

**THE ROLE OF  
CORRUPTION ON CIVIL  
SOCIETY ACTIVISM IN  
THE NIGER DELTA**

**BY**

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## Abstract:

This thesis studies the challenges and relationships between the Niger delta people, the federal government and Multinational Oil Companies (MNOCs). It describes the major problems caused by unmonitored crude oil exploitation as environmental degradation and underdevelopment. The study highlights the array of roles played by Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in filling the gap between the stakeholders in the oil industry and crude oil host communities. Except for the contributions from Austin Ikelegbe (2001), Okechukwu Ibeanu (2006) and Shola Omotola (2009), there is a limitation in the literature on corruption and civil society activism in the Niger delta. These authors dwelt on the role of CSOs in the region's struggle. But this research fills a knowledge gap on the role of corruption in civil society activism in the Niger delta and defines CSOs to include NGOs, self-help groups and militant organisations. Corruption is problematic in Nigeria and affects every sector of the economy including CSOs. The corruption in CSOs is demonstrated in their relationship with MNOCs, the federal government, host communities and donor organisations. Smith (2010) discussed the corruption in NGOs in Nigeria which is also different because this work focuses on the role of corruption in CSOs in the Niger delta and the problems around crude oil exploitation. The findings from the fieldwork using oral history, ethnography, structured and semi-structured interview methods show that corruption impacts CSOs activism in diverse ways and has structural and historical roots embedded in colonialism. CSOs must understand that civil society activism is an enormous task by shunning corruption and working towards bringing improvements to the problems in the region.

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## Table of Contents

Abstract:.....	i
Acknowledgements.....	ii
Figures, Tables and Pictures .....	viii
Acronyms and Abbreviations: .....	x
Chapter one:.....	1
1.1: Introduction:.....	1
1.2: Understanding the Adverse Effect of Crude oil Exploitation in the Niger Delta:.....	3
1.3: Purpose of the study.....	7
1.4: Research Aims.....	8
1.5: Dissertation outline: .....	9
Chapter Two: Research Methodology (Approaches to Studying the Impact of Corruption on Civil Society Activism in the Niger Delta): .....	12
2.1: Introduction: .....	12
2.2: Recruitment of Respondents and Research Summary: .....	12
2.3: An Overview of the Field Sites and Samples: .....	17
2.4: Research strategy and design .....	23
2.5: Field Data Explanation: .....	24
2.5.1: Problems with Reaching the Respondents: .....	28
2.6: Data Sources: .....	28
2.6.1: Primary Data Sources: .....	28
2.6.2: Structured Interviews: .....	29
2.6.3: Semi-Structured Interviews: .....	29
2.6.4: Oral History: .....	30
2.6.5: Ethnography: .....	31
2.7: Secondary Data Sources: .....	31
2.8: Data Analysis: .....	33
2.9: Ethics: .....	34

2.9.1: Informed consent:.....	34
2.9.2: Anonymity:.....	34
2.9.3: Risks to participants: .....	35
2.10: Limitations of the Research: .....	37
Chapter Three: The Laws and Different Government Approaches to Corruption in Nigeria.	
3.1: Introduction: .....	39
3.2: An Overview of Corruption:.....	39
3.3: Corruption in the Oil Industry and the Niger Delta:.....	41
3.4: Factors Influencing Corruption in the Niger Delta: .....	48
3.4.1: Bribery: .....	51
3.4.2: Embezzlement of Public Funds: .....	52
3.4.3: Lateness/Laziness to Work and Sexual Gratification:.....	52
3.4.4: Forgery: .....	53
3.4.5: Lobbying for unmerited favour:.....	54
3.4.6: Robbery and Kidnapping:.....	54
3.4.7: Cultism: .....	55
3.4.8: Falsification of Records and Academic Malpractice:.....	55
3.5: Historical Timelines on Legislation and the impact at Eradicating Corruption in Nigeria:.....	56
3.6: Timelines on Legislation and the impact at Eradicating Corruption in Nigeria:.....	57
3.7: Conclusion:.....	63
Chapter Four: The Problems Arising from Crude Oil Exploitation in the Niger Delta: .....	
4.1: Introduction:.....	64
4.2: Lectures Driving the Study:.....	64
4.3: The Niger Delta and Crude Oil: .....	66
4.4: Environmental Degradation:.....	68
4.4.1: Loss of Livelihood:.....	72

4.4.2: Mass Unemployment: .....	73
4.4.3:Poverty:.....	75
4.4.4: Social Problems:.....	77
4.4.5: Health Problems: .....	80
4.5: Under-development:.....	81
4.5.1: Attempts at Resolving the Problem of Under-development in the Niger Delta:.....	81
4.5.2:Problems Associated with Crude Oil Exploitation in the Niger Delta: .....	85
4.6.1: Revenue Allocation and Resource Control:.....	85
4.6.2: The Poor Relationship Between MNOCS and Host Communities in the Niger Delta.....	87
Conclusion:.....	90
Chapter Five: The Consequences of Crude oil Exploitation in the Niger Delta. Expectation versus Reality .....	91
5.1: Introduction:.....	91
5.2. The Problem of Environmental Degradation in the Six communities:.....	92
5.2.1: How Gas Flaring Affects Three Communities: .....	93
5.2.2: How Crude Oil Spills Affects Three Communities:.....	96
5.2.3: The Under-development in the Six Communities: .....	106
5.3: The Role of Corruption in the Relationship between the Federal Government, MNOCs and Host Communities in the Region: .....	107
Conclusion: .....	111
Chapter Six: The Impact of Corruption in the Niger Delta (Corruption and Colonialism). The Historical Roots of Corruption in Colonialism: .....	112
6.1: Introduction: .....	112
6.2: An Overview of Colonialism in Nigeria:.....	112

6.3: The role of colonialism in the ongoing problems of corruption in the Niger delta: .....	119
6.4: The impact of colonialism on corruption in the Niger delta; a Tale of the Elders: .....	124
6.5: Conclusion: .....	126
Chapter Seven: Societal Responses - Civil Society Organisations: .....	127
7.1: Introduction: .....	127
7.2: Understanding the Concept of Civil Society:.....	127
7.3: The Civil Society Practice:.....	131
7.4: The Functions of the Civil Society:.....	132
7.5: Civil Society in Africa: .....	133
7.6: Civil Society in the Niger Delta:.....	137
7.6.1: Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs):.....	140
7.6.2: Self-Help Groups:.....	142
7.6.3: Militant organisations:.....	146
7.7: Conclusion: .....	154
Chapter Eight: The Role of Corruption in Civil Society Activism in the Niger:.....	155
8.1: Introduction: .....	155
8.2: How Civil Society Organisations are Responding to the Problems in the Niger Delta:.....	155
8.3: CSOs and the Complexities Surrounding Crude Oil Host Communities in the Region: .....	165
8.4: The Impact of Corruption in Civil Society Activism:.....	172
8.5: Literature Versus this Research:.....	184
8.6: Anti-corruption Agencies and Corruption in the Niger delta:.....	186
8.7: How CSOs can Resist Corruption and Prepare for the Unforeseen Future:.....	188
8.8: Conclusion: .....	192

Chapter Nine: Conclusion and Recommendations: .....	193
9.1: Introduction: .....	194
9.2: The Problems Caused by the Oil and Gas Industry in the Niger Delta and Civil Society Responses:.....	194
9.3: The Impact of Corruption on the Activities of CSOs:.....	199
9.4: The Role of Corruption in the Oil and Gas Industry: .....	203
9.5: The Root Causes of Corruption in the Niger Delta:.....	204
9.6: How CSOs can Resist Corruption, Recommendations and Future Research:.....	207
9.7: Conclusion:.....	211
Appendix: .....	212
Appendix 1: Sample of the Interview Guide for Community Members:.....	213
Appendix 2: Sample of the Interview Guide for Oral History in the Communities (Bonny & Calabar):.....	213
Appendix 3: Sample of the Interview Guide for CSOs:.....	214
Appendix4: Sample of the Interview Guide for Community Relations Representatives of MNOCs:.....	215
Appendix 5: Sample Guide for Government Controlled Anti-Corruption Agencies:.....	216
Appendix 6: Sample of Consent Form:.....	217
References: .....	218

### Table of Figures, Maps and Tables

Table of Figures, Maps and Tables.....	viii
Table 2.1: Research decision and implementation .....	13
Table 2.2 .....	15
Fig. 2.1: A Map of the Niger Delta Region in Nigeria .....	17
Fig. 2.2: A Map of the Local Government Areas of Rivers State .....	18
Fig. 2.3: A Map of the Local Government Areas in Delta State .....	20
Fig. 2.4: A Map of the Local Government Areas in Cross Rivers State .....	21
Table 2.3: The sample and methods .....	23
Table 2.4: A Table Showing the Names of Communities and Sample Size .....	25
Table 2.5: A Display of the Socio-Economic Characteristics of Respondents in Crude Oil and Gas Host Communities in Rivers and Delta States of the Region .....	26
Table 3.1: Types of Corruption Practiced in the Niger delta.....	46
Table 3.2: How Corruption Occurs in the Niger Delta.....	47
Fig. 4.1 Crude oil Exports from Nigeria (2007-2018).....	67
Fig. 4.2: A Map of the Geo-political Zones in Nigeria .....	69
Table 4.1: Showing the Frequency of Crude Oil Spills in the Niger Delta .....	72
Picture 4.1: Showing Soot in Port Harcourt .....	74

Table 4.2: Labour Force Statistics in the Niger Delta for 2017.....	76
Table 4.3: Showing Relative Poverty Headcount in Nigeria from 1980-2010.....	78
Table 4.4: A table Showing the Nigerian Population Living Below the Poverty Line in the Niger Delta .....	79
Picture 4.2: Showing an Artisanal Refining of Stolen Crude Oil aka Kpor- Fire View From the air off Saipem Base in Front the Nigeria Navy in Port Harcourt .....	81
Picture 4.3: Showing a Local Refining Site.....	82
Table 4.5: resource derivation/ allocation table.....	89
Picture 5.1: Showing Gas Flaring Points in the Niger Delta .....	98
Picture 5.2: Showing Shell's Gas Flare in Umuechem in Rivers State.....	98
Picture. 5.3 Showing a Crude Oil Spill Site in the Niger Delta.....	99
Table 7.1: Characteristics of Civil Society .....	134
Table 7.2: Functions of Civil Society .....	137
Fig. 7.1: Showing Evolution of Victim Responses.....	143
Fig. 7.2: A Representation of CSOs in the Niger Delta.....	144
Picture 7.1: Showing Arms Surrendered by Cult and Militant Organisations in Rivers .....	158
Table 8.1: Demographic Details of Respondents .....	162
Table 8.2: A table showing how CSOs are defined in the Niger delta .....	163
Fig. 8.2: Corruption in Civil Society Activism in the Niger delta.....	179

## Acronyms and Abbreviations:

CSOs: Civil Society Organisations

EFCC: Economic and Financial Crimes Commission

FCT: Federal Capital Territory

ICPC: Independent Corrupt Practices Commission

IYC: Ijaw Youth Council

JTF: Joint Task Force

MEND: Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta

MNDA: Ministry of Niger Delta Affairs

MNOCs: Multi-National Oil Companies

MOSOP: The Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People

NBS: National Bureau of Statistics (Nigeria)

NDBDA: Delta Basin Development Authority

NDDB: Niger Delta Development Board

NDDC: Niger Delta Development Commission

NGO: Non-Governmental Organisation

NNNGO: Nigeria Network of NGOs

OMPADEC: Oil Minerals Producing Areas Development, Commission

OPEC: Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries

SPDC: Shell Petroleum Development Company of Nigeria

## Chapter One:

### 1.1: Introduction:

Crude oil extraction from the Niger delta makes the largest contribution to the Nigerian economy. Experts argue that over 85% of the foreign exchange earnings and government spending in the country are from crude oil (Abraham & Michael, 2018). It has several uses including generating electricity, fuelling cars, trucks and aeroplanes, and the manufacture of chemicals and plastics. But, crude oil extraction is not without risks and these have not been managed properly in the Niger delta. These risks have caused a lot of problems for the Niger delta such that crude oil appears to be more of a ‘curse’ than a ‘blessing’ (Osaghae, 2015; Tamuno & Felix, 2006; Elwereflli & Benhin, 2018).

One type of inadequately managed risk is environmental degradation. Although there are many statutes and policies that should regulate the oil industry in the Niger delta, most of these are ineffective. This is because the organisations controlling these policies lack the ability to implement and enforce existing environmental standards and guidelines (Ite et.al. 2016). The other major problem that has arisen from crude oil exploitation in the region is under-development. Despite excess funds from crude oil export, the Niger delta is highly under-developed when compared to other parts of the country which aligns with the narrative on the theory of relative deprivation.

The theory of relative deprivation developed by Samuel Scheffler is a description of people that are deprived compared to others in the same society or their past (Scheffler & Munoz-Darde, 2005). It is different from absolute deprivation which is negative and can be linked to extreme poverty (Duclos & Gregoire, 2002; Grasso et.al, 2017). In relative deprivation the rationale for offending is explained through white collar offenders like the Multinational Oil Companies (MNOCs). The theory of relative deprivation fits in the narrative of the failed relationship between the federal government, MNOCs and crude oil host communities in the Niger delta because of the problems in the region. These crimes are non-violent but are financially motivated. Furthermore, the theory of relative deprivation addresses the responses of the Niger delta people through Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), it states that, when deprivation lingers, it could lead to revitalisation movements.

The CSOs in the Niger delta are a collection of groups that share interests, values and purposes. CSOs in Nigeria are not totally independent of the government, which is an important

characteristic of civil society activism, but this variation has arisen because of the predominance of corruption in the country. The description of CSOs in the Niger delta is different from some global perceptions of independent Organisations because of the roles they play in the region and their interface with the government. This government's interference is strengthened by foreign donors, they prefer to send aid for CSOs through the government to prevent fraudulent activities in the non-profit sector. CSOs in the Niger delta include Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), self-help groups, and militant organisations. NGOs and self-help groups are non-violent and include a variety of different types of organisations such as women's organisations, advocacy, and community groups. Whilst, militant organisations are confrontational, violent and often resort to armed struggle. Self-help groups are different from NGOs because they are formed by community members, mainly the youths and women. And, in the Niger delta, their responsibility is to help resolve the problems arising from crude oil exploitation activities in their communities. They carry out this function maintaining that they are fighting for their share of the crude oil wealth (Ikelegbe, 2006).

The rationale for CSOs standing against the federal government and MNOCs in the Niger delta is driven by the environmental, social and political problems residents face in the region and a pressing global reality of falling crude oil prices. If crude oil prices drop further, the federal government and MNOCs might not be able to solve these problems because they will be harder to resolve. The cost of cleaning the environment will be harder to meet and MNOCs will be reluctant to spend the money. Consequently, CSOs are standing up against the federal government and MNOCs to take responsibility for the damage they are causing the region.

Nevertheless, civil society activism can sometimes be hampered by many bottlenecks. These hindrances are enormous, and they include the lack of funding, corruption, government interference etc. but corruption has one of the biggest impacts on civil society activism in the Niger delta. Corruption is widespread in Nigeria and affects the social and economic development of the nation (Dike, 2005). According to Transparency International (TI), in 2018 Nigeria was ranked the 144<sup>th</sup> most corrupt country out of 180 countries studied globally. However, the high corruption index of the country fits poorly with the anti-corruption agenda of the administration of the current President, Muhammadu Buhari, and the efforts of previous governments.

Based on the above, this thesis seeks to explore corruption and its impact on civil society activism in the Niger delta. It argues that corruption affects the activities of CSOs negatively.

The research investigates these impacts and discusses the urgency to resolve the problems caused by crude oil exploitation in the region. The dissertation presents data from fieldwork carried out in three Niger delta states and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja. The interviews conducted during the fieldwork were with CSOs, local community dwellers, staff of MNOCs and the two anti-corruption agencies, the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission and Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (ICPC and EFCC) in Nigeria.

The research makes contributions to the academic literature on the Niger delta by discussing the role CSOs play in resolving the problems around crude oil exploitation and the impact of corruption on these organisations. From the analysis of data collected, the research finds that there are more health challenges arising in crude oil host communities as opposed to the representations in the literature on the Niger delta. The inhabitants of crude oil host communities are sometimes unaware of the impact of crude oil exploitation on their health and wellbeing. And, the MNOCs who perpetuate these crimes, are hardly held accountable because of their relationship with the federal government as expressed in the literature on the crimes of the powerful (Sutherland, 1985; Tombs, 2017).

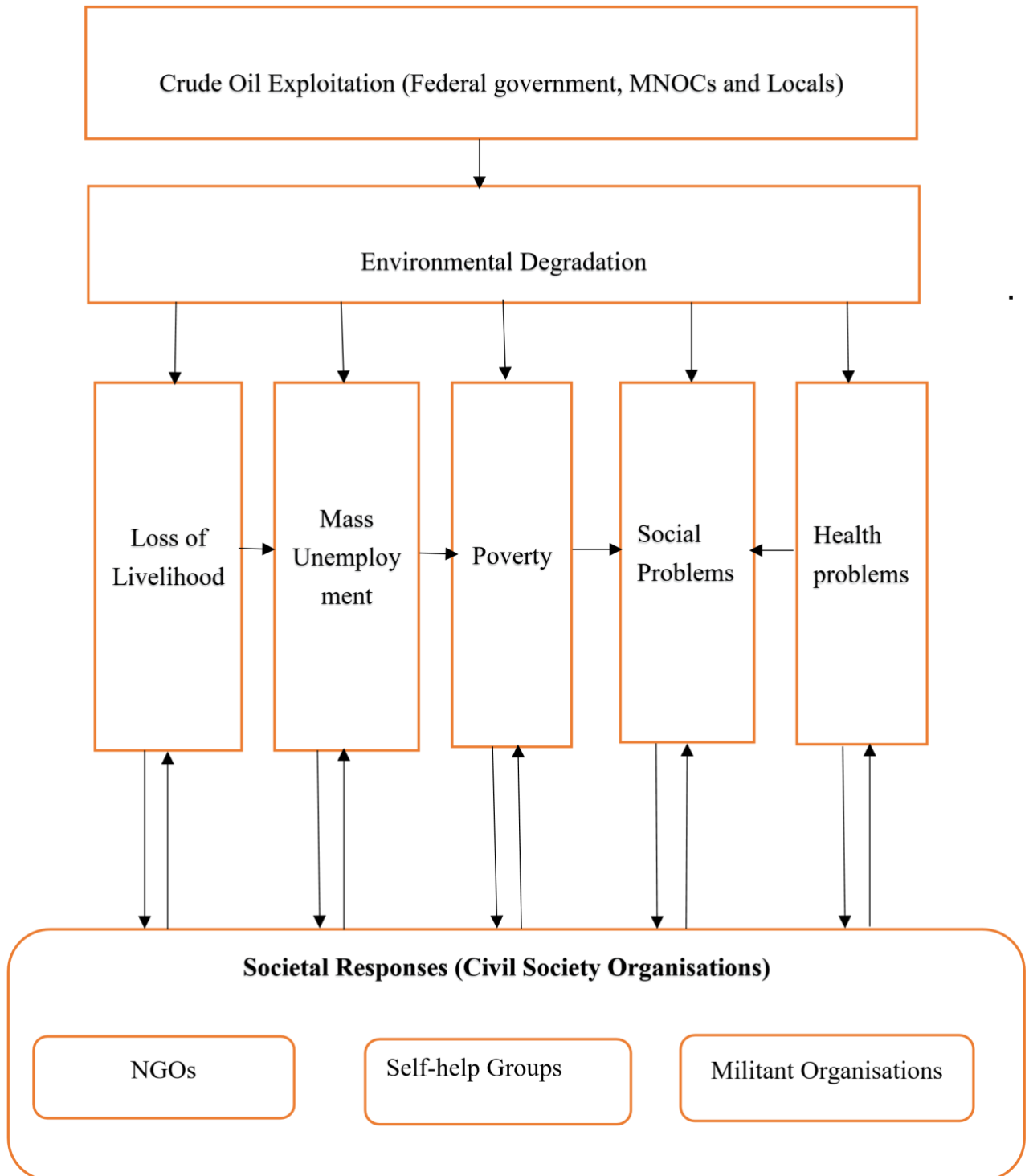
On the role of corruption in civil society activism in the region, the research finds that despite CSOs exonerating themselves from corrupt practices, there are corrupt CSOs and corruption impacts civil society activism in the Niger delta. Corruption is a major hindrance to the active participation in the resolution of the problems around crude oil exploitation in the region by some CSOs. Nevertheless, there are some strong CSOs which are not deterred by corruption. The study also suggests that the corruption in the Niger delta has structural and historical roots embedded in colonialism. Although Nigeria has been independent for over 50 years, the impact of colonialism lingers. Generally, the research finds that corruption creates a space for the violent responses by militant organisations which is discussed using the William's model on the evolution of victims' responses and the theory of relative deprivation (Tombs & Whyte, 2015; Williams, 1996). When there is no satisfactory resolution to the problems around crude oil exploitation, militancy comes in and creates a lot of other problems. Finally, corruption makes environmental harms and its impact on the health, economic and the social wellbeing of community dwellers to be invisible to government, MNOCs and even the crude oil host communities.

