation.

## 9.5: RQ5: DOES THE DEGRADATION THREATEN THE EXISTENCE OF ANY BENEFICIARY?

Consequent upon the result of the data analysis, it can be concluded that the paradigm of environmental degradation threatens the existence of some beneficiaries. The beneficiary identified by the finding to be under the scourge of environmental degradation is the indigenous oil-bearing host communities (OBHCs) of Bayelsa State (Niger Delta). The literature argues that more than 60% of the Niger Delta population depends on the environment as their source of livelihood and these same sources of livelihood (arable land and water) have been degraded by pollution related to oil extraction by the MNOCs (Francis and Susan, 2008 in Mba, 2013: 50-51). This is because as farmers and fishermen and women, they entirely depend on their land for their agricultural sustainability. The same thing applies to their fishermen and women who depend on their ubiquitous rivers for survival. Their mangrove and rain forests serve a variety of purposes to support their continued existence. They serve as sources of their fuel (wood) and are of high medicinal value to them due to a dearth of a modern health care infrastructure. However, from the

findings of this study, it can be concluded that a threat to the environment that means everything to the OBHCs meant a threat to their sustainable existence. This fact is clearly delineated in the following narratives.

Before the advent of the Petroleum industry, Niger Delta used to be the food and wealth basket of the nation because of our productive terrain. Our people are not used to buying and eating iced fish because of abundance of fresh-water-fish. Our farm lands usually blossom with crops of diverse classifications leading to bountiful harvests. Our sources of water for our various domestic usages were free from contamination. Our air was fresh and unpolluted. All these ensured that life flourished well. But as soon as the oil industry became a reality, all that changed. First and foremost, the burning of unwanted gas called gas flare burns every day from year to year. This destroys our houses, crops and the worst of all, our health because of its chemical composition called acid rain. As a result, cancer, different types of respiratory and skin diseases are common feature in Niger Delta. Contamination of our drinking water and cases of eating poisoned fish result in still-births and high child and maternal mortality rates. Incessant cases of crude oil spillages devastate our farm lands. This results in poor harvest which aggravates the issues of unemployment, hunger, poverty and death (AGRCM<sub>3</sub>; FFW<sub>6</sub> & CL<sub>4</sub>). The cumulative effects of all these is economic, food, water, health and socio-political insecurity of the OBHCs. This means that their existence is threatened due to frustrations gravitating to aggression.

## 9.6: RQ6: WHY DO ACTORS TRANSLATE THEIR FRUSTRATION TO AGGRESSION?

Frustration is an emotional state of the mind that arises from failure to achieve a goal. Frustration develops from disappointments, lack of fulfilment and disorientation or inability to change a discomforting situation as a result of an intervening variable. Fishermen in Bayelsa state just as in other states of the Niger Delta go to work every day to catch fish. Most of them claim that before the commencement of oil

exploration and exploitation in the Niger Delta, fishermen could catch enough fish with which their families were fed, and had good stock for sales. From this occupation and the proceeds from their marketed fish, they were able to provide for their families' essential needs. However, all that changed with the advent of the multinational oil corporations that had promised a better life to them. This promise faded into oblivion as soon as crude oil from both upstream and downstream activities leaked into the rivers, seas and fish ponds. Conclusions from this study indicate that the authorities have not been able to adequately check the cause of the environmental degradation. The implication of this on the population is seen from the following result of the analysis: according to the data displayed in the age distribution of the respondents in Table 6.2, the respondents are aged from 35-45 years and are a total of 36.