## 1.2: Understanding the Adverse Effect of Crude oil Exploitation in the Niger Delta:

The major effect of crude oil exploitation in the Niger delta is environmental degradation. Not only is this degradation immediately upsetting but it also has wide and far-reaching consequences hitting diverse aspects of the lives of those living in the region. The consequences of environmental degradation are enormous, and they include the loss of livelihood, mass unemployment, poverty, social and health problems as shown on Fig.1.1. These problems plague the region and are often the direct outcome of a crude oil exploitation industry that is devoid of the implementation of environmental controls (Obi, 2017).

Under-development is another problem associated with crude oil exploitation in the Niger delta. It is not a direct consequence of crude oil exploitation in the region, nevertheless given the contributions made by the region to the development of Nigeria through crude oil exports, one would expect the area's level of development to be at least comparable (if not significantly better) than other parts of the country. Although there are many factors responsible for the under-development of the Niger delta, most of which has been attributed to the poor topography of the region, corruption and environmental degradation are the prevalent causes of this problem in the region (Ebegbulem, Ekpe & Adejumo, 2013). Other problems associated with crude oil exploitation in the Niger delta are the inadequacy of revenue allocation and resource control from the federal government and a poor relationship between MNOCs and crude oil host communities.

Fig. 1.1 Showing how Societal Responses fit into the Problem of Environmental Degradation in the Niger Delta



Before the inception of crude oil exploitation in the Niger delta (in the late 1950s), the people of the region were predominantly farmers, fishermen and traders (i.e. they were dependent on the land and sea for food and their livelihood). However, the degradation of the environment

from crude oil exploitation has caused a decline in fishing and farming activities resulting in mass unemployment. This has a direct effect on the poverty levels in the region because high unemployment rates correlate with high rates of poverty irrespective of the wider rate of economic growth in the country (Rasaki, 2016).

High poverty rates have impacted other areas of the society leading to social problems examples of which is the formation of militant Organisations as described in the theory of relative deprivation (Smith & Pettigrew, 2015; Inyang, 2018). These organisations are responsible for most of the crude oil theft, local crude oil refining, cultism and kidnapping activities in the region. Apart from the above social problems, there are significant public health threats like cancers, respiratory diseases etc. which have been linked to environmental degradation because it is the major cause of food and water contamination in the region. It is the prevalence of these problems and the lack of a genuine action plan from the federal government and MNOCs that has precipitated a rise in the number of societal responses in the form of CSOs.

It is difficult to estimate the number of CSOs in the region accurately because they are many and there is no platform that brings them all together, the way I have classified them in this research. As stated earlier, the CSOs in this work include NGOs, self-help groups and militant organisations. Self-help groups and militant organisations help to fill the gaps NGOs are working on closing, meaning they sometimes overlap. A great part of self-help groups in the Niger delta are made up of youths and women and their fight is against the federal government and MNOCs (Ikelegbe, 2005). CSOs seek to address these ongoing set of problems by proffering solutions through different forms of civic engagements. Their acts of activism are against environmental degradation, marginalisation, poverty, unemployment and for the payment of adequate compensation in the region. Other forms of activism that CSOs are involved in are campaigns against gas flaring, poor air quality, food pollution, reducing the impact of crude oil pollution on flora and fauna, as well as attempting to democratize the process of development with a view of protecting community livelihoods.

The protests and agitation to resolve the problems in the region started as far back as the 1960s during the times of the resistance leader, Comrade Adaka Boro, and have increased in scale and prominence from the 2000s (Courson, 2011). As a result, the government have made several efforts at solving these problems and combating militant organisations in the region including sponsoring an Amnesty Programme introduced by the late President Umaru Musa Yar'adua in 2009. Although the Amnesty Programme appeared to have been successful,

militancy and armed struggle (as well as the problems that precipitated them) continue to plague the region. The societal responses through CSOs and public campaigns face several difficulties, but the focus of this dissertation is the problem of corruption hindering civil society activism in the Niger delta.

Corruption is an ongoing threat to the social, economic and infrastructural development of Nigeria and has impacted the Niger delta for many decades (Ben et.al, 2018). The effect of corruption on CSOs in the Niger delta is a complex and far-reaching problem. This is because, while there are CSOs in the Niger delta that are corrupt, corruption also cuts across the relationship between CSOs and donor organisations, the federal government, MNOCs and sometimes crude oil host communities.

### 1.3: Purpose of the Study:

The purpose of the study is to understand the role of corruption in civil society activism in the Niger delta and provide an insight into the array of roles played by CSOs. The problems that have arisen from crude oil exploitation in the region are more than the benefits. It is important to study this because the people in the region are not enjoying the benefits of the highly profitable crude oil. The study is focused on CSOs that are interested in resolving crude oil related problems in the region. A large majority of these CSOs in the Niger delta face several hindrances whilst carrying out their functions, but one of their big struggles is with corruption. The research fills this gap in knowledge by providing a discussion on the impact of corruption on civil society activism in the region.

This study was borne out of my concern for the environmental degradation in the Niger delta caused by poorly monitored crude oil exploitation activities. There is an urgency on the need to redress these problems whilst the crude oil industry is still globally relevant. One way to go about this is to enact and implement laws that will force MNOCs to clean up the pollution on the environment now that crude oil is still a globally viable product. The dropping demand for crude oil exports from the region and the dwindling prices globally is influenced by a shift towards cleaner energy and reducing carbon footprints. This is because, the environmental impact of crude oil exploitation is higher compared to some newer forms of energy generation leading to a drift towards these innovative paths (Brandt, et.al. 2018). Consequently, there is a need to resolve these problems sooner than later.

There are also conflicting thoughts on how much time we have left before crude oil reserves decline significantly. On the one hand, there is a view that the oil era will soon be over (Hall & Klitgaard, 2018). Yet, there is another viewpoint which argues that the crude oil era is far from being over (Salameh, 2018). Irrespective of the outcome of these views, according to the financial times, the Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) is forecasting a drop in the demand for crude oil in coming years (Raval, 2019). Another report from Goldman Sachs experts suggest that crude oil prices will continue to fall because of shale oil from America and the waivers granted by the USA to some countries to purchase crude oil from Iran (Cunningham, 2018). Nevertheless, this has changed with the problems in the relationship between Iran and the USA.

The above emphasises the need for CSOs to focus on resolving crude oil related problems in the Niger delta with a sense of urgency. As such, this dissertation is fitting of the present state of the Niger delta because it provides an insight into how corruption impacts the struggles of CSOs as they interface with the government, MNOCs, crude oil host communities and other organisations. The hindrances CSOs face like corruption as they carry out acts of activism in the region is important because CSOs are at the forefront of the campaign on reducing the adverse effect of crude oil exploitation activities in the region. How this is analysed will be insightful for crude oil dependent economies like Nigeria to make economic changes. The predictions on peak oil and the global shift for cleaner or alternative energy sources will also shape the economic importance of crude oil in the nation. The study will make contributions to the academic literature on crude oil and civil society activism in the Niger delta, colonialism and corruption studies in Africa.

#### 1.4: Research Aims:

This research aims to explore the importance of the responses from CSOs to the environmental and social problems arising from crude oil exploitation in the Niger Delta. It also examines how corruption impacts CSOs and the oil industry in Nigeria. Specifically, it aims to answer the following questions:

1. What are the problems caused by the oil and gas industry in the Niger delta?
2. How are CSOs responding to these problems?

3. How does corruption impact on the activities of these CSOs?
  - a) What form does corruption take in relation to the activities of CSOs?
  - b) How does corruption hinder the activities of CSOs?
  - c) What are the root causes of corruption in the region?
  - d) How can CSOs resist corruption in the Niger delta?

### 1.5: Dissertation Outline:

The study fills a knowledge gap on how corruption impacts civil society activism in the Niger delta. It addresses the problem of corruption in CSOs and its relationship with colonialism which was highlighted during the fieldwork. The first chapter introduces the problems in the Niger delta, purpose of the study and what I intend to achieve with the research. The study will make contributions to the existing literature on the Niger delta and oil, CSOs, and the role of colonialism on corruption in the Niger delta.

Chapter two is the methodology chapter. It describes the research methods utilised in gathering data during the field work in three Niger delta states (Rivers, Delta and Cross Rivers) and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja. The carefully chosen research methods are structured and semi-structured interviews, ethnography and the oral history method. The chapter describes the rationale behind the selection of these methods and provides an understanding of how primary and secondary forms of data collection are utilised in the research. There is also a description of how the respondents were recruited, a discussion on research ethics and an account on the limitations of the research in the chapter.

In chapter three, corruption is described as a menace and an impediment that impacts the crude oil industry and the economic growth and development of Nigeria. The chapter explains the various efforts made by the different administrations in Nigeria at eradicating corruption. It highlights the promises made by the present administration headed by President Mohammadu Buhari in eradicating corruption. Finally, the chapter also describes the introduction of the whistle-blower policy in Nigeria and the achievements of this policy.

Chapter four is the background of the study, it describes the problems caused by the crude oil industry in the Niger delta. It begins by discussing the rationale behind the study and describes the Niger delta region. It highlights the contributions made by the region to the economic development of Nigeria through crude oil export. The chapter provides a detailed description of the problems and consequences of crude oil exploitation on the region. From the literature, it states that environmental degradation and under-development are the major problems in the Niger delta. There is also a brief description of the other problems including resource control and the poor relationship between the government and MNOCs with host communities. Finally, it describes the attempts made by the federal government in resolving the crude oil related problems in the region.

Chapter five is an analysis of the data collected from the interviews conducted in six communities in Rivers and Delta states. It lays side by side the reality in these communities against the literature described in chapter four, the background of the study. The chapter also highlights the differences and similarities between the problems discussed in the background of the study and the data collected from these communities. It draws a conclusion that is in accordance with the literature that crude oil exploitation in the Niger delta has adverse effects on the environment and people living in the region. However, the findings during the fieldwork show that there are more health problems in the region than those described in the literature. The problem is compounded by the discovery that the people in these communities are unaware of most of the health problems associated with crude oil exploitation in the region. This lack of awareness is responsible for the increasing number diseases associated with crude oil exploitation. The chapter also uncovers the poor relationship between MNOCs and host community dwellers and introduces the problem of corrupt practices between communities and oil companies.

Chapter six is a discussion on the impact of corruption on the Niger Delta. It analyses the role of colonialism on corruption in the region and attributing the problem of corruption as having structural and historical roots embedded in colonialism. It draws this conclusion based on the findings from data collected from six older citizens from Bonny in Rivers state and Creek Town in Cross Rivers state and the anti-corruption agencies in the country. The chapter also provides an overview of colonialism in the Niger delta and investigates the role it played in introducing and sustaining corruption in the region. Creek town and Bonny are coastal towns that played host to the Whiteman during colonialism. The data from the fieldwork supports the argument that corruption is a residue of colonialism. Corruption was encouraged by the colonial masters

because it replaced the traditional system of punishment, shaming and death penalties with a criminal justice system that is porous and supports bribery.

Chapter seven is the analysis of data collected from CSOs. It draws on the literature and available statistics. It describes the role of CSOs in the region and the challenges they face. It also demonstrates the role of corruption in civil society activism in the Niger delta. The chapter introduces a finding on the impact of colonialism on corruption in the region. It portrays corruption as having structural and historical origins embedded in colonialism. Details on corruption are discussed in chapters seven and eight.

Chapter eight is on CSOs and corruption, it draws on the literature and available statistics. The chapter describes the concept of civil society, its origin, the diversity in meaning and the functions of CSOs. Knowing that civil society is a western construct, the chapter describes the African style of CSOs and provides examples of the practice of civil society in the Niger delta. It defines CSOs in the region to include NGOs, self-help groups and militant organisations. It also describes the important roles CSOs are playing in resolving the problems around crude oil in the Niger delta.

Chapter nine is the conclusion of the research on the role of corruption in civil society activism in the Niger delta. The chapter concludes on the findings during the fieldwork by stating that there is corruption in civil society activism. Corruption impacts CSOs negatively from effectively fighting against crude oil related problems in the region. Based on the literature and the oral histories collected from the respondents, the research finds that corruption is rooted in colonialism thus having structural and historical strongholds on the region. For CSOs to strive, corruption must be brought to the barest minimum. A way of resolving these problems in the region will be to improve on the economic development of the country through diversification. The recommendation is for CSOs in the region to shun corruption and put up a struggle in the resolution of crude oil related problems in the region now that oil is still economically relevant. At the end of the chapter, there are suggested areas for future study such as militancy and an understanding of peak oil in the Niger delta.

## Chapter Two: Research Methodology (Approaches to Studying the Impact of Corruption on Civil Society Activism in the Niger Delta):

### 2.1: Introduction:

The data for this study was collected using qualitative research methods. This chapter details the different methodological strategies adopted to fill the knowledge gap on how corruption impacts civil society activism in the Niger delta. It utilizes primary and secondary data collection sources using different methods including oral history, ethnography, structured and semi-structured interviews. The chapter begins with a presentation of the research summary, then provides an overview of the fieldwork sites and explains the rationale behind the selection of these sites.

The research design in this chapter outlines the data collection methods and describes the decision on the selection of the sample size. It also explains the intricacies in the recruitment of the respondents, arrangement of interview time, venue and states the time spent on each of the interviews. The chapter reflects on the ethical challenges encountered and how these problems were tackled during the fieldwork and the analysis of the data collected. There are also discussions on getting informed consent from respondents and an outline of the steps taken to maintain confidentiality and anonymity. Finally, the chapter describes the limitations of the research.

### 2.2: Recruitment of Respondents and Research Summary:

The research samples were collected at various sites in the Niger delta (Rivers, Delta and Cross-rivers states) and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja. The samples are to enable me to describe the impact of corruption on civil society activism in the Niger delta. The research samples were collected from representatives of CSOs, MNOCs, crude oil host communities to MNOCs, and the two anti-corruption agencies in Nigeria, the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC). The main research methods selected for this study are Oral history, ethnography, semi-structured and structured interview methods.

Table 2.1: Research decision and implementation

Research decision	Implementation
Research type	Qualitative research
Research topic	The role of corruption on civil society activism in the Niger delta
Research approach	Multiple samples
Area and organisations	CSOs (NGOs, Self-Help groups, and militant organisations), host communities, Multinational Oil Companies (MNOCs) in the Niger delta and the anti-corruption agencies in Nigeria, the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) in Abuja.
Research methods	Oral history, ethnography, semi-structured and structured interview methods and oral history.

The method central in collecting the data on the role of corruption in civil society activism in the Niger delta is the interview method. Interviews are mainly face to face conversations enabling physical contact with the respondents such that the interviewer could observe during this interaction. The interview method enables the interviewer to probe further where the response to a question was unclear resulting in new questions not included in the already prepared outline of questions. It also enables the researcher collect comprehensive information from the respondents to effectively answer the research questions (Brown, 1988). Interviews can either be structured or semi-structured.

According to Longhust (2003), the structured interview method as the name implies, follows a structure whilst the semi-structured interview method is an informal discussion between the interviewer and the respondent. The semi-structured interview method is used to discuss a subject matter extensively with a respondent. It does follow a laid down set of rules or questions. Ethnography on the other hand is a scientific description of peoples and culture which includes customs, habits and mutual differences. The other research method utilized in this research is the oral history. It plays an important extra role here because it unveils hidden

histories which are central in understanding the problem of corruption in the Niger delta. Oral history became necessary in this study when there was a need to identify the structural and historical origins of corruption in the Niger delta that were highlighted during the interviews with CSOs. Table 2.2 is a description of the number of interviews conducted and the knowledge gap it fills.

Table 2.2

Number of Interviews conducted	Purpose of the interview
80 interviews (50 men and 30 women) in the six communities selected in Rivers and Delta states.	To provide an understanding of the problems around crude oil exploitation in the host communities. described in chapter five.
25 interviews (22 men and three women) conducted with CSOs representatives.	To collect data on the types of civil society activism carried out by these organisations in the region. The interviews with CSOs also discusses the challenges they face in the region and highlights the role of corruption as they go about their acts of activism. Details of this is discussed in chapter eight.
Five community relations staff (all men) of MNOCs were interviewed	To provide an insight on the relationship between MNOCs and crude oil host communities. It highlights the efforts made by MNOCs to bring improvements to the lives of community dwellers. The MNOCs interviewed were all in Port Harcourt, the capital of Rivers state. This will be discussed in chapter five.
Five members of the two major anti-corruption agencies (all men), three from the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and two from the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC), these interviews were conducted in Abuja.	The interview for these anti-corruption agencies were conducted to understand the problem of corruption and oil in the region. It also discusses a few of the corruption cases in the oil industry and CSOs. Discussed in chapter eight.
The oral history interviews were conducted with five senior citizens (three men and two women) interviewed in Calabar (Cross Rivers state) and Bonny (Rivers state).	In these two others Niger delta communities, the oral histories were a way of understanding corruption from the viewpoint of the older people in the region. To understand corruption in the region, it is important to analyse the structural and historical origins of the problem. It is discussed in chapter six.

There were more male respondents than female respondents for all sets of interviews. Although corruption in the Niger delta is not a gender-dependent problem, there was a general perception amongst respondents during the fieldwork that women are less corrupt than men. However, this is a difficult conclusion to draw because there are fewer women in political positions and big businesses in the region than men. The argument on who is more corrupt cannot be sustained because of the disparity in the numbers. According to Breen et.al (2017), generally, women are less involved in bribery and corruption in businesses. The importance of the role of the male gender as the head of the family and the breadwinner of a family in the region is beginning to diminish. This is because in recent years, there are only a few instances where women are forced to be housewives to take care of their children at home, they are now the breadwinners of the family (Amadi, Ogbanga & Akena, 2015). These are some of the complexities around discussing gender and corruption in the Niger delta.

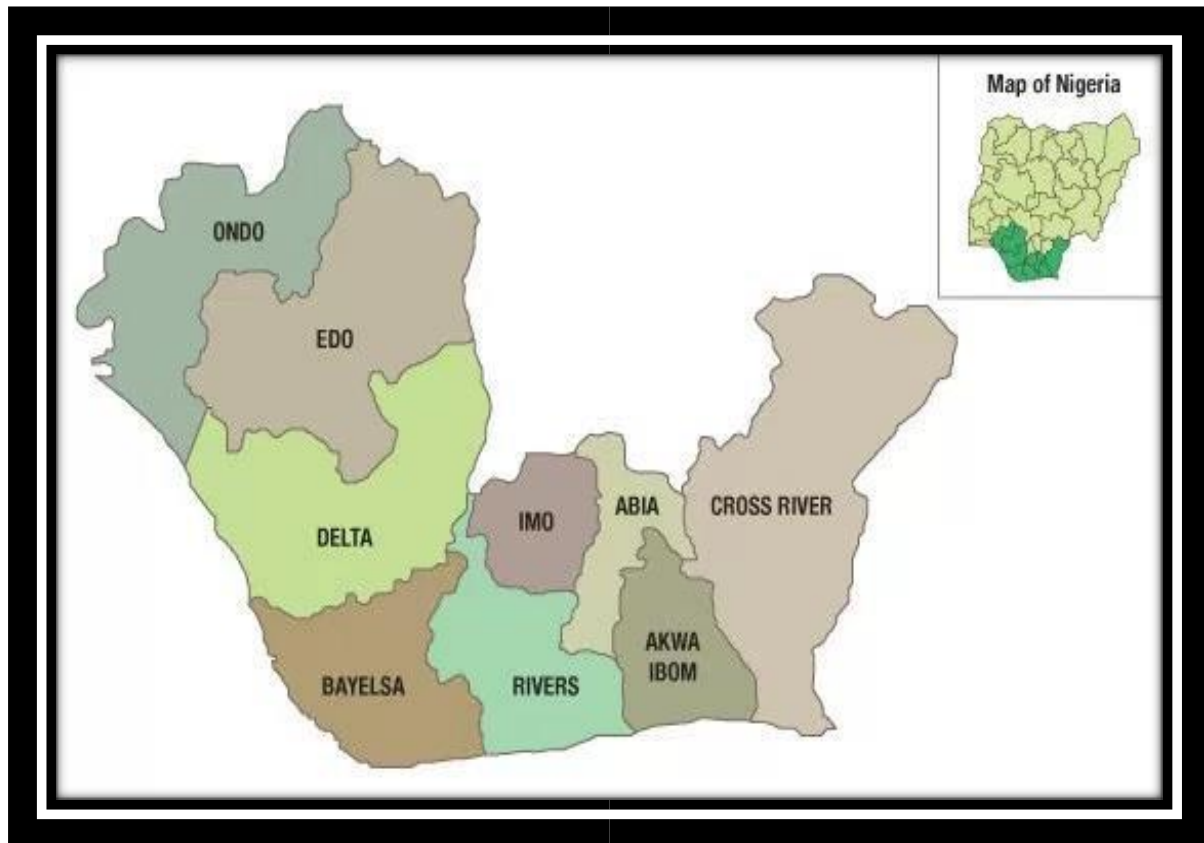
Nevertheless, civil society activism in the Niger delta is a male-dominated sector. The few women involved in CSOs in the region maintained that there were fewer women because of the dangers involved in dealing with militant organisations and crude oil host community members. Traditionally in the Niger delta, women are expected to be in the background while the men speak; they are only to tell their opinions to their husbands and are not allowed to speak in public places. This is changing broadly in the region because women are becoming change agents (Acey, 2016). The number of corrupt men or women does not alter the pre-eminence of data collected in this research because the role of corruption in civil society activism in the Niger delta is not a gender-based problem.

But, as a female researcher, I think that my gender played a role on the type and number of people that were willing to take part in the interviews. Most of the male respondents appeared to be impressed on meeting with a female researcher. It is an indication that the gender of the researcher can sometimes affect the gender of the people that are most likely to respond to the research questions (Padfield, & Procter, 1996). Civil society advocacy in the Niger delta has proceeded along different fronts which was discovered during the fieldwork. However, this research is focused on CSOs that are interested in resolving crude oil related problems in the region. Examples of the other acts of civil society activism in the Niger delta include poverty eradication, the fight against increasing unemployment, the lack of infrastructural development, social equality and women's empowerment.

### 2.3: An Overview of the Field Sites and Samples:

Figure 2.1 is a representation of the nine states in the Niger delta from which Rivers, Delta and Cross Rivers states were selected.

Fig. 2.1: A Map of the Niger Delta Region in Nigeria



Source (<http://www.nigerianmuse.com> visited on 02/06/2017).

Figures 2.2, 2.3, 2.4 and 2.5 are maps showing the Local Government Areas (LGAs) in the three states in the Niger delta and the city map of the FCT, Abuja.

Fig. 2.2: A Map of the Local Government Areas of Rivers State



Source: <http://www.nigerianmuse.com>.

The interviews for this research were conducted in 8 communities – four communities in Rivers state (Omoku in Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Area, Belema in Akuku Toru Local Government Area, Finima and Bonny in Bonny Local Government Area). Three communities in Delta state (Ugboegungun and Oto-Gbene in Warri South Local Government Area and Koko in Warri North local government area) and one in cross-river (Creek town in Odukpani Local Government Area). Six communities were selected to highlight the problems associated with crude oil exploitation, host communities and how corruption is impacting the response of MNOCs in the region. The remaining two will be used to discuss the role of colonialism on corruption in the Niger delta.

In the selection of these communities, I have looked out for the following characteristics: 1) the community is a host to a major MNOC 2) they are being impacted by crude oil exploration activities and suffer a neglect from the government and the MNOC; 3) there are evidences of civil society activism in these communities against the MNOC and federal government. There were many communities that met these criteria, but the selected ones were the most convenient in terms of distance from where I lived. While, the data on the role of colonialism on corruption were collected in the remaining two communities (Bonny and Creek town). These communities are selected because they were a host to the colonial masters. It was in these communities that the oral history interviews for the older citizens to discuss the relationship between colonialism and corruption were conducted.

I would like to state here that there are conflicting ways of describing settlements in the Niger delta, they are either called towns or communities. However, I have generally referred to the areas I have visited as communities because this classification variance is not important to this work.

Fig. 2.3: A Map of the Local Government Areas in Delta State



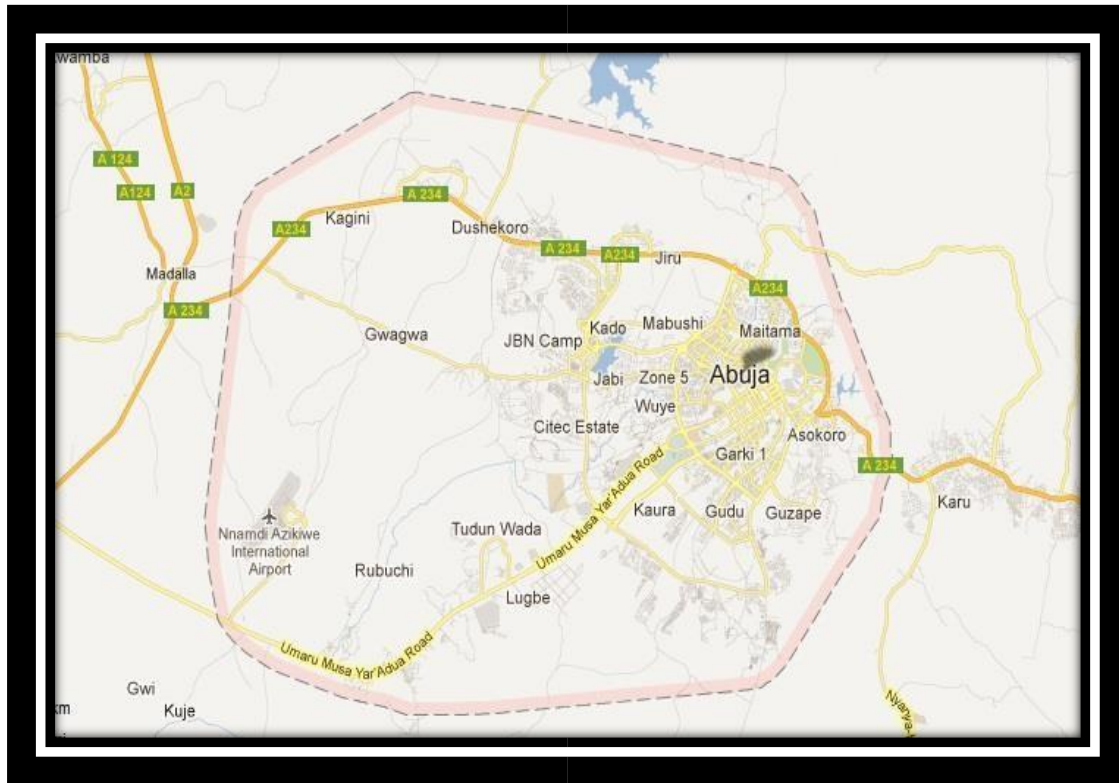
Source: <http://www.nigerianmuse.com>

Fig. 2.4: A Map of the Local Government Areas in Cross Rivers State



Source: <http://www.nigerianmuse.com>.

Fig. 2.5: A Map of Abuja



Source: <https://nigeriazipcodes.com>

## 2.4: Research Strategy and Design:

Table 2.3: The sample and methods

<b>Sample</b>	<b>Research Method</b>	<b>Total of Sample Size</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
Niger delta people	Structured interviews (face-to-face)	80	50	30
CSOs (NGOs and Self-Help groups)	Semi-structured interviews (face-to-face)	25	22	3
Multinational oil companies (MNOCs)	Structured interviews (face-to-face)	5	5	0
Anti-corruption agencies	Semi-structured (face-to-face and telephone interviews)	5	5	0
Older Niger delta citizens	Oral history (face to-face)	5	3	2

A total of 120 interviews were conducted to analyse the role of corruption on civil society activism in the Niger delta. Eighty of these were structured interviews conducted in six crude oil host communities. In the first four communities, 15 interviews in each of them while ten interviews each were conducted in the remaining two. These 80 interviews are to highlight the problems and benefits from crude oil exploitation in these communities. Twenty-five interviews were conducted with CSOs to discuss their acts of activism in the region and how corruption impacts their activities. While, five oral histories were carried out in Bonny and Creek town to establish the relationship between corruption and colonialism in the Niger delta. Five interviews were conducted with the MNOCs to discuss their relationship with crude oil

host communities and five interviews with the two anti-corruption agencies in the country (EFCC & ICPC) to discuss corruption in CSOs and the efforts they are making to eradicate the menace in the country. Most of the interviews were face-to-face interviews except for one with an anti-corruption agency which was conducted over the phone. The telephone interview lasted for 52 minutes while the interviews in the first six communities was for an average of 40 minutes for each respondent. On the average, the length of the interviews conducted with CSOs lasted for 90 minutes while the oral history sessions went up to an average of two hours.

## 2.5: Field Data Explanation:

A total of 120 interviews were conducted using the oral history, structured and semi-structured interview methods of data collection and the sample size is represented in table 2.3. I interviewed 80 people in six communities most of which were men and women between the ages of 20 to 60. They were people from different socio-economic backgrounds and employments. Most of the women that are classified as housewives in this research were forced into being sit-at-home mums because of the high rate of unemployment in the region. Many of them claimed to have been educated up to the university level. The names of the communities where these interviews were conducted, the number of respondents in each community and how they will be identified in this work is displayed on table 2.4. The table shows the number of respondents in each of the six communities in Rivers and Delta states.

Table 2.4: A Table Showing the Names of Communities and Sample Size

Identification	Community	Number of Respondents
A	Omoku	15
B	Belema	15
C	Diagbene	15
D	Fakados	10
E	Finima	15
F	Ugboegungun	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>80</b>
Other Communities		
Calabar	Calabar	2
Bonny	Bonny	3

A total of five senior citizens, three men, and two women were also interviewed in Calabar and Bonny to grasp an understanding of their experiences with the colonial masters and corruption in the region. The collection of oral history data from older citizens became necessary when some respondents during the interviews of CSOs pointed out that the corruption in these organisations and the country has its roots embedded in colonialism.

Table 2.5: A Display of the Socio-Economic Characteristics of Respondents in Crude Oil and Gas Host Communities in Rivers and Delta States of the Region

Characteristics of Respondents	Categories of Respondents	Number of Respondents (%)
Sex	Male	57 (71.25)
	Female	23 (28.75)
Age Group	20-30	30 (37.50)
	30-40	25 (31.25)
	40-50	18 (22.5)
	50-60	7 (8.75)
Employment status	Housewives	20 (25)
	Farmers/ Fishermen	12 (15)
	Unemployed graduates	28 (35)
	Oil company workers	15 (18.75)
	Workers in other sectors and organisations.	5 (6.25)
Level of Educational	Primary School	18 (22.5)
	Secondary School	26 (32.5)
	University graduates	36 (45)

There are over a five hundred CSOs in the form of NGOs, self-help groups and militant organisations in Nigeria according to the Nigeria Network of NGOs (NNNGOs). But the interviews conducted to describe the role of corruption on civil society activism in the Niger delta were with the representatives/members of twenty-five CSOs. I was unable to read through the mission statements of these 500 organisations because of time. Initially, I selected 50 CSOs that were interested in resolving crude oil related problems in the region and were in Rivers and Delta states. However, reading through their mission statements, I reduced the number to 30 CSOs. I focused on the CSOs working with the communities that were selected for this research. I was particularly interested in CSOs that are involved in environmental activism and those fighting against crude oil-related corruption. I realised that, there is a CSO for every problem in the Niger delta. The 25 CSOs were selected for their acts of activism in the region and the availability for an interview.

Before setting out on the interviews, I prepared a list of questions for the structured interviews and an interview guide on the points as will be seen on the appendix. As the interview progressed, some respondents raised important points that required further probing because some of the questions were open-ended. This was intended to give me an opportunity to understand the views of the respondents. I wanted to have a discussion with members of the CSOs while staying focused on the research aims and objectives. Fifteen of the interviews lasted for as long as two hours, five for an hour thirty minutes and the other five for only 35 minutes.

What I found rather interesting with the interviews conducted with CSOs was when I asked the question on how corruption impacted them, a clear majority of the members of these CSOs were quick to disassociate themselves from any form of corrupt practices. While A few claimed not to have experienced any form of corruption. Remarkably, many of these CSOs were quick to discuss corruption when it indicts another CSO and go as far as mentioning names. Consequently, I discovered that it was easier to talk about corruption when it involves other people but not you or your organisation. The need to interview older citizens to establish the relationship between colonialism and corruption arose during the interviews with CSOs on corruption. They pointed out that corruption has historical and structural roots embedded in colonialism.

### 2.5.1: Problems with Reaching the Respondents:

The respondents I was unable to reach were those with militant organisations because of the risks involved, I was only able to interview one of them. There were some CSOs as earlier discussed that were unwilling to talk about corruption, but many were happy to fix meetings and they were also prompt. There were no major problems with conducting interviews in these communities because I visited the communities with the help of a community leader who I had briefed earlier on my research. The community departments of the MNOCs were also willing to discuss or tell their side of the story.

It was difficult to schedule interviews with the anti-corruption agencies. There were branches of these organisations in Port Harcourt where I lived in Nigeria, but I was asked to go to their head offices in the FCT, Abuja. Their offices in Port Harcourt were not authorized to grant interviews as this could lead to claims that they were giving away classified information. Before leaving for Abuja, I was asked to write letters to the heads of the two organisations at the head offices asking for the interviews. I did as I was told but the responses from the head offices was slow. The interviews were fixed eventually, and semi-structured interviews were conducted with the two major anti-corruption agencies in Nigeria, ICPC & EFCC. These were all face to face interviews except for one which was a telephone interview because the respondent was unavoidably absent in the office on the days I visited.

## 2.6: Data Sources:

### 2.6.1: Primary Data Sources:

The Primary source of data collection for a research can either be by observation or direct communication. An example of this type of data collection is the interview method (Kothari, 2004). This source of data collection requires the assembling of evidence from where they originated. It serves as a collective evidence of the past and present providing a mutual account which is generally acceptable but not necessarily correct. Sources from which primary data is collected include interviews, evidence on events, legal and historical document, speeches,

audio and video recordings and pieces of creative writing. In this work, primary data is collected by oral history, structured and semi-structured interviews and these are the main sources of data collection in this research.

### 2.6.2: Structured Interviews:

The crude oil exploitation activities in the Niger delta are solely carried out by MNOCs and they are the major stakeholder in the Nigerian crude oil industry. Crude oil wells in the Niger delta are either onshore or offshore. Crude oil host communities will be affected by flare points that are either onshore or offshore. The problems arising from crude oil exploitation in the region will be discussed in chapter four and five. The structured interview method was utilised in highlighting the problems crude oil host communities face in their relationship with MNOCs. I have classified the department in charge of the affairs of the community in the MNOCs as the department of community relations in this research because they have different titles in these companies. The coined title refers to a department in the MNOCs that is encumbered with the task of liaising with the crude oil host community.

For the interviews in the six communities, I arranged with a youth in each of the community that served as a guide as I went around conducting the interviews. The same questions were asked everyone in the community and paraphrased where there is a difficulty with understanding (Stuckey, 2013). The members of the community department of MNOCs were eager to discuss their relationship with the community whilst listing their elaborate CSR plans except that they were unable to practically show evidence of some of their claims. A sample of the interview questions for the communities and community departments of the MNOCs is shown on the appendix at the end of this work.