This age bracket constitutes the most active age in any given population, indicating that they are of matured age and charged with various family responsibilities as husbands, wives, mothers, fathers with extended family burdens. This means that they are the bread winners of their families coupled with a plethora of extended family responsibilities. Austere social and economic conditions such as joblessness and loss of means of livelihoods created by environmental degradation deprive them of the opportunity to fulfil these daily vital responsibilities to their immediate families. This makes aggression an alternative means of survival. To AGRCM<sub>4</sub> and CL<sub>12</sub>: "we are the products of man-made austere conditions that deprive us of our rights to existence and good living. Everything we have done and experienced are as a result of direct action or inaction of the authorities against our existence. Frustration is an effective weapon of war. Frustrated man has only two choices: Either he dies of hunger and disease or he dies through a bullet. Anyway, either way, he dies. So what is the essence of living a torturous life when others are enjoying the fruit of our environment?" According to G<sub>0</sub>S<sub>1</sub>, "Desperation is the major driving force pushing frustration to aggression". As demonstrated elsewhere, the application of the instrumental aggression against the OBHCs creates the desperation that makes the frustration-dynamics to convert the distressed but powerful energies into aggression. Notably, while this is providing answer to the RQ6, it has also shown that the HPT1 stating that frustration is fundamental in aggression is plausible.

## 9.7: THE HYPOTHESES OF THIS STUDY ARE:

The code “HPT” as used in this context means “Hypothesis” and it will be used throughout the presentation of the implication of the hypothesis to the results of the data analysis. The first hypothesis is “HPT1”.

## 9.8: HPT1: FRUSTRATION IS FUNDAMENTAL IN AGGRESSION

In demonstrating that frustration is fundamental in aggression, Figs. 1.8.1 and 1.8.2 in Chapter 1, indicate that the desire to acquire the OBHCs’ crude oil is what led to the development of self-inflicted-frustration by the MNOCs and the government. Consequently, the self-inflicted-frustration activated the instrumental aggression launched by MNOCs and the government against the OBHCs’ environment. The instrumental aggression culminated in the degradation of the environment which frustrated the OBHCs. Conversely, this frustration from the environmental degradation made the OBHCs to resort to reactive aggression. In each stage of the aggression, there was frustration. Because frustration appears every time before aggression, it does show that frustration is fundamental in aggression. What this means is that frustration is the mother of aggression as Dollard et al argued in 1939. It equally demonstrates that the frustration-aggression theory is perfect for the explanation of cross accusations of frustration leading to aggression in the Niger Delta.

That frustration is fundamental in aggression can be demonstrated with international relations between sovereign nations. The case of Iraq and Kuwait easily comes to mind. Adopting the same Figs 1.8.1 and 1.8.2, the GOVMT/MNOCs can easily be substituted with Iraq, while the OBHCs are substituted with Kuwait. In this scenario, the illustration demonstrates that Iraq propelled by envy of Kuwait’s oil resources, was moved by frustration to invade Kuwait. The fact about SIFAT is that it clearly demonstrates that the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq was provoked by self-inflicted-frustration-aggression. Even though, Kuwait did not do anything practically to

provoke Iraqi invasion, but SIFAT demonstrates that the provocation was self-inflicted-frustration. This frustration was caused by envy and greed over Kuwait's oil resources. Therefore the subsequent aggressive act was equally self-inflicted-aggression from the self-inflicted-frustration. Thus SIFAT has clearly demonstrated here that frustration is fundamental in aggression.

## 9.9: HPT2: ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION CONSTITUTES FRUSTRATION FLASH POINT: THE CONCLUSION

The findings from data analysis revealed that the frustration of the people of the Niger Delta is a consequence of the failure of the Nigerian government to stop the devastation of their environment. Environment is the source from which they satisfy their socio-economic needs, and the frustrations created by the effects of its degradation led to aggression and violent conflict. In other words the findings are in agreement that environmental degradation is a veritable frustration flash point that ignites aggression and violent conflict. Theoretically, the cardinal plank of the frustration-aggression theory is the hypothesis that "aggression is always a result of frustration" (Dollard et al, 1939: 1). As a completion of this line of thought, the theory postulates further that "the existence of frustration always leads to some form of aggression" (Dollard et al, 1939: 1). Instinctively, Amaraegbu's (2011: 213) research findings most appropriately conveyed the message that struck eloquently at the heart of the problem by supporting the findings in this study which declares that frustration was responsible for the aggression and violent conflict in Niger Delta.