### 2.6.3: Semi-Structured Interviews:

The directory of NGOs and self-help organisations in the Niger delta is a display of an endless list of organisations in the region. I was surprised by the level of information I found on the internet considering the difficulty one could experience in collecting data in Nigeria. An interesting observation is that some of these organisations formed mergers. There were different levels of coalitions, some were a coming together of ten NGOs, seventeen NGOs and even twenty NGOs depending on what they were interested in achieving. On the directory, I

discovered that one office address was used by several NGOs. In a few instances, these organisations were no longer in existence, they had closed. This is arguably one of the reasons Smith (2010) stated that some NGOs were formed for personal benefits or gains. When I probed further on I was the rationale behind several NGOs occupying one office space, I was told that it was a way of cutting down on cost. Notwithstanding the response, it is public knowledge in Nigeria that some of these CSOs are a business venture. They apply for funding and when the request is granted, they reach out to help a few people and will stop running the CSO after spending a little of the allocated money. The remainder of the approved funds will then be diverted into other personal ventures (Smith, 2010). There are also many militant organisations and coalition in the region. An example is MEND which is a collection of several militant organisations

#### 2.6.4: Oral History:

Colonialism was a finding that emerged from the research and I decided to explore it further by carrying out some oral histories. Oral history is the practice of asking questions and storytelling. It is a reliable and valuable technique and has its own history yet gives a voice to those that have been hidden from history (Thompson, 1988; Rile & Harvey, 2007). Accounts from oral history are usually established on personal experiences and opinions. These narratives can also be used as a social justice tool to record and keep stories for marginalized societies (Janesick, 2007). An understanding of the political, social, economic, cultural history and structure of the Niger delta before and during colonialism is the foundation for analysing the role of colonialism on corruption in the region. An interpretation of the communal relationships that existed before the ‘white’ men – the way the colonial masters were popularly addressed in the Niger delta and what happened during colonialism is of uttermost importance to this work and it what is referred to as post-colonialism.

Post-colonialism is a theory and it is used to understand the relationship between colonialism and corruption in this work. The theory of post-colonialism is behind the understanding of happenings from the colonial times to the present. It takes account of the cultural effects of the outstanding developments from the moment of colonisation to the present day (Ashcroft, Gareth & Helen, 2002). It also refers to the structural and historical patterns that have shaped the Niger delta region over the years (Njoku, 2005, Pierce, 2006, Omotola, 2006). An example of such changes was what Achebe in 1958 described in his literary piece ‘Things Fall Apart’,

on how the coming of the colonial masters replaced traditional African beliefs and style of worship with Christianity. According to his account, colonialism introduced new relations, religion, language, and culture which initially caused division in communities.

British colonialism and the roles it played in shaping the practice of corruption is supposedly the historical and structural foundations of corruption in the Niger delta. Based on the above, I am proposing in this work that corruption is an example of the historical and structural residue of colonialism in the Niger delta. According to Childs, Williams, & Williams (1997), 'there is a continuity of its pre-occupation throughout the historical process initiated by European imperial aggression' (p.3). To fully develop this relationship between colonialism and corruption in this research, I will uncover happenings before and during the colonial era. The research will answer questions on how communities maintained law and order before colonialism, the changes to these laws and the effect these changes have had on society and the practice of corruption in the Niger delta. A conclusion on how colonialism affects corruption in the Niger delta will be drawn from the oral history accounts of five older citizens in the Niger delta.

Failure to account for this method of data collection will mean the loss of a lot of information especially from the older generation that can neither read nor write in the Niger delta. The stories told by these group of people are not documented in books, papers or anywhere else (Shopes, 2002). Notwithstanding, according to historians and academics, oral history has a disadvantage as it might sometimes not have real evidence and the stories might be misleading. However, stories told through oral histories have saved communities, especially in Africa because of the high level of illiteracy among elderly people.

The Niger Delta has been popular lately in research and is sometimes referred to as 'over researched' but there are stories yet untold. A number of these tales especially those on the history of the origin of corruption, events, personal and those about families were collected in Bonny and Creek Town. These two coastal communities were very important in the colonial times. The waterfronts of these communities served as seaports for the trading of goods and slaves between locals and the colonial masters. This interaction with the colonial masters is what in my opinion has equipped older citizens in these communities with first-hand information on the happenings in the colonial times. And this information is beneficial in discussing the structural foundations of corruption in the Niger delta.

### 2.6.5: Ethnography:

Ethnography is the study of people in a naturally occurring setting over a period (Hammersley, 2018). How long this will be is dependent on a lot of other factors. In this instance, I have spent a large part of my life in the Niger delta consequently, understanding the people in these communities was not a difficult task. However, it is important to state that there are differences in language and culture as well as similarities. Notwithstanding, understanding how crude oil impacted the lives of the people in crude oil host communities was difficult to unravel because of the different accounts which will be discussed in chapter five. I took a few days out in each community to take walks around, talk to locals and eat new delicacies and fruits. Food is an important aspect of culture and a way of starting interactions with people.

It was important to introduce myself to the traditional Head of each of these communities so as not to be treated as an intruder. With the approval of the community Head, I was free to visit health centres, schools, women gatherings and the market square for traditional ceremonies. In the first few days, I learnt to greet people in the native dialect which opened communication. It is important to state here that these people all speak at least the 'pidgin English' but were happy to hear me greet them in their local dialect. I also observed farmlands, water bodies/rivers, buildings and the atmospheric temperature in these communities. In conducting the interviews, some answers resulted in probing further. I conducted in-depth interviews to clarify questions that sprang up during the observations. An ethnographic research is a qualitative study of lifestyle, cultures and groups. According to Fernandez (2019), it is difficult to understand the present without knowing the historical, social, and cultural mediums from which it arises. On the average, I was in each community in Rivers and Delta state for at least three weeks.

### 2.7: Secondary Data Sources:

Secondary data can be collected from sources including from government departments, documents from NGOs and newspaper publications. Other forms of secondary data are Television, news articles and literary works to provide an understanding of the insider and outsider discourses on corruption and civil society activism. It is not the main source of data collection for this research, but it is an important aspect of the study. Access to these materials in this study were through the library, records of government organisations, newspapers and

through the internet. Assembling data from secondary sources could sometimes pose problems but, they are valuable. Corruption and civil society activism in the Niger delta are a part of everyday life and require regular update.

## 2.8: Data Analysis:

An analysis is defined as the process of examining, testing, tabulating and combining different evidence to discuss the research questions (Yazan, 2015 see also Yin 2002). This is a qualitative research that is aimed at generating classifications for the role of corruption in civil society activism in the Niger delta. The data collected in the Niger delta and FCT, Abuja using oral history, ethnography, semi-structured and structured interview will be examined in the chapters 4, 6 & 8. During the fieldwork, I took field notes, observed, recorded conversations and interviews in the form of audio and video recordings. Some of the interviews were conducted in 'pidgin' English, a combination of English and local slangs because the respondents could not speak 'good' English, these I have transcribed into standard English. It was easy for me to do these transcriptions because not only am I familiar with pidgin English, I can also speak it. The data organisation began with the transcription of recorded and written data, it helped with finding the research path. It brings together the research aims and objectives such that logical conclusions can be drawn.

The use of a research tool in the analysis of qualitative data is becoming an increasingly important, easy and effective way of analysing qualitative data. In analysing the data for this study, I have used MAXQDA which is a tool that enables me to systematize my data easily and faster. Before entering my data into MAXQDA, I separated the data into categories, those that were irrelevant from those that are relevant (Klose & Seifert, 2017). I started by coding the data which entails putting together all the information on the themes of the research to connect my data with the research questions. Data analysis using the above software took me some months to put together.

## 2.9: Ethics:

The ethics of a research are important rules that must be obeyed during the collection and analysis of data. Corruption is a complex topic and extra steps should be taken to effectively follow ethical standards and guidelines (Krause, 2017). There are several benefits that can be derived following ethical guidelines in a research amongst which are: 1) it will enable the researcher to avoid error 2) it will help the researcher get support from the public and 3) the researcher can be held accountable to the public (Resnik, 2011). The problems of militancy and kidnapping in the Niger delta were causing worry for the ethical committee of the university. Nevertheless, I was able to convince them on how long I had lived in the region and how I intend to follow all ethical rules and regulations before an approval was granted for the fieldwork in the Niger delta. I received ethical approval from the university on the 20th of January 2017. The ethics approval number is FL16095.

### 2.9.1: Informed consent:

During the fieldwork, I made sure that I got signed consent on forms from the participants. Before signing the form, I read and explained the content to the participants that could not read. The form was signed after they agreed to the terms. A sample of a scanned copy of the consent form has been attached as part of the appendix of this study.

### 2.9.2: Confidentiality and Anonymity:

Corruption is a very sensitive topic to research as mentioned earlier therefore, the confidentiality and anonymity of the respondents should be protected. In instances where acts of corruption, come to light, it could be an ethical requirement to report these. However, during the data collection for this research, there were no such cases. To protect the respondents, I made sure that the names and other forms of identification of the respondents were removed during the analysis of the data. The information gathered for the research were stored with password which has not been disclosed to anyone. The two main ways that a participant could be identified are through key attributes such as name, address or phone number or identification provided through sensitive attributes such that data containing information on the research topic (Vasilateanu & Casaru, 2015). Before data is published or submitted, it is important to make sure that all the information that can be traced to a participant are removed. Anonymised data

should protect respondents in ways that they cannot be re-identified through the data provided (Vasilateanu & Casaru, 2015).

Confidentiality refers to the protection of data or information that touches on private feelings like corruption in this study. To protect the confidentiality of the respondents in this research, I have replaced the names of the individuals in the community with numbers. For instance, the number of respondents in the communities were 80, I have numbered them from 1-80. For the civil society and the MNOCs, I have labelled them with alphabets. The only names I have mentioned in this work are those of the communities and the anti-corruption agencies in Nigeria as these organisations are few and are known to everyone in Nigeria.

### 2.9.3: Risks to participants:

There were no participant risks during the fieldwork that are known to me. I have also made sure that risks such as revelations that could lead to arrest by the police and prosecution will not occur during data collection and analysis because I have kept to the rules and regulations of confidentiality and anonymity. However, there was the killing of about 60 cult members a few days after I had left one of the communities. This was not because of my research but it was a planned government raid on the community to reduce cult activities and prevent further disturbances of MNOCs in the Niger delta.

### 2.10: Limitations of the Research:

The complexity around the discussions of corruption makes it difficult to get honest and accurate responses from respondents. Those who could be indicted are not open to talk about corruption. The interesting part of the research is that the information on corrupt practices can only come from another person, it is almost like gossip. Secondly, it was particularly difficult to interview militants because they are harder to reach and could be potentially dangerous. Based on this, I was only able to interview one militant, although he claimed not to be a repentant militant and a peacemaker. Thirdly, the information on corruption provided by the EFCC and ICPC was little compared to what I had requested. They told me that data on corrupt practices involving CSOs are regarded as classified information or materials and cannot be disclosed.

Living in the Niger delta for many years before this research was an added advantage. It was easy to access the communities in the region and communication with 'pidgin' English was not a problem. Although, visiting these communities were difficult because some of them lack good roads and could only be reached through uncomfortable boat rides. Finally, it was difficult scheduling interview appointments with anti-corruption agencies. I had to travel to Abuja, the FCT Abuja from Port Harcourt to fix and conduct interviews because the branch offices were unauthorised to grant such interviews.

The analysis of the data collected during the fieldwork for this study begins in chapter five. In this chapter, the primary data collected with 80 structured interviews from six communities in Rivers and Delta states were analysed. The chapter compares the problems in the region as discussed in the background of the study in chapter four against practicalities in the six selected communities. It highlights the problems in these communities that have not been discussed in the literature and those that were toned down or exaggerated.

Chapter six establishes the role of colonialism in the corruption in Nigeria. It discusses the relationship between the people in the region and the colonial masters. It states that the colonial masters gave preferential treatment to the elite class in the communities and introduced bribery by gift giving and tax collection. Although the tax collectors were mainly from the region, the colonial government did not stop the practice of bribery. Finally, colonialism introduced what is understood as the legal system in Nigeria that is controlled by bribery abolishing the traditional system of punishment. Although the traditional system of punishments was aggressive and may appear to be violating human rights, it deterred people from getting involved in corrupt practices. The main finding in this chapter is that the corruption that impacts CSOs in the Niger delta has structural and historical roots embedded in colonialism.

Another data analysis begins in chapter eight; it is an examination of civil society activism and the problems they face while carrying out acts of activism in the region. It identifies corruption as a major hindrance to civil society activism in the region. A total of 25 face-to-face semi-structured interviews were conducted in 25 CSOs with either a head or member of the CSO. The data were collected using the semi-structured interview method. The semi-structured interview method is an important way of gathering information amongst people with varying forms of education, personal histories and varied professional backgrounds (Barriball & While, 1994). The respondents from CSOs were from different backgrounds with varying levels of education.

For instance, there was a CSO that was managed by a professor and his wife who has a Ph.D. in Ecology. Then again, there were other people who were members of CSOs that could only boast of a secondary school education. The flexibility and openness of this method offsets some of the limitations and enables the researcher to discover new perceptions from the respondents. Whereas, semi-structured interviews are located outside of everyday event and are usually scheduled in advance with timing that lasts usually from 30 minutes to several hours (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). Most of the interviews as earlier stated, lasted an average of an hour, thirty minutes.

Chapter eight is also a discussion on how corruption impacts CSOs in the Niger delta. According to Graycar & Sidebottom (2012), the available opportunities around a could encourage the practice of corruption. During the collection of data on corruption, I discovered that corruption in the Niger delta is an historical and structural problem. To understand how corruption affects civil society activism in the Niger delta, it is important to be aware of its origin. It was the quest for how corruption originated that led to me interviewing five older citizens in the region to discuss the relationship between colonialism and corruption.

### 2.11: Biases in the Data Set:

The biases in a research can occur at any stage (He, 2016). In this research, there were a few instances where there might have been biases like in some of the interviews, but I want to state that there was no time that I to influence the outcome of this research. One of which was in the interviews carried out in the six communities. I was more interested in speaking to people who were willing to talk about their community and generally ignored people who were unwilling to discuss the problems around their community. However, I do not think that reaching out to these sets of people would have made any difference in this research because I have critically analysed the different viewpoints of community dwellers and their relationship with the MNOCs in their community. The other set of analysis that could be biased is the data on militancy. I was only able to reach one militant and that is because of the dangers involved in interviewing these sets of respondents. Finally, I do not know if there were respondents that responded in certain ways because they were not convinced on what that the data will be used for or perhaps believed that I was not being honest on the purpose of data collection. It is important to state here that even if I was aware of these are factors, I would have been unable to control

### Conclusion:

Investigating corruption is a difficult task anywhere in the world and the Niger delta was not any different. Many of the respondents were quick to disassociate themselves from corrupt practices or opt not to talk about it. This is contrary to the openness seen when interviewed on Television and radio stations on the high level of corruption in governance. Discussions on corruption are easier when it involves someone else because people are cautious when quizzed on corruption that could involve them. The chapter highlights how the data on corruption was collected to illustrate its impact on civil society activism in the Niger delta. Research data were collected at various sites in the Niger delta (Rivers, Cross Rivers, and Delta states) and Abuja, the federal capital territory. The research samples were from crude oil host communities to MNOCs, CSOs, members of the community department of MNOCs and some older citizens of the Niger delta region. The sample sets were collected using the oral history, ethnography, semi-structured and structured interview methods. Furthermore, it explains the way data will be analysed in this study and discusses the limitations of the study. The research is intended to make contributions to the literature on corruption, CSOs in the Niger delta, post-colonialism, and environmental policymaking.

## Chapter Three: The Different Approaches by the Government to Fight Corruption in Nigeria.

### 3.1: Introduction:

This research is a study of CSOs in the Niger delta. In putting together this research, I realised that CSOs in the Niger delta are faced with several hindrances as they carry out their fundamental role of engaging with society. Some of these bottlenecks include generating funds for projects, selecting communities to execute these projects, corruption, and engaging with MNOCs, the federal and state governments on how to resolve the problems facing the Niger delta. However, corruption seems to be the bigger impediment for civil society activism because of the adverse impact it has on the Nigerian economy.

Corruption is problematic and widespread in Nigeria. It is negatively impacting the economic, social and political fabrics of the nation. The federal government headed by different heads of states and presidents have taken steps to fight the menace of corruption but have failed to m deter people from the practice. The efforts by the federal government are typically in the form of legislation, setting up of parastatals and the organisation of sensitisation programmes. This chapter describes the laws and the different approaches by the federal government in resolving the menace of corruption in Nigeria.

### 3.2: An Overview of Corruption:

Corruption is an ancient practice, it is as old as civilization and can be traced back to the pre-biblical times (Bardhan, 1997; Ladikos, 2002; Dike, 2003; Egwemi, 2012; Nwankwo, 2014). Early practices of corruption were seen in Egypt, Israel, Rome, and Greece (Dike, 2005; Rotaru, Bodislav & Georgescu, 2016). Corruption has become a universal practice that cuts across all the nations in the world and all realms of governance (Hooker, 2003). Despite being practiced globally, what is regarded as corrupt varies from place to place (Bhattarai, 2009).

The effect of corruption on society and governance is less severe in some countries than it is in others. These countries have been able to reduce corruption to the barest minimum in ways that it is hardly seen in everyday life and interactions. Examples of countries with minimal corruption are: New Zealand, Finland, Norway, United Kingdom etc., this is according to the 2018 corruption index provided by Transparency International (TI). A high level of education and income resulting in high quality government institutions are arguably some of the reasons for which corruption is less in developed countries compared to developing countries (McMullan, 1961; Glaeser & Saks, 2006).

In the countries where corruption is problematic, it can sometimes act like a tax, increasing the cost of doing business and providing public services (Drury et.al, 2006). Corruption is drawing significant attention at the international level with an increasing interest in research especially in the past two decades (Olken & Pande, 2012). I am interested in researching corruption because it is posing key challenges to market economies and democratic governments globally (Sandholtz & Koetzle, 2000). Corruption is a contested concept because it is difficult to find an all-encompassing definition. A large part of the definitions put out by scholars and organisations are deficient in one way or the other and have failed to incorporate in it all the aspects of corruption (Kaufmann, 1997; Tanzi, 1998; Jain, 2001; Svensson, 2005; Sampford, et al., 2006).

There are several definitions used globally, the one from the World Bank (WB) states that corruption is ‘the abuse of public power for private benefit’ (Tanzi, 1998, p.564). The definition from the United Nations (UN) is distinctly concerned with the exploitation of power for personal gain. It defines corruption as the ‘abuse of public office for personal gain, directly or indirectly’. Whilst, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), defines corruption, as the ‘abuse of power or confidence for private benefit’. Other popular definitions are those of the Multidisciplinary Group on Corruption of the Council of Europe which defines corruption as

‘bribery and any other behaviour in relation to persons entrusted with responsibilities in the public or private sector which violates their duties that follow from their status as public official, private employee, independent agent or other relationship of that kind and is aimed at obtaining undue advantages of any kind for themselves or for others (Munhoz, 2007, p.695).

Transparency International (TI) is a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) that has taken up the challenge to tackle corruption globally by putting together data on corruption from different countries in the world. TI defines corruption as the ‘abuse of entrusted public power for private gain’. According to Tanzi (1995), a more neutral definition of corruption should be that it is a non-compliance distant relationship that is intentionally aimed at being beneficial to the individual, friends, or relatives. What this means in principle is that corruption at its core, is about the misuse of public office or a position of authority for private gain (Treisman, 2000).

Most definitions of corruption refer to it as what is improper but the main problem scholars face in defining corruption is how to identify what is improper. The variation in defining improper makes it difficult to generalize the definition of corruption (Sandholtz & Koetzle, 2000). Based on the above, Sampford, et al., (2006) suggested that we adopt the conclusion made at the UN convention on corruption in 2002. The agreement at this conference is that corruption should not be firmly defined but listed according to types and actions. Based on this, the types of corruption practiced in Nigeria are grand, political, corporate, bureaucratic, legislative, administrative, and petty (Jain, 2001).

### 3.3: Corruption in the Oil Industry and the Niger Delta:

The corruption in the Nigerian oil industry is aggravated by the mono-economy powered by crude oil and the huge revenue accruing from it (Omotola, 2006). The government has continually discussed diversifying the Nigerian economy, but this has not been practiced as the country is heavily dependent on crude oil. It is this dependence that is responsible for the formulation of laws that puts the onus on the government to fully control crude oil proceeds not considering the people in the Niger delta. There are many of these laws but for this study, I will be analysing the Petroleum Act of 1969 and the Land use act of 1978 because of their impact on the region.

Section 1 Schedule 1 of the Petroleum Act of 1969 states thus: - (a) The entire ownership and control of all petroleum in, under or upon any lands to which this section applies shall be vested in the state. This section applies to all land (including land covered by water) which (a) Is in Nigeria, or (b) Is under the territorial waters of Nigeria, or (c) forms part of the continental shelf. The act puts the ownership of crude oil on the government making it difficult for people in the region to enjoy the proceeds from crude oil. While the Petroleum (Drilling and Production) Regulations of 1969 section 1(1) states that: ‘every application for an oil exploration licence, oil prospecting licence or oil mining lease shall be made to the Minister in writing on the appropriate form as set out in the schedule to these regulations’ this act has made it possible for ministers in Nigeria to act in ways that more of self-interest than in the interest of the public. The petroleum regulations of 1969 encourage corrupt practices in the oil industry (Brown, 2013).

However, the most controversial law that people think have encouraged corruption is the Land Use Act of 1978. It is an act that was enacted to benefit the ruling majority in Nigeria with the oil from the region of the minority because it grants the ownership of all lands to the government. Based on the provisions of this act, land users and owners in the Nigerian state are treated as tenants at the will of the state, they are only entitled to the improvements made on land. This act removed rent paying to host communities as rents are no longer paid to landlords by oil companies on the enactment of this act (Akpan, 2006, Uchendu, 1979).

The ownership of oil is further shown in the 1999 constitution of the Nigerian state. It states in part (1) Section 44 (3) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 that: ‘notwithstanding the foregoing provisions of this section, the entire property in and control of all minerals, mineral oils and natural gas in under or upon any land in Nigeria, or in, under or upon the territorial waters and the Exclusive Economic Zone of Nigeria shall vest in the Government of the Federation and shall be managed in such manner as may be prescribed by the National Assembly’(Brown, 2013).

The other piece of legislation that was also drawn to further show that the people in the Niger delta cannot do much with land based on the 1978 Land Use Act is the Nigeria’s Oil and Gas Industry Development Act, 2010. It deals with how compensation will be paid not stating an appropriate formula but leaving this entirely at the discretion of the government. This act further complicates the relationship between the crude oil host community and MNOCs thereby

encouraging corruption and a false relationship between the state and MNOCs. See the appendix for a list of oil and gas regulation in Nigeria by Brown (2013).

Apart from the lack of tangible infrastructural development the Niger delta, the past and present governors of the nine Niger delta states have also failed. These governors are to blame for the misappropriating public funds set aside for the development of the region thereby disrupting the developmental plans. I will be citing the examples of two state governors that have embezzled public funds for personal use. However, they are not the only governors who have practiced corruption, most of the governors who have served in the region have engaged in corrupt practices (Agbiboa, 2013). But, these two governors have become prominent illustrations of corruption because of the involvement of foreign governments.

These examples are in the cases of ex-governors Chief Diepriye Solomon Peters Alamieyeseigha of Bayelsa state and James Ibori of Delta state. The governors of Bayelsa and Delta states respectively, these two states are making large contributions to the oil economy of Nigeria. The ex-governors were both apprehended in the United Kingdom on money laundering charges and now serve as examples of the misappropriation of public funds from the Niger delta.

The late Chief Diepriye Solomon Peters Alamieyeseigha before his death was the governor of Bayelsa state from 1999 to 2005. He was referred to as the Governor - General of the 'Ijaw Nation' – a title conferred on him by the Committee of Traditional Rulers in Bayelsa state (Adesoji & Rotimi, 2008; Oke, 2016). Chief Alamieyeseigha was accused of embezzling the sum of £203,753.34 which was held in his United Kingdom's bank accounts in NatWest, Barclays, HSBC, and RBS as at February 2005 (Adegbami & Uche, 2016). He was also the landlord of four properties in London with a net worth of about £10 million and another property assessed to be worth \$1.2 million in Cape Town, South Africa (Agbiboa, 2013; Adegbami & Uche, 2016). The late Chief Diepriye Alamieyeseigha was arrested in the UK but he escaped back to Nigeria and was not detected at the airport because he was dressed as a woman. (Carroll, 2005).

The debate in the region is that, the governor was being set-up by the then President Olusegun Obasanjo because of his stand on the Niger delta region implying his arrest was politically motivated (Agbiboa, 2013). Then again, some people were unimpressed with the news of how much of the region's developmental funds he embezzled as a governor. He was prosecuted by the Nigerian government on his arrival for corrupt practices and was replaced by Goodluck

Ebele Jonathan who at the time was serving under the late chief as deputy governor of Bayelsa state. On the 12th of March 2013, President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan who has moved up to the coveted seat of the President of Nigeria, granted his former boss late Chief Diepriye Solomon Peters Alamiyeseigha presidential pardon under the presidential pardoning power of section 175(1) of the 1999 Nigerian constitution (as amended) (Adangor, 2015).

This is a practical example of tribalism superseding justice (Oko, 2001; Smith, 2010; Ijewereme, 2015). The presidential pardon granted to his former boss by President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan was widely opposed. However, the ex-governor and governor general of the Ijaw nation, Chief Diepriye Solomon Peters Alamiyeseigha died on the 10 October 2015 of complications from a heart attack. His death has been linked to a call made by President Mohammadu Buhari to the government of the United Kingdom for his repatriation and trial in the UK. He was given a state burial in his country home in Amassoma, Southern Ijaw Local Government Area of Bayelsa state on the 9<sup>th</sup> of April 2016.

The other notable case was that of the ex-governor of Delta State James Ibori who was charged with money laundering in the UK. According to the BBC, he was a former London DIY store cashier before leaving for Nigeria and becoming a governor (Crawford, 2012). James Ibori served an eight-year term as the governor of Delta state from 1999 to 2007 and accumulated a lot of wealth whilst in office (Adegbami & Uche, 2016). The ex-governor was already accused of corruption in Nigeria, but his multitude of supporters prevented the police from arresting him. This practice of tribalism which provides support to a family member, friend, or someone from the same ethnic group and asking that they are freed when they are corrupt is a major stimulant to corruption in Nigeria (Smith, 2010; Hope, 2017). After escaping trial in Nigeria, James Ibori was arrested in Dubai in 2010 and extradited to the UK.

The ex-governor pleaded guilty to an accusation of the embezzlement in the sum of about sixty million pounds (Adegbami & Uche, 2016). And, with the evidence from the Metropolitan Police, James Ibori was jailed after being prosecuted in April of 2012 for a fraud of about £50 million (Crawford, 2012). According to Adegbami & Uche (2016), during the eight-year governorship term of Ibori as the governor of delta state, everything from education to health care fell apart because he was busy amassing public wealth to himself. The embezzled funds which should have been used for the development of the state was rather stolen and spent by him and his family members while developmental projects were ignored. The above examples are a common phenomenon in the region. The account of Chief Diepriye Solomon Peters

Alamieyeseigha and Chief James Ibori are a part of this study because of the uniqueness of their embezzlement cases (Mohammed, 2013). The misappropriating public funds is a part of politics in Nigeria. The embezzlement of public funds by governors in the region is an indication of failure of the stakeholders in the oil and gas industry in Nigeria.

The attitudes of these governors and the responses of tribes men and friends can best be described by the neutralisation theory. It is proposed by Matza and Sykes as a technique that justifies criminal acts. The more people justify their actions, the easier it is to commit that act again. Neutralisation theory is used to understand deviant behaviour. It suggests that the individuals that are involved in wrong doings, subscribe to the morals of a society but can excuse their delinquent behaviour (Muruna, Shadd, and Copes, 2005). The efforts made by the different administrations to fight corruption which will be discussed later in this chapter is an example of neutralisation. The different governments think that they should stop corruption in the country, but they cannot be exonerated from corrupt practices, they are highly corrupt as described in the examples of James Ibori and Alamiesiegha, the ex-governors of two Niger delta states discussed above.

The five techniques of the neutralization theory as discussed by Muruna, Shadd & Copes (2005) are the denial of responsibility, blaming others for their actions. The governors claim that they are indigenes of the region and it is better for them to do so than allow non-indigenous people to embezzle monies from their region. They go on to deny injury and because there is no physical hurt, everything is good. Forgetting that some harms can be psychological. As stated earlier on the rights of the governor to embezzle public funds, they are in denial of the victims. Justifying the harm, they cause and suggesting that the victim which in this case is the federal government, deserves it. They claim that the federal government is corrupt thereby condemning the condemners. Finally, they appeal to higher loyalties, defence of family and friends. These governors were defended by family members and tribes men for their offence because of the relationship they share with these people.

Table 3.1: Types of Corruption Practiced in the Niger Delta

Grand Corruption	Grand corruption is the misuse of high power to embezzle what belongs to many people. It is practiced in the Niger delta, for example, the ex-governors of Delta and Bayelsa states which will be discussed later in this chapter embezzled funds meant for the region. They are the examples in this work but there are a lot more.
Political Corruption	Political corruption is the abuse of power by government officials. Government official abuse the power vested on them very often in the region. An example is government officials disobeying traffic rules with their escorts and go unpunished.
Corporate Corruption	Corporate corruption is committed either by a person representing a corporation or the corporation itself. The failed relationship between MNOCs and crude oil host communities is as a result of corruption. Details of this has been discussed in chapter four.

Bureaucratic Corruption	Bureaucratic corruption occurs more in the civil service. The civil service in the region collects to carry out their assigned duties. This type of corruption in the Nigerian civil service is discussed by Rasul, Imran & Rogger, (2015).
Legislative Corruption	It is the use of public office for private gain. There are times when some members of the house of assembly in Rivers state collected bribes to pass a law that will be favourable to the government. Another example is lecturers asking for bribes from students to award marks to such students.
Administrative Corruption	Administrative corruption is the corruption in government policies. Some of the government policies appear to have an undertone of corruption (Hope, 2017). An example is the implementation and enforcement of the land use act of 1979 discussed in chapter four.
Petty Corruption	It is the practice of corruption by low and middle level government officials. Corrupt practices in the Nigerian Local government system where funds are embezzled and the bribery of to keep a local government chairperson after his or her tenure (Edeh & Nwakamma, 2017).

Apart from the above, Jain (2001), suggests that corruption should be described as it occurs while Asongu's view shown below is on how it is displayed. Corruption should be described as incidental, systematic, and systemic (Asongu, 2013), as shown on table 3.1. The main actors in corruption are the determinants of the type of corruption and these are usually government officials at different levels (Asongu, 2013). Corruption is also carried out in different modes, table 3.2 presents a broader view of corruption and how it occurs in the Niger delta.

**Table 3.2: How Corruption Occurs in the Niger Delta**

Type	Main Actor	Mode
Incidental	Petty officials interested officials and opportunistic individuals	Small size embezzlement and misappropriation, bribes, favouritism, and discrimination.

Systematic	Public officials, politicians, representatives of donor and recipient countries, bureaucratic elites, businessmen and middlemen.	Bribery and kickbacks, collusion to defraud the public, large-scale embezzlement and misappropriation through public tender and disposal of public property, economic privileges accorded to special interests, large political donations and bribes.
Systemic	Bureaucratic elites, politicians, businessmen and white-collar workers.	Large-scale embezzlement through ‘ghost worker’ on government payroll, embezzling government funds through false procurement payment for non-existent goods, large-scale disbursement of public property to special and privileged interest under the pretext of ‘national interest’, favouritism and discrimination exercised in favour of ruling parties in exchange for political contributions.

Source: Asongu, (2013) see also: Kpundeh (1998).

Generally, the consequences of corruption are enormous, they affect the economy negatively and could cost the economy a lot of money. In Nigeria where the practice is prominent it includes injustice, inefficiency, mistrust of government by citizenry, waste of public resources, and discouragement of enterprise especially foreign which could result in political instability (McMullan, 1961). The corruption in Nigeria is hindering the flow of foreign aid because it is sometimes diverted (Mauro, 1996), the diversion of donations will be discussed in detail in chapter seven. Other effects of corruption are the loss of revenue, adverse budgetary consequences, inferior public services and infrastructure and the composition of government expenditure (Mauro, 1996).

Examples of corruption in the country are illegal acts of money laundering, black market operations which on their own do not constitute corruption except they are carried out with the help of public officials (Jain, 2008). The definition of corruption that will be adopted in this research is that of TI where corruption is defined as the ‘abuse of entrusted public power for private gain’. The corruption in Nigeria is mainly a problem of government officials abusing

the power given to them as leaders and misappropriating public funds as described in the case of James Ibori and Alamiesiegha discussed above in this chapter.

### 3.4: Factors Influencing Corruption in the Niger Delta:

There are many factors that have encouraged the persistent rise in corrupt practices in the Niger delta. There is a school of thought which argues that corruption in Africa has structural and historical roots embedded in colonialism (Mulinge & Lesetedi, 1998; Pierce, 2006). Details will be discussed in detail in chapter six. Another factor influencing the rise in corrupt practices in the region is the culture, the argument is that the cultural practices in the region is encouraging the widespread in the practice (Watts, 2005; Smith, 2010; Adesina, 2016; Hope Sr, 2017). Cultural contributions to corrupt practices are solely based on the premise that societal norms and values help shape the behavioural pattern of an individual (Serra, 2010; Ebitu, 2016). The culture of the Niger delta people is a combination of traditional cultural lifestyles and others copied during colonialism.

An example of the cultural structure of the country that is encouraging corruption is in relation to how people must behave when they are elected as public servants/office holders. There is a general belief in the region that politicians are entitled to the wealth of the state because, leaving a political office 'broke' will usually result in mockery (Smith, 2010). There is the burden of the extended family or strong kingship ties. A person is answerable to the people that is of the same ethnicity as him or her, the kinsmen and extended family members when in governance. The dogma is that such offices are supposed to be financially beneficial to these relatives (Obayelu, 2007; Obuah, 2010; Hope Sr, 2017). Public officers are reminded habitually through courtesy visits from community leaders, family members and friends that such opportunities sometimes come once in a lifetime and when they do, they should be utilised effectively (Smith, 2010). Daily activities and slogans such as 'share the national cake' used on the streets suggest that looting the country's fund and using same for personal benefit is acceptable.

This daily expectations from family and friends on monetary acquisition is encouraging corruption (Smith, 2010). Wealth is celebrated and the people in the region do not frown at ill-gotten wealth (Watts, 2005). They do not question the source of the wealth, indirectly creating an environment for unhealthy competitions and wealth acquisition (Smith, 2010). People are drawn to the easy-way-out or prefer 'shortcuts' to get rich quick and be respected (Obayelu,

2007). The quest for wealth is robbing people of a strong sense of community and encourages weak morals (Dike, 2010). In instances where people work as civil servants with huge administrative discretion, they are made to cut corners to make more money (Katuka et al., 2016).

An aspect of the culture of the people in the region that is influencing corruption is the strong culture of gift-giving. It is difficult to differentiate gift-giving from bribery (Graycar & Jancsics, 2016; Cragg, Idemudia & Best, 2016; Hope Sr, 2017). The act of gift giving which can sometimes seem like a bribe is a major form of corruption. The cultural practice of gift giving can sometimes suggest that there is no difference between it and bribery (Obayelu, 2007, Obuah, 2010). Examples of the traditional practices of gift giving is a patient showing gratitude by gifting a doctor cola and yams for the support they got while at the hospital, this is gift giving because it is voluntary. However, modernization, industrialization, and the recession in the Nigerian economy, leading people to demand for gifts rather than waiting for them to be given voluntarily is bribery (Egbue, 2006).

Corruption in the Niger delta can sometimes be caused by poverty and inequality (Katuka et al., 2016). The region is rich in natural resources and the wealth accruing from these resources are huge but have not been distributed evenly. Only a small fraction of the population, mostly the political elite enjoy the wealth from crude oil and live in affluence. This deprivation is leading people into looking for quick money in the wrong places like swindling foreigners to survive. The problem is worsened by the poor salary from the civil service accounting for corrupt practices and poor performances as suggested by Okonjo-Iweala & Osafo-Kwaako (2007).

Also, greed is causing corruption in the Niger delta (Katuka et al., 2016). Greed amongst politicians and some young people in the region is accountable for the large sums of money embezzled, stored in foreign banks and the huge investments in foreign countries. Some of the young people are engaged in swindling money from unknown people using the internet. An act which is popularly referred to in Nigeria as 419, meaning advanced fee fraud. The term '419' according to Chawki, (2009) is coined from section 419 of the Nigerian criminal code (part of chapter 38: Obtaining Property by false pretences and cheating). The failure to enquire about the source of wealth, celebrating the rich and failing to shame corrupt people, is luring most people into 419.

The political environment in the Niger delta, which is favourable only to the rich, is encouraging the practice of corruption. It is impossible to be amongst the ruling party or be voted into power when you are poor. This is because, Nigeria operates a political system that requires the purchase of votes by the electorates. It requires the 'greasing of palm' which means the bribery of the electorate is an important aspect of the electoral process (Smith, 2010). It is a practice that makes it impossible for a free and fair election to be conducted. For those who are poor and wish to be elected, Albert (2006) suggests that their only option is to seek the help of a godfather. A godfather provides the funds for an election but expects in return a payback with interests, contracts, and political appointments for other members of his group (Albert, 2006; Smith, 2010). The godfather who is also referred to as the 'big boss' has on him the onus of protecting those that are loyal to him (Albert, 2006).