Analogically, what this means is that environmental degradation is the frustration flash-point that triggers aggression. Clinically, what this theory advocates is that individuals become aggressive when there are obstacles to their success in life (van de Goor et al., 1996 cited in Ikejiaku, 2012: 131). It equally indicates that aggressive behaviour is not motivated by genuine hostility, but by frustration (Malici, 2007: 6-7). Environmental degradation creates economic, food, health, water and socio-political insecurities within the OBHCs. Thus, environmental degradation constitutes a barrier to the OBHCs' leading a good life by depriving them of their basic needs.

“After milking us dry, and driving us into unemployment, the government could not create alternative employment for us in companies producing petrol chemical products such as rubber, paints, plastics, fertilizers, adhesive, cosmetics, fabrics, carpets, and so forth. We lack basic infrastructure such as paved road and amenities such as electricity and clean water that could enhance our wellbeing, while megacities like Abuja are built with our wealth” (CL<sub>1</sub>). The findings show this as indicative of degradation constituting frustration flash point in conclusion. The next chapter brings the thesis to conclusion.

## CHAPTER 10

# WRAPPING-UP THE KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION PERFORMATIVITY

### 10.0 OVERVIEW

The concept of performativity from the lens of Austin's (1962) work, 'How to Do Things with Words', is indicative that "All utterances are performative since they depict that saying something is doing something" (Austin, 1962: 98; 1970: 241), rather than simply reporting on or describing reality. This understanding influenced hugely the trajectory of anthropology particularly in the spheres of ethnography of speaking, discourse analysis amongst others. Thus, the knowledge created in this qualitative ethnography interrogating the correlation between frustration and aggression as a result of environmental degradation in the Niger Delta, is derived from the performative utterances or narratives of the research respondents (RRs) triangulated with the extant literature. It is on this strength that chapter 9 answered the research questions with the result of the data analysis with the objective of creating knowledge by providing solution to the research problem. Subsequently, in this chapter 10, the thesis is brought to a conclusion by reflecting on the contributions of the study.

The primary interest of this thesis is not simply to be another addition to the extensive literature on the effects of environmental degradation attributable to oil and gas exploration and exploitation. Rather, it is to discover the socio-political dynamics motivating the major beneficiaries of the Bayelsa State (Niger Delta's environment – NDE) to degrade their benefactor. This becomes very significant, especially, as the cross accusations of frustrations from RRs and the literature indicate that the beneficiaries may have been aware that their actions threaten the existence of the

OBHCs of the erstwhile Biafran enclave of Bayelsa (Niger Delta). Critically, environmental degradation reduces the value of the environment by making it unhealthy and therefore, unfit for promotion of agricultural activities that support human existence. Discussing the environmental degradation phenomenon in juxtaposition with the resource curse paradigm, this thesis rejected the latter theory with robust justification from the extant literature; and highlighted the importance of the environment to the entire stakeholders in the conflict. It particularly showcased how the degradation deprives the OBHCS of access to employment, food security as well as health security. In rejecting the paradigm of resource curse as a major cause of the Niger Delta conflict, this thesis advocated for governance curse instead. It argues that it is the governance curse that is responsible for mismanagement of resource abundance and not the resource itself, hence resource curse is non-existent.

But contrarily, the environment is degraded when habitats are destroyed, and there is pollution of the rain forest, soil and air pollution through such major disasters as oil spillages and gas flaring. On this basis, the oil industry-induced environmental degradation creates huge threats resulting in economic, food, water, health and socio-political insecurities whose frustrations trigger aggression and violent conflict in the region. It is therefore, no wonder that scholars including Dollard et al (1939; Ibaba, 2011; Owolabi, 2012; Willow, 2014) have all agreed that deprivations that frustrate peoples' access to their basic needs, usually explode into aggression and violent conflicts. This adds weight to the perceptions of many of the participants in my research, indicating that they are still in a war prosecuted mainly through an environmental battle front. This leads to the consideration of the core contributions of this study based on how instrumental aggression regime aggravates environmental degradation indicating that the war is not over yet.

## 10.1 THE NIGERIA-BIAFRA CIVIL WAR IS NOT YET OVER

The Nigeria-Biafra civil war began in 1967 and officially ended in 1970 as seen in chapter 3. Contrarily, my fieldwork research respondents (RRs: Fig. 10.4 below) robustly found justification for their postulation that the civil war is not yet over. The respondents argue that starvation was an official weapon of war which appears to be continually pursued through the environmental warfare or environmental degradation. To them, environmental degradation is a catastrophe that gives birth to such absurdities as unemployment, poverty, hunger, terminal illnesses and deaths. Owolabi (2012: 50) referred to this environmental warfare as reckless degradation of the environment. In an obvious reference to the reason for this environmental warfare, Courson (2009: 9) argues that “More than 100 billion barrels of oil have already been lifted by the MNOCs from the NDE due to aggressive resource exploration and exploitation”. Quantifying and monetising this 100 billion barrels of oil, the Amnesty International (2009: 9-10) confirms that the NG has earned over US\$600 billion from oil found in the NDE over the years, while the region remained impoverished. This shows the importance of the NDE to all the stakeholders in the conflict, who unfortunately degrade it. Because environmental degradation triggers unemployment, poverty, hunger, terminal illnesses and deaths; exactly the same conditions, if not more than what they witnessed during the war, it propelled the OBHCs to conclude that the war is not over.

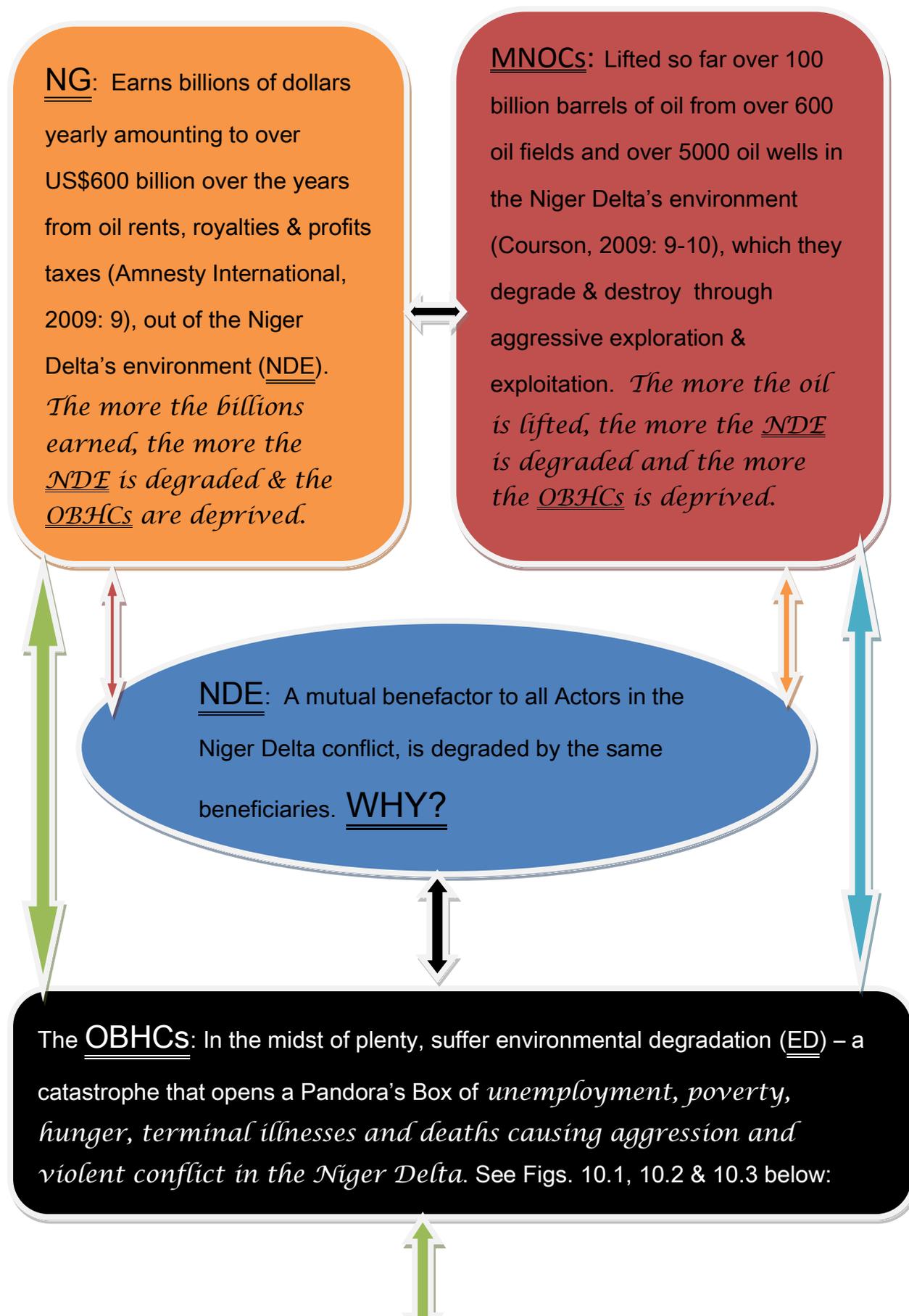
Furthermore, the World Bank’s (1992: 6) World Development Report argues that land degradation, water contamination, air pollution and the loss of biodiversity are some of the many environmental problems jeopardising economic activities and development in vulnerable communities of the world. It concludes that environmental degradation is a major factor causing indigenous poverty. Thus the 1978 Land Use Decree’s empowerment of unrestricted appropriation of land by the MNOCs, which is a scarce natural resource on which over 80% of the Niger Delta population, who are farmers rely on, for their source of livelihood (UNDP, 2006: 9), is counterproductive. This is because, the higher the degree of this land appropriation and the degradation of the un-appropriated land, the higher is the percentage of the OBHCs’ population