The huge revenue accruing from crude oil exploration activities has increased government spending and borrowing creating room for corrupt practices in the region. Crude oil has encouraged the government to mortgage the future of its citizen. Government has also gone into excessive borrowing thereby collapsing the other sectors of the economy such as agriculture which was at the core of exportation before crude oil (Watts, 2005). This is what is generally referred to as the Dutch disease - the under-utilization of other forms of trade and investment because of the abundance of a natural resource like crude oil (Olusi & Olagunju, 2005).

Finally, the legal system in the country is encouraging corruption by compromising on the way it is implementing the rule of law (Treisman, 2000, Pellegrini, 2011). The nonchalant attitude displayed by judges, police and public officers in enforcing the laws of the land are examples of corruption (Dike, 2005). The ineffective governmental and social enforcement is also a causal factor of corruption (Dike, 2005, Smith, 2010). Other causes of corruption are history, government, and geography as argued by Goel & Nelson (2010). Graf (2005) took a comprehensive approach based on data collected from a cross-section of countries which suggests that the causes of corruption are enormous. They include the government size and decentralization, government involvement in private market, institutional quality and the low level of competition. Corruption is a major problem in the Niger delta. It can be practiced through bribery, embezzlement of public funds, lateness to work, laziness at work, sexual gratification, forgery, lobbying for unmerited favour, robbery and kidnaping, cultism, falsification of records and academic malpractice.

### 3.4.1: Bribery:

Bribery is a breach of trust involving the offering of an incentive to induce actions that break the rules of an organisation (Samuel, Enyi & Ajao, 2013). It is a common way corruption is practiced in the Niger delta (Orole, Gadar & Hunter, 2015; Katuka et. al. 2016; Hope Sr, 2017; Gordon, 2017) and goes together with extortion. Bribery is passive and when accepted, it places personal benefits over public gains (Samuel, Enyi & Ajao, 2013). From a business standpoint, 'the possibility for bribery and extortion typically impinges on the regulatory gates, transactions with public officials; obtaining import/export permits and visas, paying for public utilities and taxes, loan applications, award of public contracts, influencing laws and regulations, and getting favourable judicial decisions' (Samuel, Enyi & Ajao, 2013 p.96).

Bribery is a common corrupt practice in the region based on reports from the media. Examples of how bribery is practiced in the Niger delta are: in the extortion by police officers from road users. It is a common practice in the region for a police officer to ask for a tip or bribe depending on the circumstance. When police officers' mounts roadblocks, they do so mainly to extort money from road users because they are usually sent to these sites by their bosses to raise extra funds (Smith, 2010). Initially, the incessant problem of collecting bribe in the police force was blamed on the poor salaries of the officers. The federal government of Nigeria responded to resolving this problem by increasing the salaries of police officers, but this type of extortion remains a major problem in Nigeria. The problem of bribery in the Nigerian police force transcends poor salaries, it has become a way of life for these officers. Other examples of bribery are money for marks from students to lecturers - commonly referred to as 'sorting' and bribery from contractors to government officials or those heading private organisations, the end results are poorly executed contracts.

The crude oil industry has also been impacted by bribery. One example is the scandal involving the MNOC Halliburton in 1994. It is a \$180 million Halliburton bribery scandal involving former heads of state and top government officials in Nigeria. It was facilitated by Jeffrey Tesler, owner of Tesler, Kellogg Brown & Root (KBR), a former subsidiary of Halliburton and Albert J. Stanley. The bribe was for a contract on the Nigerian Liquefied Natural Gas (NLNG) projects in the United States of America by the company. None of the accused persons have been prosecuted in Nigeria but Jeffrey Tesler was convicted for bribery in America (Iriekpen, 2015). Bribery remains a major problem in Nigeria and a survey conducted as part of a technical

assistance project on corruption funded by the European Union (Support to Anti-Corruption in Nigeria) and implemented by the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), in partnership with the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) states that about 400 billion Naira (£867,280.00) is spent on bribes annually in Nigeria. This survey was conducted in April/May 2016, a year before the release date in 2017, in all the 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). This analysis suggests that bribe-payers in Nigeria spent one-eighth of their salaries on bribes within the said period.

### 3.4.2: Embezzlement of Public Funds:

The embezzlement of public funds set aside for the development and improvement of the lives of citizens is a common occurrence especially amongst the political elites. President Mohammadu Buhari has discovered a lot of funds hidden in markets, villages, banks etc. that were embezzled (Daniel, 2017). The number of discovered hidden monies has increased since the introduction of the whistle-blowing policy. The monies embezzled are usually stored as dollars, pounds and a few Nigerian Naira notes because of the instability of the Nigerian Naira against the Dollar and the British Pound. Details on the whistleblowing policy adopted to curb corruption in Nigeria will be discussed later in this chapter.

One example is the discovery of a large sum of money in a plaza at the Balogun market in Lagos by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) on the 10th of April 2017 (Daniel, 2017). According to the Vanguard report of that day, the money is allegedly owned by a northern leader. However, it has not been claimed by anybody and has since been delivered to the federal government. Following this report by the anti-graft/anti-corruption agencies, the monies discovered were in Euro, Pounds and Naira and they were as follows €547,730 (£492,579.07), £21,090 and N5,648,500 (£12,283.51) (Daniel, 2017). This is an embezzled fund because the owner has refused to publicly lay claim on the monies.

### 3.4.3: Lateness/Laziness to Work and Sexual Gratification:

Lateness to work is another way corruption manifests itself in the Niger delta. Many people present themselves to work late especially at the civil service. When civil servants come to work, they are made to sign a register on which it is expected that they write their time of arrival to work. But, the regular practice with regards to signing the register is that they come late to work and fill out a different time usually earlier than when they arrived. This is a practice that

is growing at an alarming rate is responsible for the loss of productivity resulting in poor economic output in the region (Eneh,2006).

The term civil servants refer to people employed by the government on a full-time basis to run the administrative affairs of the state and are different from the armed forces and politicians who may be appointed as heads of various departments (Ugochukwu, Ogbeide & Chukwuma, 2017). The authors further suggest that the civil service in a state has enormous powers in the day to day running of that state. However, the civil service is harbouring a lot of lazy staff which has affected their productivity (Anazodo, Okoye & Chukwuemeka, 2012; Ugochukwu, Ogbeide & Chukwuma, 2017). The major indicator of a lazy and corrupt civil service is a situation whereby files are not attended to till bribes are paid. The absence of senior officers or supervisors further encourage laziness and inefficiency. In most cases, the staff claim that there are no jobs to be done but unattended files pile-up on office tables waiting for bribes as stimulants to attending to them (Anazodo, Okoye & Chukwuemeka, 2012).

In the Niger delta sexual gratification is seen mostly in offices and schools (Ladebo, 2003). It is a practice that has gone unpunished until recently when a University lecturer of Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU) Professor Richard Iyiola Akindele was convicted on the 17th of December 2018 for 24 months. The jail terms are to run concurrently. He is currently being referred to as the ‘sex for mark’ lecturer because he demanded for sex from a student named Monica Osagie and was charged by the ICPC (Olarinoye, 2018).

#### 3.4.4: Forgery:

Forgery as an act of corruption is a major offence in Nigeria (Adekoya, Razak & Azam, 2017) and Section 465 of the Criminal Code of the Nigerian Law of 1999 defines forgery in the following way:

‘as a person who makes a false document or writing knowing it to be false, and with intent that it may in any way be used or acted upon as genuine, whether in the state or otherwise, to the prejudice of any person, or with intent that any person may, in the belief that it is genuine, be induced to do or refrain from doing any act, whether in the state or elsewhere, is said to forge the document in writing.

The recommended punishment for forgery as stated in section 467 of the criminal code law is imprisonment of 3 years.

Notwithstanding the penalty stated above, forgery remains a major way of spreading corruption in the region. Important documents like school certificates, birth certificates, contract papers etc. are forged regularly in the region and in most cases, the offenders are never prosecuted for it. Despite being a punishable offence in the country, it could be taken lightly. This is because of the high level of bribery in the judiciary (Das, 2018). However, the case of an ex-minister of finance was different. Recently, the ex-minister of finance in Nigeria was accused of forging her National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) exemption letter. In her response while submitting her resignation, she claimed not to have known that the document was forged (Baba, 2018). She has not been tried but was forced to resign and has since left Nigeria for her place of birth, the United Kingdom.

#### 3.4.5: Lobbying for unmerited favour:

The process of lobbying for unmerited status or favour, getting what they do not deserve is another way corruption is practiced in the Niger delta. In lobbying, a person gets an offer or a position because of their relationship with the person in charge or have sometimes offered bribe or have given something in return to get what they want. Lobbying for unmerited status or favour can be seen in politics, schools and workplaces (Adebayo, 2016). It is the reason behind a common slogan in the region that states that you ‘use what you have, to get what you want’. This corrupt practice is responsible for people that are appointed to political offices even when they deserve or have merited such positions (Smith, 2010; Ogundiya, 2009).

#### 3.4.6: Robbery and Kidnapping:

Robbery and kidnapping may be social problems/crimes, but they could also be away of grooming corruption. Robbery and kidnapping are a menace to the Niger delta because there is a rise in these social crimes. Dumbili & Sofadekan (2016), are suggesting that robbery and kidnapping are crimes that should be linked to corruption. Especially in the Niger delta because there is a relationship between kidnapping and crude oil exploitation in the region, details of which will be discussed in chapter four. The high rate of unemployment and poverty in the country is usually the first thing youths blame when they are caught in acts of robbery or kidnapping (Kunnuji, 2016; Crocker, 2016).

The menace of kidnapping is gradually spreading to other parts of the country. Lately, a notorious kidnapper was arrested in Lagos state, Chukwudi Dumeme Onuamadike also known

as Evans. He was a billionaire kidnap kingpin and has admitted having lost count on the number of people he had kidnapped. The ransom collected from his victims were usually large sums of money mainly paid in dollars (Sunday, 2017). It was discovered that he had a network of kidnappers in the different states of the country mostly in the Niger delta and targeted at wealthy people. His style of kidnapping is considered an act of corruption because he was working with some police officers as a part of his network.

#### 3.4.7: Cultism:

Cultism in Nigeria is a social problem that was first introduced in universities and other institutions of higher learning but is gradually becoming a threat to the Nigerian state (Oyemwinmina Aibieyi, 2015). Recently, cultism has been practiced on the streets, in primary and secondary schools. Cultism can be defined as ‘a ritual practice by a group of people whose membership, admission, policy, and initiation formalities as well as their mode of operations are done in secret and kept secret with their activities having negative effects on both members and non-members alike’ (Oyemwinmina Aibieyi, 2015 p. 223 see also Ajayi et. al, 2010). Cultism is analysed as corruption because most of the cultists in the region are used as political thugs during elections. Cultism is also encouraging corruption in employment, cult members who are heads of organisations are more likely to offer employment opportunities to members of their cult group as opposed to non-members (Nnam, 2014). Cultism has also become a quick way of making money resulting in the initiation of impatient youths into various cult groups.

#### 3.4.8: Falsification of Records and Academic Malpractice:

The falsification of records includes the altering of human data records such as date of birth to suit the purpose it will be used for. A major example in the Nigerian state is the drive to participate in the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC). It is one exercise that youths in the region are eager to part take in after they would have graduated from the university. However, the rule of the NYSC is that, if you graduate from the university after 30 years of age, you should ask for an exemption. A lot of the people involved in the scheme lie about their age just to attend. A fake declaration of age is usually used to replace the original birth certificate. This can also be blamed on the lack of a proper database in the region and where people can collect data. A deficiency that is continuously encouraging the falsification of records in the nation. It

is also difficult to understand the reason for this failure in record keeping because the state can afford a database and have a lot of qualified Information Technology (IT) personnel.

Examples of academic malpractices are admission racketeering, assigning, or grading of scripts to non-academics, absenteeism from seminars and meetings and examination Malpractice are common practices in the academic system in the Region. Examination malpractice is the most prominent corrupt practice amongst those listed here. It begins as early as in primary schools and sometimes parents are involved in helping their wards pass an examination by paying for such examinations (Anzene, 2014).

Another example is in the excessive pricing of contracts in the region and the falsification of records to represent this increment (Wells, 2013; Otusanya et.al, 2015). The instances where contracts are overpriced are enormous but this example by Dike in 2005 stated that the cost of building the National stadium in Abuja was less than what it should be. He points out that the building of the National Stadium has guzzled more than necessary in terms of funds to complete the project. Nevertheless, projects ‘guzzling’ excessive funds or being overpriced is one of the ways Nigerian contractors especially those linked to top politicians practice corruption and amass wealth.

### 3.5: Historical Timelines on Legislation and the impact at Eradicating Corruption in Nigeria:

Corruption is a common practice and arguably a way of life in Africa (Gould & Amaro-Reyes, 1983). It is one of Africa’s most obstinate problems affecting countries in many ways and resulting in poor infrastructural development, poverty, and a weak economic growth (Ittner, 2009; Mbaku, 2016; Warf & Warf, 2017). The impact of corruption on the continent is huge and is a major part of the political structure. Africa loses about 148 billion US dollars each year to corruption and 2 trillion US dollars to money laundering (Ewi, 2018). TI maintains that about 1.2 billion Africans on the continent are living under corrupt governments which is higher than most parts of the world. According to the report from TI, Botswana is the only country in Africa that is slightly corrupt while Nigeria is amongst the six most corrupt African countries (Warf & Warf, 2017).

The corruption in Nigeria is problematic and is negatively impacting the economic, social, and political fabrics of the country (Dike, 2003; Fagbadebo, 2007; Opara, 2007; Obuah, 2010;

Egwemi, 2012; Udensi, Aliyu & Bariate, 2016; John, 2017; Oyeyinka, 2017). According to Dike (2005), corruption has spread like cancer all over Nigeria and is making it impossible to do business or be awarded contracts without having to pay bribes or mobilization fees (as it is usually called in Nigeria) to the head of the organisation or government officials depending on the awardee. The scope of corruption in Nigeria is described by Joseph & Mauton (2011) as:

‘touching material possession, integrity, moral values and the society or the economy on the aggregate, thus, encompasses both institutional and personal decadence. In its disaggregated form, elements of corruption include forgery, bribery, embezzlement, lateness to work, laziness at work, sexual gratification, lobbying for unmerited status/favour, robbery, cultism, falsifying records, admission racketeering, assigning, or grading of scripts to non-academics, absenteeism from seminars and meetings and examination malpractice amongst others’ (p.115).

According to a report by PWC (Price Water Cooper) in 2016, the failure to effectively deal with corruption in the nation could cost up to 37% of GDP by 2030. This cost is equated to around \$1,000 per person in 2014 and nearly \$2,000 per person by 2030. Nevertheless, Gould & Amaro Reyes (1983) argue that corruption can also have positive effects on developing countries. The authors suggest that corruption could contribute to national integration, help maintain political development, stability and encourage administrative flexibility by breaking bureaucratic strongholds.

The above claim is developed on the ground that when economies are plagued by stiff laws or bureaucratic setbacks, bribery could be the best way to get things done quickly which could have positive impacts on the economic development of the nation (Svensson, 2005). If a system in the country is built on the foundation of bribery for example in contract allocation, corruption could be the driver for effective companies winning the bid. It is only an efficient organisation that is able to pay the bribe that will win the bid thereby resulting in the development of well-run organisations (Svensson, 2005). This view on bribery and efficiency fails to critically analyse instances like those in the Nigeria where bribery could result in sub-standard project delivery which will be discussed in chapter four. This notion on corruption being beneficial in developing countries could only be favourable to large organisations and detrimental to small organisations (Tanzi, 1998). And, these small organisations remain the main source of development in these countries.

Corruption is a prevalent problem in the Niger delta despite the above suggestions that it could be beneficial by cutting bureaucratic bottlenecks and saving time, the adverse effect of corruption on the region outweighs this claim of benefit. In the region, corruption is responsible for under-development, slow economic growth, poverty and is an impediment to sustainable development (Obayelu, 2007; Ayobami, 2011). The other problems that could arise from the corrupt practices are the loss of tax revenue, misallocation of talent and the diversion of developmental resources for private gain (Ayobami, 2011). It is the magnitude of these problems that has provoked the government into taking steps at eradicating corruption in the country.

These attempts have not provided a lasting solution to the problem because the government is evidently corrupt too. Notwithstanding, it is important to highlight the efforts and the changes that they have made in the fight against corruption in the nation. There are various standpoints on why the anti-corruption agendas of the government in Nigeria has failed. For example, Aderonmu (2001) proposes Nigeria has failed in the fight against corruption because the country was colonised. The author insists that a colonised state cannot fight corruption meaningfully because corruption, violence and lawlessness are the hallmarks of colonialism. This argument is founded on the ground that the people in these countries do not have faith in the government because of the looting of state wealth, poor infrastructural development, political instability, and the bad governance (Fagbadebo, 2007).

The attempts at eradicating corruption began in America in 1977 and some other countries joining in this fight by 1990 (Opara, 2007). Many African countries have since this period taken to the fight at eradicating corruption with no concrete results. Nigeria is one of those countries and the military governments in the country have claimed that the military take-overs and coups resulting in military heads of states were aimed at eradicating the corruption practiced by civilian governments in the state (Ikoku, 1985). The first civilian government headed by Nnamdi Azikiwe was accused of corruption (Nwaodu, Adam & Okereke, 2014). These corrupt practices continued with other civilian governments before military takeover. According to Opara (2007), the abuse of public offices by the civilian government resulted in the coup or takeover by the military.

Every Nigerian military head of state and civilian president since after the independence have struggled with tackling the menace of corruption. Notwithstanding these attempts, the various governments in the country have being strongly accused of corrupt practices themselves. The fight against corruption in the military administrations was tackled using the promulgation of decrees. While in the democratic era, civilian presidents adopted the acts of parliament and the

establishment of institutions empowered by law as ways of fighting corruption in the state (Opara, 2007; Dandago, 2008).

Military governments utilised the Decree of 1976 which is aimed at investigating the assets of public officers. It was Decree no. 5 of 1976 which was supplemented by the code of conduct Bureau and Code of conduct tribunals in the 1979 constitution. However, it got its mandate after 10 years when the enabling law was passed in 1989 under the Babangida led administration and has remained up until date. The pioneer anti-corruption agency in Nigeria is the Code of Conduct Bureau (CCB) which has a sole responsibility of monitoring corrupt practices in the Nigerian Public service. It gives the police powers to make arrests leading to prosecution where necessary. The Code of conduct tribunal has been imbedded in all the 5 constitutions in the country which are the independent and they are the constitutions of 1960-1963, 1979, 1989, 1993, 1995 and the current 1999 constitution (Sagay, 2001). Below is an analysis of the different government administrations and how they have tackled corruption.