being exposed to vulnerability and finally forced into poverty. This type of deprivation drives people to crave absurdity and the unimaginable because of their vulnerability to a system that further impoverishes them in the midst of their richly endowed environment. This anti-developmental trajectory of environmental degradation makes it imperative to formulate a theoretical framework that aides our understanding why such unsustainable policies are practised by the NG and the MNOCs against the NDE - their benefactor. A full comprehension of this complexity, necessitated the formulation of a formal structure – the theoretical model named the Self-Inflicted-Frustration-Aggression-Theory (SIFAT) for analyzing the complexities surrounding the Niger Delta conflict. SIFAT robustly challenged the traditional theoretical argument that instrumental aggression has no provocations or causes as seen in chapter 4.

But the application of SIFAT demonstrates that instrumental aggressions have provocations or causes. Thus the study makes contributions in various ways towards the better understanding of the degradation of Bayelsa State (the NDE). This theoretical framework filled the gap created by the limited scope of the frustration-aggression theory. This inadequacy made full understanding of the incidence of instrumental aggression, rogue states and their leaders' behaviours very problematical. But with the aid of the SIFAT, instrumental aggressions such as the introduction of the Petroleum Decree 1969, Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and others are understood. By this, the study has made a contribution to better understanding of conflictual situations that have been very problematical. For example, in this Niger Delta case study, greed for oil provoked the aggression against the NDE (see Fig. 10.6 below). Usually, the instrumental aggression triggers the reactive aggression that tries to eliminate the source of such aggression. This shows why the Dollard et al (1939) Frustration-Aggression theory constructed on the principles of the reactive aggression (Ramirez, 2009: 89; Anderson and Huesmann, 2003: 298) was adjudged to be the best for this study. This indicates why the civil war is considered not to be over, because as long as the instrumental aggression, chiefly deployed to achieve ulterior motives is applied and degrades the environment, the reactive aggression would be triggered. This theoretical position receives strong

justification from the (RRs) in Fig. 10.4, who declared that the Nigerian civil war is not over, because of the continued prevalence of the war time conditions.

## WAR IS NOT OVER - IN GRAPHICS





**Fig. 10.1: No Infrastructure: Poverty amidst plenty**



Source: <http://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2013-04-23-letter-from-nigeria-the-niger-river-delta-looks-at-life-after-oil/>



**Fig. 10.2: Air & Water Pollution: Triggering unemployment, poverty, hunger etc**



Source: Ed Kashi in <http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/2007/02/nigerian-oil/oneill-text>



**Fig. 10.3: Farmlands' Degradation: Triggering unemployment, poverty, hunger etc**



Source: UNEP (2011) Environmental Assessment of Ogoniland. Nairobi, Kenya. [www.unep.org/oea/pdf\(Niger delta byUN\).pdf](http://www.unep.org/oea/pdf/Niger_delta_byUN.pdf).





Fig.10. 4: Fieldwork Research Respondents (RRs): “The Nigeria-Biafra civil War is not over. It’s now an environmental warfare”.

To understand why the NDE beneficiaries are degrading their benefactor, SIFAT was formulated to analyse and explain the complex conflict dynamics in the Niger Delta. See below:

Fig. 10.5: FORMULATED THEORETICAL MODEL: SIFAT

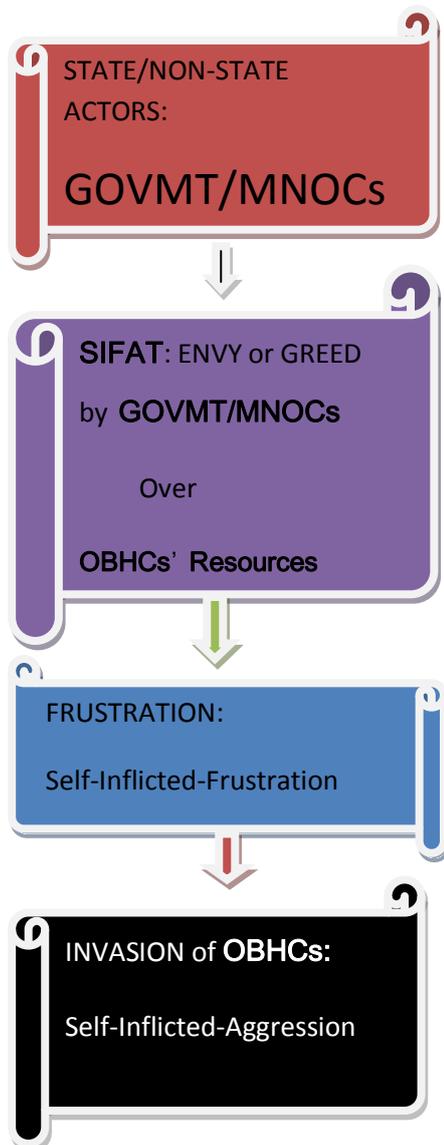
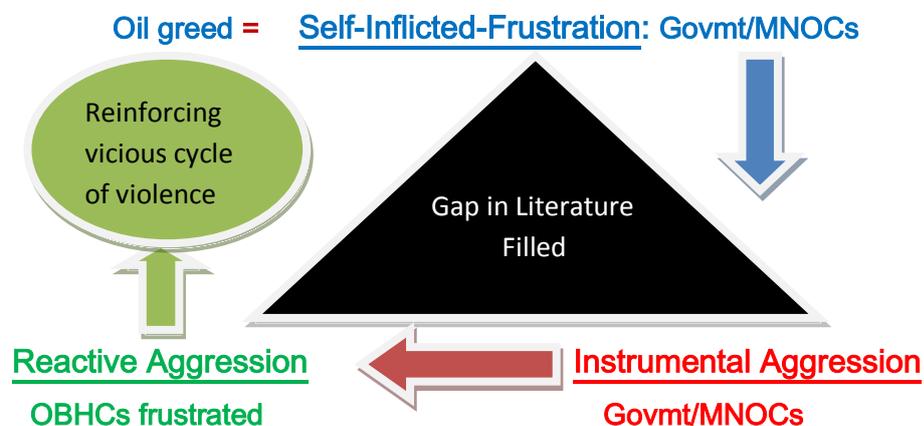