The Shehu Shagari's administration initiated the Ethical Revolution by appointing a minister in charge of national guidance from 1979-1983 to provide a moral leadership in the fight corruption (Agbu, 2003; Nwaodu, Adam &, 2014). But this measure was ineffective in the fight against corruption (Nwaodu, Adam & Okereke, 2014). After Shagari's administration, when General Mohammadu Buhari was a military head of state and General Babatunde Abdulbaki Idiagbon as the chief of staff, they came up with the catch phrases of 'War Against Indiscipline' (WAI) trusting that the indiscipline in the civil service was a major to corruption (Agbaje & Adisa, 1988; Ajayi, 1990). The WAI was a corrective measure to social instability and the widespread corruption in the country. The WAI failed because it was unable to curb corruption and corruption was on the rise. They also led the anti-corruption crusade focusing on the recovery of public properties from public servants and imprisonment. The military government was criticised because of the method used in implementing the WAI resulting in its failure (Nwaodu, Adam & Okereke, 2014).

From 1985-1993, the military head of state was General Ibrahim Badamisi Babangida who tagged his fight against corruption as the Economic Crime Decree (Draft) of 1990. The Babangida led military administration was against the WAI saying it trampled on the human rights of the people (Nwaodu, Adam & Okereke, 2014). However, as discipline reduced, corruption increased in the nation. On leaving office, Babangida appointed an interim government which was supposed to hand over to a civilian government. This government was headed by Ernest Shonekon also tried

fighting corruption in the nation. He wrote a proposal to the national assembly on the ways to fight corruption in the country, but it was never passed to law (Nwaodu, Adam & Okereke, 2014).

This is because, shortly after the appointment of the interim government, they were overthrown by General Sani Abacha. In the period from 1994 to 1999, the military government was headed by General Sani Abacha and is tagged the most corrupt in Nigeria because of the loots hidden in foreign accounts. Notwithstanding, General Sani Abacha's regime fought corruption with the 'Indiscipline corrupt practices and the Economic Crime (prohibition) Decree' of 1994, which was an imitation of the General Babangida led administration (Oko, 2001; Agbu, 2003). Abacha's regime also failed in the fighting corruption. Generally, these decrees by the military heads of state were unable to make significant improvements in resolving corruption in the country (Nwaodu, Adam & Okereke, 2014). The fight against corruption was difficult to get off the ground because there was significant political instability and repeated overthrows of governments. Much of these efforts and laws did not have enough time to develop into fully thought out policies because the governments that proposed them were so short-lived.

After these military regimes, Nigeria moved to the democratic era. According to Obi (2003), the civilian administration of 1999 was headed by a one-time head of state who later became a civilian President, General Olusegun Obasanjo. He started his fight against corruption by sending an anti-corruption Bill to the National Assembly entitled 'A bill for law to prohibit and punish bribery and corruption of or by public officers and other persons' on the 7<sup>th</sup> of July 1999 for indorsement (Nwaodu, Adam & Okereke, 2014). This administration also fought corruption by creating the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) which are still a major part of the fight against corruption in Nigeria (Obuah, 2010). The EFCC according to their establishment act is supposed to 'combat financial and economic crimes. The Commission is empowered to prevent, investigate, prosecute and penalise economic and financial crimes and is charged with the responsibility of enforcing the provisions of other laws and regulations relating to economic and financial crimes.

On formation, the EFCC was largely aimed at prosecuting money laundering charges whilst the ICPC handles corrupt practices outside the authority of money laundering by the EFCC. The ICPC was established on the Corrupt Practices and other Related Offences Act of 2000 of the federal republic of Nigeria and it is intended to achieve a Nigeria free from all forms of corruption and corrupt practices and a mission statement that reads 'to rid Nigeria of corruption through lawful enforcement and preventive measures. It was during the administration of

President Olusegun Obasanjo that the EFCC succeeded in prosecuting several Nigerians including the ex- governors of Bayelsa and Delta states Dieprieve Alamiesiegha and James Ibori respectively on money laundering charges in conjunction with the British government.

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The anti-corruption war in Nigeria are fought in some other ways using the Code of conduct tribunal, Central authority unit, Financial intelligence units and parts of the 1999 constitution (Dandago, 2008). Under the Constitution of Nigeria, the Code of Conduct Tribunal is established as a special tribunal for the entire Federation dedicated to combating corruption at all the levels, arms and agencies of government in Nigeria. The Code of Conduct Tribunal is a tribunal of co-ordinate jurisdiction at the High Court of each State and the Federal High Court of the Federation. Its jurisdiction is founded on the Constitution of Nigeria and specifically prescribed by an act of the National Assembly of Nigeria.

The code of conduct tribunal is also charged with the responsibility of asset declaration and works together with the code of conduct bureau. The major provisions of the Nigerian constitution on fighting corruption are those on the declaration of Assets and Liabilities in Sections 140 (1) and 185(1), this is intended to order public officers to declare their assets before occupying a public office (Dandago, 2008). Part 1, section 6 (i) of the constitution is titled Gifts and Benefits, where a public officer is not allowed to ask for gifts while carrying out official duties. There is also a section that is directed at offering and accepting bribes as Public Officers and the Abuse of such offices: Sections 8, 9 and 10 of the 5th Schedule (part 1) states that public officers are not allowed to accept bribes while discharging their duties (Dandago, 2008; Aiyede, 2008).

Other parts of the Nigerian constitution that is responsible for eradicating corruption are: Power and Control over Public Funds: Sections 80(1) and 120(1), stating that public funds should be used legitimately and that public accounts should be audited: Section 85(1) and section 125(1)

asking that auditors are appointed to audit state accounts (Dandago, 2008). Preparation of Financial Statements: Section 85(5) and Section 125(5), this section requires that an annual financial report should be submitted to appointed auditors, aimed at reducing fraud and embezzlement (Dandago, 2008). There is also a part of the constitution referred to as Checks and Balances which spells out the duties of the three arms of government, the judiciary, the legislature, and the executive arms of government. The punishment for corruption is allowed on the constitution and the part responsible for this is the Punishment on Corrupt Practices: Section 18(1), part I, Schedule 5 (Dandago, 2008).

After the death of President Umaru Musa Yar'adua, President Goodluck Jonathan took his turn at eradicating corruption using the already existing EFCC and ICPC. But the administration of President Goodluck Jonathan has been declared corrupt because many of the politicians that were a part of that administration are currently being investigated including the wife of the ex-president Dame Patience Jonathan. The politicians in his cabinet that are being investigated by the EFCC include the former petroleum minister Diezani Alison-Madueke, a former minister of Niger Delta Affairs, Godsdan Orubebe and Mrs. Stella Oduah, a former minister of Aviation and currently the Senator representing Anambra North.

The APC (All Progressive Congress) capitalised on the problems of corruption in the Goodluck Ebele Jonathan administration and declared as a major part of their campaign, the fight against corruption. It was a major part of the campaign promises of President Muhammadu Buhari leading to his election as a civilian president under the umbrella of the APC. Since the inauguration of President Buhari on the 27th of May 2015, some politicians have been arrested on the charges of corrupt practices. Some of those arrested had served under the previous administration of President Goodluck Jonathan. These arrests have been faulted because there are assumptions that it is only those that are members of the opposition party that are being arrested. This act of arresting members of the opposition party is responsible for the defections from other political parties to the ruling APC. If these insinuations are anything to go by, then the administration has failed in its fight against corruption.

The Buhari led administration also introduced a new way of fighting corruption by inaugurating the 'whistle-blower' policy which was initiated by the federal ministry of finance. It is a policy that is aimed at eradicating the corrupt practice of money laundering carried out by politicians in the country. A whistle-blower according to the ministry of finance is someone who discloses a misconduct in the interest of the public that has occurred, about to or will occur to the federal

government through the ministry of finance voluntarily. It was approved by the national assembly in December of 2016. The policy was created for those who have useful information on money embezzled from national funds.

The incentive for whistleblowing is that if successful and accurate, the whistle-blower will be paid 2.5 - 5.0% of whatever money he or she provides hints on where it can be found. However, if the whistle-blower is found to be a collaborator, the policy will not provide impunity, the whistle-blower can in that instance be prosecuted. Monies hidden in marketplaces, homes and villages have been discovered through the whistle-blower policy. The fight against corruption is an ongoing battle as none of these anti-corruption agencies have successfully fought corruption in the country. In every corruption case or prosecution, there is always a group acting as the victim and claiming that they are being victimised because of their party, tribal or religious affiliation. If these types of protests continue, the fight against corruption will never be successful in Nigeria.

## Conclusion:

According to the data provided by the TI, Nigeria is one of the most corrupt countries in the world in the past two decades. There are several factors impacting the rise in corrupt practices in the country, but the historical and structural effect of colonialism appears to be stronger as discussed in chapter six. The corruption in Nigeria is a major problem for governance causing governments at different levels to have taken steps at fighting corruption. However, as discussed in this chapter, these efforts are yet to achieve the desired results. The urgent need to reduce corruption in the region is the main reason for which the Buhari led administration was elected into office in 2015.

The fight against corruption is the major agenda of the Buhari led administration. And, General Buhari's administration is supposedly still fighting corruption even when there are accusations that those indicted of corrupt practices are mainly from the opposition party PDP. This allegation is responsible for the defection of politicians to the ruling APC. The platforms used to fight corruption in the country are the EFCC, ICPC and the provisions in the 1999 Nigerian constitution. The ICPC and EFCC are supposed to be independent of the government, but they have been linked severally to the presidency making the fight against corruption partial.

Examples of corrupt practices in the nation are bribery, paying for academic excellence in universities, using low quality and cheap materials on projects, embezzlement of public funds by politicians and public office administrators.

## Chapter Four: The Problems Arising from Crude Oil Exploitation in the Niger Delta:

### 4.1: Introduction:

Before the crude oil boom of the 1960s and early 1970s, Nigeria was dependent on agriculture (Walker, 2000). The Niger delta people were traditionally farmers, fishermen and traders (Aaron, 2005; Idemudia, 2009; Opukri & Ibaba, 2008; Pegg & Zabbey, 2013; Duruji & Azuh, 2015; Ikein, 2016). In this era, the foreign exchange earnings were from agricultural produce like cocoa, palm fruit, cotton, wheat, and groundnut. There were two types of farming practices in the region, the subsistence and the industrial. The agricultural practice that is subsistent involves the cultivation of produce consumed locally. While, the cultivation of cash crops for exports is referred to as industrial agricultural. In this era, the Niger delta people were not the biggest farmers in the country.

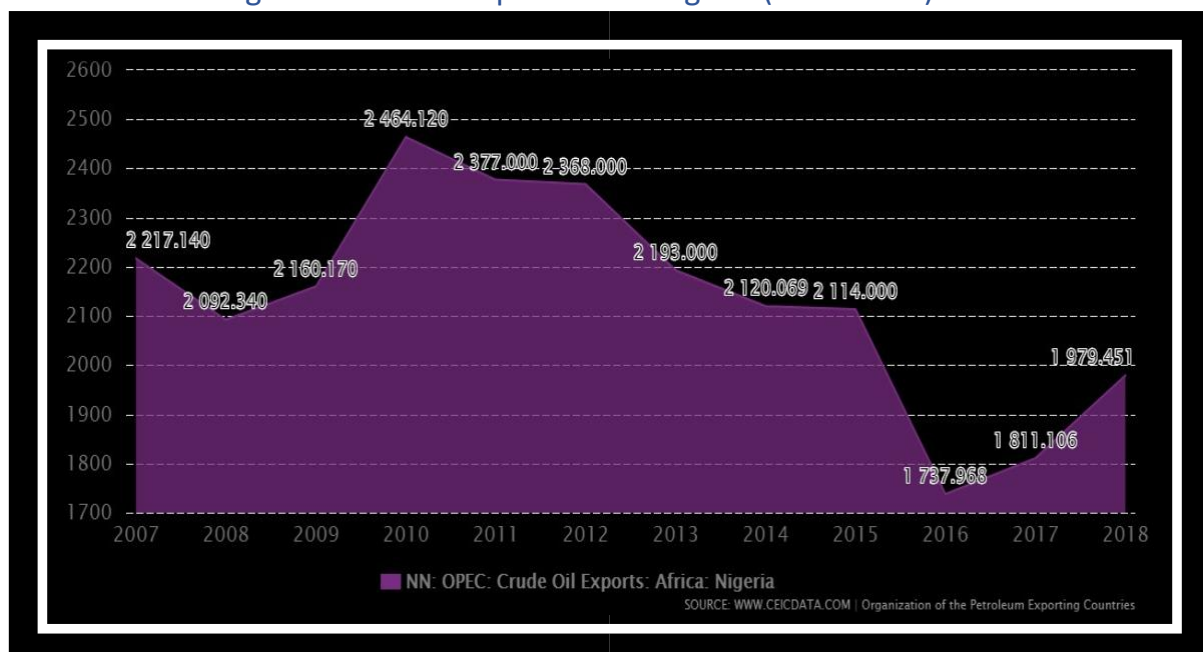
A globally increasing demand for crude oil caused by the oil crises in the 1970s gave rise to a corresponding modification in export preferences from cash crops to crude oil in Nigeria. This shift was driven by the diversity of uses for crude oil and the huge proceeds accruing from its export (Onoh, 2017). Excess revenue from the discovery of a natural resource like crude oil, coal, copper, or natural gas in a developing nation should be beneficial to the economic development of the nation. It should also encourage investment in infrastructural development, social well-being, create employment opportunities, and help in eradicating poverty. However, apart from these benefits, scholars have demonstrated that the existence of a natural resource in a state could also be a source of poverty, under-development, and suffering (Ite & Ibok, 2013; Ikein, 2017; Okechukwu & Ukeje, 2016). It is on this background that the study describes the snags around crude oil exploitation in the Niger delta. The chapter discusses the reasons for which I embarked on this study and the problems/consequences of crude oil exploitation in the Niger delta.

### 4.2: Lectures Driving the Study:

There were debates on the increasing demand for cleaner energy sources while studying for my MSc in Facility and Environment Management (FEM) at the University College London (UCL) in 2011/2012. These debates and lectures spurred me into thinking anew about the

environmental issues in the Niger delta, where I grew up. The lectures on reducing carbon footprints in buildings demonstrated the role organisations can play in reducing national and global carbon emissions. These conversations were in contrast with the situation I have witnessed in the Niger delta where environmental degradation is as a result of the carelessness of MNOCs in keeping environmental standards in Nigeria. It is a combination of these lessons and my experiences in the Niger delta that incited me into thinking deeply on the region. This is because, the world is gradually advancing from crude oil to low carbon fuels (Chu, Cui & Liu, 2017). But what is most important is that crude oil export from Nigeria has reduced drastically since 2014 (Ikein, 2017).

Fig. 4.1 Crude oil Exports from Nigeria (2007-2018)



Source: <https://www.ceicdata.com/en/indicator/nigeria/crude-oil-exports>

The reduction in crude oil export from Nigeria is adversely affecting the Nigerian oil industry (Ershov, 2017) as displayed on Fig. 4.1. The present state of the environment in the Niger delta and the change in the global oil industry with respect to Nigerian oil suggests that, there is an urgency in the need to proffer solution to these problems. The federal government of Nigeria and MNOCs should carry out clean-up exercises in the region while they are still making money from crude oil and before the MNOCs leave. Experts say it could take about two decades for the environment to be free from crude oil residues after a clean-up exercise (Zabbey, Sam, & Onyebuchi, 2017; Okonkwo & Etemire, 2017). Therefore, the clean-up of the region should

begin now. Other ways to effect changes with respect to the above problems in the oil industry is the diversification of the Nigerian economy. This is a regular topic of debate in Nigeria but, the time has come for government to take practical steps in encouraging economic diversification and discouraging the dependence on crude oil.

#### 4.3: The Niger Delta and Crude Oil:

A description of the Niger delta should take account of the state and regional boundaries in Nigeria. The country is divided into thirty-six states and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Abuja. Each state in Nigeria is further divided into Local Government Areas (LGAs). The number of LGAs that make up a state varies from state to state. An LGA is a collection of different communities. These communities share terrestrial boundaries, and, in some cases, have the likelihood of sharing a common language, tradition and culture. There is a total of 774 LGAs in Nigeria (Jimenez & Pate, 2017).

Nigeria is also divided into six geo-political zones as shown on Fig. 4.2. A zoning system in country was introduced during the military regime of General Ibrahim Badamisi Babangida, the military head of state in Nigeria from August 1985 to August 1993 (Okundamiya & Nzeako, 2010). The aim of the zoning system was to ease the problems experienced by the federal government in distributing the economic, political, and educational resources of the nation amongst the people from the various ethnic groups.

Fig. 4.2: A Map of the Geo-political Zones in Nigeria



Source: Nigerian Muse(2010)

The Niger delta is the crude oil hub of Nigeria. It is blessed with a vast tropical rainforest, the largest in West Africa and one of the largest in the world (Doust & Omatsola, 1989; Corredor & Bilotti, 2005). The region comprises nine of the thirty-six states, spread across three of the six geo-political zones, and is situated in the Gulf of Guinea in central West Africa (Corredor, Shaw & Bilotti, 2005). The Niger delta is made up of Rivers, Bayelsa, Delta, Akwa-Ibom, Imo, Abia, Edo, Cross-Rivers, and Ondo states. They are spread across the south-south, south-east, and the south-western geo-political zones (Babalola, 2014; Guanah, et.al, 2017).

Crude oil exploitation activities in the Niger delta commenced as far back as 1908. The first extraction license was granted to the Nigerian Bitumen Corporation, a German oil company. It began crude oil exploitation in 1908 with a license issued by the British colonial government (Omoregbe, 2001; Aigboduwa & Oisamoje, 2013). However, the discovery of crude oil in commercial quantities happened after about fifty years. The first large deposits of crude oil were discovered at Oloibiri in 1958 (now in present day Bayelsa state) by the MNOC called Shell D'Arcy (Omoregbe, 2001; Watts, 2004; Kaur, 2012; Aigboduwa & Oisamoje, 2013; Ebegbulem, Ekpe & Adejumo, 2013).

The crude oil from the Niger delta has remained a significant part of the foreign exchange earnings for the country since the 1970s (Corredor, Shaw & Bilotti, 2005). According to Ikein (2017), it contributed as much as 99.6% of the foreign exchange earnings in Nigeria in the year 2000. Crude oil became a major export commodity for Nigeria during the global oil crisis in the 1970s. This was because of war in some Middle Eastern countries and peak oil problems in the USA placing a high demand on the Bonny light crude oil from the Niger delta (Campbell & Laherrère, 1998, Painter, 2014). These problems presented an opportunity the Nigerian government seized, for which it has become the highest crude oil producing country in sub-Saharan Africa.

Based on the above, the dominance of the crude oil industry resulted in the neglect of the other sectors of the economy like agriculture, which before the 1970s was the bedrock of foreign exchange earnings for Nigeria (Kilian, 2009; Omeje, 2005; Odularu, 2008; Osarumwense, 2015; Aregbeyen & Kolawole, 2015; Ubani et.al, 2016). Notwithstanding the contributions of crude oil to the Nigerian economy, it has been inadequately managed and unregulated with dire consequences. The major problems from crude oil exploitation in the region are environmental degradation and under-development. Although, under-development is not a direct repercussion from crude oil exploitation in the region, it is often associated with it. This is because, the under-development of the Niger delta remains a major problem for the government despite the huge revenue accruing from crude oil exploitation from the region. Other problems associated with crude oil exploitation include resource control and the poor relationship between MNOCs and crude oil host communities.