Fig. 10.6 SIFAT: DYMISTIFIES INSTRUMENTAL AGGRESSIONS



## 10.2 REJECTION OF THE RESOURCE CURSE PARADIGM

Primarily, the aim of this study is to push boundaries by transcending the mere descriptive roles, but critically ask the fundamental question why the major beneficiaries of Bayelsa State (NDE) are degrading their benefactor. Particularly in relation to its implications for the OBHCs' existence, I conclude by reviewing the substance leading to understanding how frustrations from environmental degradation drive the cross accusations that culminate in aggression and violent conflict in the Niger Delta. Thus, the rejection of the resource curse theoretical trajectory as a probable cause of the Niger Delta conflict is premised in this study's discovery that the environmental degradation culminates in cataclysms threatening the existence of the OBHCs.

To understand the dynamics militating against upholding the resource curse as a cause of the conflict, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP, 2011: 7-12) found the Niger Delta to be contaminated and polluted far beyond the imagination of the World Health Organisation (WHO). UNEP found that environmental remediation in Ogoniland will take as many as three decades because of the extent of the destruction it has been subjected to. In the same vein, with the exception of the NG and the MNOCs respondents during my fieldwork, other respondents were clear that the environmental degradation is a deliberate act of aggression connected to the civil war sentiments. Specifically, this focus group - AGRCMfgd<sub>10</sub>, argues that the confession of MN<sub>1</sub> about lack of partnership funding militating against environmental justice crystallises the resource curse illusion. Corroborating this postulation, MN<sub>2</sub> asserts that its Joint Venture partner is under-funding projects meant to check environmental degradation in Bayelsa State (Niger Delta). This primarily provides support for this study's governance curse advocacy.

For this focus group - AGRCMfgd<sub>10</sub>, "If oil is produced every day, and it is sold every day and the MNOCs pay their dues as and when supposed to NG, why would the NG not finance the projects that would benefit the NDE?" In the opinion of the focus group, the answer lies in the Biafran project. For instance, the issue of environmental legislation is another factor that indicates deliberate act of instrumental aggression aggravating environmental degradation rather than resource curse. In short, the way in which environmental legislations are framed encourages the multinationals to continue with degradation. For example, a wrongly parked car in Britain attracts a minimum fine of £70, but in Nigeria, the MNOCs who violate the environmental protection laws are fined the equivalent of £0,50P, about ₦100 (Anthony Obi, 2009: 15). What is this supposed to achieve? Encourage the MNOCs to degrade the environment or to dissuade them? This is a typical case of governance curse and not resource curse.

Environmental degradation is a complicated theory manifesting in a massive socio-political, health and economic problems militating against the evolution of human, plant and animals' well-being. Environmental degradation creates and exacerbates the scourge of economic insecurity, food insecurity, health insecurity, water insecurity and socio-political insecurity, all of which result in job losses, hunger, disease and death within the indigenous OBHCs. This explains Checker's postulation that the "environment serves as a conduit not only for the circulation of toxic poisons, but also for the social poisons of racial discrimination" (Checker, 2005: 103 cited in Willow, 2014: 242). The seriousness of this is seen in juxtaposing Checker's postulation with Owolabi's (2012: 50) earlier assertion that the NNPC Report (1983) confirmed the poisoning and destruction of the Niger Delta environment. Corroborating this view, an environmental activist, Oronto Douglas, argues that the MNOCs are "assassins in foreign lands" (Oronto Douglas cited in Oyeranmi, 2011: 47). On this basis, Di John (2011: 19) describes the resource curse paradigm as a complete utopia.

### 10.3 COLONIAL LEGACY & THE NIGER DELTA CRISIS

The study found that a strong relationship exists between the legacies of colonialism and the contemporary crisis in the Niger Delta. The relationship is rooted in the prevailing nexus between frustration and aggression. To understand this paradigm, it becomes imperative to refer to some historical phenomena by trying to answer the following questions. Did Saddam Hussein invade Kuwait just for the fun of doing so? Why would America want to kill Osama Bin Laden? Hitler killed millions of the Jews, why? Is it possible for a building to stand without a builder? Is it reasonable to think of death without a cause, that is, without either an accident or illness? Can there be madness without schizophrenia? What of diabetes, is it possible to be diagnosed with this ailment without high glucose concentration in the patient's blood system? Well, the point is that to have aggression without frustration may be tantamount to schizophrenic. Hitler was not suffering from schizophrenia because he was not a mad man. Rather, he was suffering from what this thesis calls 'Self-Inflicted-Frustration-Aggression' (see chapter 4) caused by envy, resentment, covetousness

and greed. The zeal to prevent cross-breeding that would amount to pollution of German superior blood with the assumed Jewish inferior blood, was what triggered Adolf Hitler's 'Self-Inflicted-Frustration-Aggression' against the Jews. Saddam Hussein falls under the same category. He wanted Kuwait's oil wealth.

The point being made here is that colonialism was not invited by the colonies in the developing world. Rather the study found that the colonialists were provoked into aggression or invasion of the colonies by "Self-Inflicted-Frustration". The colonialists introduced policies that would frustrate the colonies. First the Oil Mineral Ordinance of 1946 vested the entire land and all the minerals found in them in the colonial British Crown. The socio-political implication of this Oil Mineral Ordinance is that Niger Delta's land and all the oil in them belonged to the Colonial British Crown. So, the Nigerian military government simply copied what their colonial masters taught them how to do best. In quick succession, the Phillipson Commission recommended 100% revenue derivation formula and this was used in the 1960s. Armed with the exact oil reserve statistics in the Eastern Nigeria, the Raisman-Trees Commission was not comfortable with such resources in the hands of the regional government. Thus, it reduced the revenue derivation formula from 100% to 50% (Klieman, 2012: 158; Ojeleye, 2011: 144; Ekanade, 2011: 77; Anugwom, 2001: 2). This is how colonialism laid the foundation for the abrogation of the principle. These and many more, such as the policy of the "Spoils of War" made Niger Delta what it is today because of colonialism.

#### **10.4 THOUGHTS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH & LIMITATIONS**

As a study of the cross accusations of frustrations from environmental degradation caused by the major beneficiaries culminating in aggression, effort is made to understand why the benefactor is subjected to such inhuman treatment. Glaringly, this study is very limited in terms of scope and sample size. Bayelsa State is the focus of the study instead of the entire 9 states in the Niger Delta. This may affect

generalisability of the findings, though ethnographic studies do not go for this. Equally, out of the 18 MNOCs in the Niger Delta, only one was studied. Despite the long years of service and experience of this particular MNOC, it does not discount the influence and contributions of the other 17 MNOCs. The study used a specifically qualitative approach for special effect. However, a mixture may have added more effects. Finally, the findings rely on respondents' perspectives of the events. As a reconstruction based on their memories, events in the distant past may prove problematic.

Based on these limitations, it is worthwhile that future research should go beyond them. There is the need for future research to build on the lead provided in the present study, which asked if the US\$600 billion earned by the NG from the Niger Delta environment should be returned to the people. This is because Wilmshurst (2013: 1) argues that Article 5 of UN General Assembly (1974) called it unlawful and therefore, illegal. In doing this, special attention should be paid to the relationship between resource control and that money, to see if that holds the key to ending environmental degradation in the Niger Delta. This is because the environmental degradation is the major cause of the problems in the Niger Delta.

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