#### 4.4: Environmental Degradation:

There are other causes of environmental degradation in the Niger delta such as gaseous emissions from cars, effluent waste, generating sets, the poor disposal of plastic bottles, water sachets and shopping bags. But, the leading cause of the degradation in the Niger delta is from decades of unregulated crude oil exploitation activities (Elum, Mopipi & Henri-Ukoha, 2016). It is the reason Duffield (2010) posits that the Niger delta is the oil spill capital of the world (see also Obida et. al., 2017). The problem of environmental degradation in the region is mainly caused by MNOCs and according to the literature on corporate crimes argued by Tombs and Whyte (2015), it points out that powerful organisations like MNOCs often prioritise profit over all other concerns. In the Nigerian case, the federal government is also interested in the proceeds from crude oil because the country's economy is highly dependent on it. This dependence and the alliance formed with MNOCs, makes it difficult for the federal government to punish these corporations. According to the committee on the medical effects of air pollution, about 200,000 deaths in 2008 globally can be linked to air pollution. Crude oil-related environmental degradation in the region are in the form of gas flaring, crude oil spills, crude oil refinery wastewater and local refining (Ite, et.al 2013; Akinbami & Abiona, 2014; Adekola, et.al, 2016; Idemudia & Osayande, 2016).

The degradation of the environment from gas flaring occurs when gas and other impurities are separated from petroleum during crude oil exploitation (Ikpeze & Ikpeze, 2015). It increases atmospheric temperatures resulting in the loss of livelihood from agricultural and fishing produce thereby causing poverty. In communities where the fire from flared gases are used in drying foods, it can cause cancers. Gas flaring is also the leading cause of acid rain which destroys the aesthetics of buildings resulting in the frequent need for re-decoration in the region compared to the other parts of Nigeria (Pegg, & Zabbey, 2013; Wilcox & Essien, 2013; Bello & Olukolajo Acey, 2016; Igu & Marchant, 2017). Gas flaring activities are mainly caused by the MNOCs, but the increasing number of local refining activities in recent years is contributing to this already prevalent problem. Consequently, indigenous people involved in local refining are now contributing to the problems of gas flaring in the region (Wilson, 2014).

The federal government has made several attempts at ending gas flaring in the Niger delta and utilizing flared gases. However, they have not been able to achieve this plan on the different set dates. Presently, there is a new date to end gas flaring in Nigeria set at 2020 and experts say it is also not feasible. According to a report on the Nigerian guardian for the 6th of May 2018, the president of the Nigerian Association for Energy Economics (NAEE), Prof. Wumi Iledare argues that 2020 is unachievable because of the unavailability of the obligatory motivations in

the oil industry. For example, the time required to get legislative support to stop gas flaring takes more than two years. In view of this, the professor is suggesting that the earlier set date which is 2030 is more workable (Ebiri, 2018).

Accidental or planned crude oil spill is another form of environmental degradation in the Niger delta. Table 4.1 presents a study on the frequency of crude oil spills in the region. In the analysis of Chikaire et.al in 2015, they discussed the different ways in which crude oil spills occur in the region. MNOCs claim that sabotage is the main cause of oil spills in the region. They make this claim to exonerate themselves from paying for clean-up exercises. The case of Shell versus the Ogoni people is a typical example of MNOCS exonerating themselves from crude oil spills in the region and details will be discussed later in this chapter. Although sabotage is high on Table 4.1, it is the least cause of oil spills in the Niger delta from their research.

**Table 4.1: Showing the Frequency of Crude Oil Spills in the Niger Delta**

<b>Causes</b>	<b>Frequency (Monthly)</b>
Explosion of oil wells/terminal stations	108
Spills from vandalized oil pipelines	95
Leakages from oil tanks/faulty facility	95
Corrosion of oil pipelines	108
Spills from loading oil vessels	95
Maintenance activities of oil companies	92
Natural gas flaring	92
Sabotage	86

**Source: Chikaire et.al. (2015)**

The contamination of underground water from crude oil refinery wastewater is another form of environmental degradation in the region (Ite et al., 2018). The federal government is trying to tackle the effective disposal of wastewater in the Niger delta. This is because, it is safer to treat refinery wastewater before disposal. The disposal of untreated wastewater contaminates the sea and the underground water table which is the major source of drinking water in the region causing sicknesses and diseases. In the past, wastewater used to only come from government-owned refineries, but recently, local refineries are also disposing wastewater (Amangabara &

Njoku, 2012). The problem with the disposal from local refineries is that they contaminate water bodies because they are untreated.

It is difficult to control and regulate wastewater from local refining plants despite the adverse effect it has on the environment and on those physically involved in the process. This is because, local crude oil refining activities occur in the mangroves where security forces might not be able to reach. Also, in these mangroves, physical harm could occur because of the use of archaic and improvised machinery such as those used to brew alcohol locally (Gijo, Hart & Seiyaboh, 2017). The major problems that might arise during local refining is fire outbreak. There have been major incidences of fire outbreak which has claimed a lot of lives. Casualty figures from fire incidents at local refining sites are difficult to ascertain because of the unavailability of records for those on site.

Example of an environmental problem from local refining experienced in Port Harcourt, the capital of Rivers state is soot. Port Harcourt is currently one of the leading locations for local refining resulting in soot as presented on Pic. 4.1. The soot are black residual particles from the local refining process, seen on the floor of houses and on clothes/objects left outside (Yakubu, 2018). According to a Vanguard report, ("FG explains causes of soot in Rivers" 2018), apart from the local refining process, the other activities causing soot in Port Harcourt is the destruction of illegal refining sites by the military and abattoirs who use rubber tyres to roast animals. Furthermore, the Director General of the National Oil Spill Detection and Response Agency (NOSDRA) discovered that the extraction of copper wires from burnt tyres was also responsible for soot.

Picture 4.1: Showing Soot in Port Harcourt



Source: (Femi, 2018)

These environmental problems in the Niger delta affect the land, sea, and air. They are an indication that, regardless of the benefits associated with the discovery of a natural resource, there are other times that it could cause problems (Kaur, 2012). It is also the leading cause of biodiversity loss, extinction of wildlife, soil infertility, air pollution, contamination of drinking water, and the loss of the ecosystem (Kadafa, 2012; Okechukwu & Ukeje, 2016; Babatunde, 2017).

The environmental degradation in the Niger delta is mainly caused by MNOCs as discussed earlier. These are corporate crimes because they are against the host community and the environment (Tombs & Whyte, 2003; Rothe & Kauzlarich, 2016). According to the literature on corporate crimes, these are crimes that result from deliberate acts of carelessness. But, the corruption in the state makes it difficult for it to hold MNOCs accountable for the problems they cause the region (Ruggiero, 2015). The crimes of the powerful includes white-collar crimes, corporate crimes, state crimes, hate crimes and family violence. In the crimes of the powerful, victimization is diffuse and distributed and many of these crimes are difficult to prove, they do not carry the same priorities as for example violent crime such that it is often difficult to find uncompromised witnesses.

The problems of environmental degradation in the Niger delta is a combination of corporate and state crimes. The environmental degradation caused by crude oil exploitation activities affect the people in the Niger delta through the: i) loss of farming and fishing as livelihoods, ii) mass unemployment iii) poverty iv) social problems and v) health problems (Aluko, 2004; Uyigue & Agho, 2007; Ite, 2007; Obi, 2014; Nwankwo, 2015; Gonzalez, 2016; Courson, 2016; Elum, Mopipi & Henri-Ukoha, 2016; Ugwu, 2016; Omeje, 2017; Adekola, et. al., 2017).

#### 4.4.1: Loss of Livelihood:

The loss of livelihood (fishing and farming) in the region is a function of environmental degradation. As earlier stated, the people in the region were predominantly farmers, fishermen and traders. The contamination of the land and sea resulted in the reduction of fishing and farming harvests and it is the leading cause of the high level of joblessness and poverty in the region (Ebegbulem, Ekpe & Adejumo, 2013; Akinbami & Abiano, 2014; Mohammed, Robinson & Aliyu, 2014 & Kaur, 2014). As will be discussed in chapter five, there are still some fishing and farming activities taking place in the Niger delta, but the quality of the harvests is poor compared to the yields from other parts of the country.

The loss of the livelihood resulting from environmental pollution from crude oil exploitation is a form of corporate crime (Tombs & Whyte, 2015). It is responsible for the mass transit to urban areas from communities in search of job opportunities (Mopipi, & Henri-Ukoha, 2016). Environmental degradation leading to the loss of livelihood deprives the people in the Niger delta of a natural resource that is exploited from their communities resulting in health problems as displayed on figure 1.1. The theory of relative deprivation suggests that people are likely to organise or form social movements if they are deprived from essentials (Davis, 1959). The loss of livelihoods is a deprivation of the essentials of life and it is one of the factors responsible for the uprising and militancy in the Niger delta (Aniche, 2019). The details on the deprivation in the Niger delta leading to the formation of CSOs will be discussed in chapter seven.

#### 4.4.2: Mass Unemployment:

Unemployment is a major problem in Nigeria and a bigger problem in the Niger delta because even the oil industry is unable to provide job opportunities for the inhabitants (Okafor, 2011). The data on the unemployment rates in Nigeria for December 2017 is provided by the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) as highlighted on Table 4.2. It shows that Rivers state has the highest

level of unemployment rate in the Niger delta while Ondo State has the lowest level of unemployment in the region pegged at 15.5%. The high level of joblessness is the leading cause in the formation of militant organisations in the region (Inyang, 2018). As people become jobless, they engage in militancy which would enable them to partake in crude oil theft which is a fast way of amassing wealth. The details on militant organisations will be discussed later in this chapter.

Table 4.2: Labour Force Statistics in the Niger Delta for 2017

State	Labour	UNEMPLOYMENT RATES %
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	<b>Force Population</b>	<b>Unemployment + Underemployment Rate %</b>	<b>Unemployment Rate %</b>	<b>Under Employment Rate %</b>
ONDO	2,390,328	34.5	15.5	19.0
DELTA	2,938,439	38.0	18.0	20.0
EDO	1,981,975	40.0	20.0	20.0
CROSS RIVER	1,799,882	40.5	20.3	20.3
ABIA	1,977,464	45.3	28.3	17.0
IMO	2,926,462	46.5	29.5	17.0
BAYELSA	1,262,406	47.8	30.4	17.4
AKWA- IBOM	3,314,394	54.8	36.6	18.2
RIVERS	4,301,988	61.4	41.8	19.5
<b>NIGERIA</b>	<b>85,088,055</b>	<b>40.0</b>	<b>18.8</b>	<b>21.2</b>

Source: National Bureau of Statistics (2017)

According to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), in 2017 about 11.5 million Nigerians out of a labour force of about 85.1 million were jobless in the third quarter of 2017. Consequently, that about 13.5 percent of people between the ages of 15-64 in the third quarter of 2017 were unemployed. There is little information on the total number of unemployed people in the region. This is because, data collection has remained a problem in Nigeria, but there could be improvements soon with the efforts made by Dr. Ifeanyi Okowa, the governor of delta state. The governor is pioneering a job creation centre to register unemployed graduates with National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) dispatch letters. If there is a replication of this type of register, there will be records on the number of unemployed graduates in the region in years to come. The NYSC is a compulsory one-year of service to the nation by graduates that are under the age of 30. Members are usually assigned to different government and private organisations for job placements as their primary place of assignments (Obadare, 2016). Assignment to private organisations is only by request.

#### 4.4.3: Poverty:

The United Nations (UN) has stated that poverty is the lack of income and productive resources to ensure sustainable livelihoods. Its manifestations include hunger and malnutrition, limited access to education and other basic services. Others are social discrimination, and exclusion as well as the lack of participation in decision-making. According to the Nigerian NBS, there is not a single indicator that can accurately measure poverty. It is analysed on the availability of certain basic needs such as food, clothing, shelter, sanitation facilities, pipe-borne water, education, good health care and access to information (George et.al, 2017). Statistically, poverty is determined based on income and/or consumption, which gives number to living standards and makes the calculation on poverty easier (Dauda, 2017). Reports from the Bureau states that about 120 million Nigerians live below the poverty line this is based on the national level of poverty in Nigeria which is presently 33.1%.

The poverty in Nigeria is worse than the above percentage. This is because, a recent report by the Brooklyn Institute suggests that the number of people living under the poverty bracket in Nigeria is now more than those in India (Adekunle, 2018) and the oil rich Niger delta is an exemption. The poverty in the Niger delta can best be described as the paradox of 'poverty in plenty'. This is because the wealth from crude oil does not play out in the lives of the residents in the region (Ugor, 2014; Idemudia, 2014; Nwankwo, 2015; Osaghae, 2015; Ijumba & Kaya 2016; Courson, 2016; Akpan & Umoh, 2016; Cragg, Idemudia & Best, 2016). Table 4.3 is a display of the incidence of poverty in Nigeria from 1980 to 2010. The poverty incidence in 1980 was at 27.2% which was the lowest based on the data shown on the table and the highest was in 2010 at 69%.

**Table 4.3: Showing Relative Poverty Headcount in Nigeria from 1980-2010.**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Poverty incidence (%)</b>	<b>Estimated population in Nigeria (million)</b>
1980	27.2	65
1985	46.3	75
1992	42.7	91.5
1996	65.6	102.3
2004	54.4	126.3
2010	69.0	163

Source: National Bureau of Statistics (2012) see also Rasaki (2016)

Table 4.4 shows the percentage of the population living below the poverty line in the Niger delta as at 2010. Ondo state has the highest number of people living in poverty at 1,899,436 which indicates that 53.9% of the population are living in poverty. This is followed by Rivers state where the people living in poverty are 49.4 % of a population of 2,795,546 while the lowest is Edo state with a population of 1,919,742 living in poverty which is about 49.3% of the population.

Table 4.4: A table Showing the Nigerian Population Living Below the Poverty Line in the Niger Delta

<b>State</b>	<b>No of settlements (2006)</b>	<b>Projected population (2010)</b>	<b>Estimated population living in poverty</b>	<b>People Living in Poverty %</b>

Abia	950	3,763,000	1,587,986	42.2
Akwa-Ibom	2,387	3,895,000	1,799,490	46.2
Bayelsa	696	1,992,000	1,055,760	53.0
Cross-Rivers	681	3,187,000	1,501,077	47.1
Delta	1,449	4,186,000	1,523,704	36.4
Edo	1,248	3,516,000	1,195,440	34.0
Imo	1,796	3,894,000	1,919,742	49.3
Ondo	1,814	3,524,000	1,899,436	53.9
Rivers	1,258	5,659,000	2,795,546	49.4
Niger Delta	12,277	33,616,000	15,362,512	45.7

Source: Ibaba, (2016) see also Achinulo, (2017).

#### 4.4.4: Social Problems:

There is a link between unemployment and poverty in the region resulting in social problems. These problems include militancy, crude oil theft, local crude oil refining, cultism, kidnapping and prostitution which is responsible for sexually transmitted diseases such as HIV/AIDS (Wilson, 2014; Boris, 2015; Cragg, Idemudia & Best, 2016; Onuoha, 2016). Militant organisations and how they double as problems to the society and serve as CSOs will be discussed in detail later in chapter six. Militant organisations are responsible for crude oil theft and local refining. And, crude oil theft and local refining are extremely risky, but they are also very lucrative businesses especially for the unemployed in the region (Wilson, 2014). Crude oil theft and local refining is what is referred to as bunkering and kpor fire respectively in the Niger delta. Picture 4.2 is an image captured by a friend who is the Creative Director at RAK Entertainment Port Harcourt. It is an illustration of a local crude oil refining site in Port Harcourt.

Picture 4.2: Showing an Artisanal Refining of Stolen Crude Oil aka Kpor- Fire View  
From the air off Saipem Base in Front the Nigeria Navy in Port Harcourt



Source: RAK Entertainment Port Harcourt, taken on 23/12/17

The act of crude oil theft and local refining deepens the problem of environmental degradation in the Niger delta (Wilson, 2014. Boris, 2015; Gijo, Hart & Seiyaboh, 2017). The by products from crude oil includes kerosene for cooking stoves, petrol, and diesel for cars and electricity generating sets. The prices may vary from one supplier to the other but the petroleum products from the local refineries are cheaper and more accessible to the public than those from the government owned refineries. Those involved in crude oil theft and refining are unemployed people that are either members of militant organisations or a cult group or could be family and friends of these people (Wilson, 2014). Pic. 4.3 is an example of another local refining site in the Niger delta. It shows three men carrying out local refining activities on a site in Bolo Creek in Rivers state.

Picture 4.3: Showing a Local Refining Site



*‘NIGER DELTA, NIGERIA-JULY 2009 - In Bolo creek, the villagers are bunkering the oil from Shell facilities and refining it to sell it on the black market. Around 30 to 40 illegal refineries can be found all over the creek. The strong presence of the militants is keeping away the army and the police allowing the villagers to work freely’.*

Source: Wires (2018).

To tackle crude oil theft and local refining, the federal government created the Joint Task Force (JTF) in 2003. The JTF is a combination of the Navy, Army, and paramilitary agencies. The federal government adopted invasion as a method to stop crude oil theft by destroying the equipment used for these activities and petroleum products found on site. Since the inception of the JTF, they have destroyed many illegal refineries and paraded crude oil thieves but have failed to effectively stop crude oil theft in the region (Boris, 2015). Rather, it is on the rise because members of the JFT sometimes accept bribes from rich local crude oil refiners (Oyewole, Adegboye, & Durosinmi, 2018). Nevertheless, what is most important is that the destructions of illegal crude oil refining sites are exposing the environment to further damage.

The act of kidnapping is another social problem that has invaded the Niger delta. The high rates of poverty and joblessness are the major factors responsible for the increasing incidents of

kidnapping (Aghedo,2015). Kidnapping came into prominence through the militant organisation called Movement of the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND). The act of kidnapping is widespread in Nigeria resulting in stringent laws from the federal and state governments to deter offenders. The results from these efforts are insignificant because it is another fast way of amassing wealth. The major problem is that the high rate of kidnapping in the Niger delta has threatened security leading to the evacuation of staff of MNOCs and the headquarters of these companies from the Niger delta to Lagos (Aghedo, 2015).

The high poverty rates and unemployment is also responsible for prostitution which is another prevalent social problem in Niger delta when compared to the other parts of the country. The relatively high wages of oil and gas staff results in extravagant lifestyles which encourages prostitution in the region (Anthony & Pratt, 2015; Osin, Yu & Lin, 2017; Albert, Amaratunga & Haigh, 2018). It is a common practice for women to travel from other parts of the country to the Niger delta for prostitution. The oil workers who are mainly expatriates, spend excessively on these women thereby encouraging the practice. Women loiter around hotels and guest houses where oil and gas staff are lodged in the region to attract them (Ihayere, Ogeleka & Ataine, 2014; Okpako, 2014; Poroma, David & Jackson, 2015). Other social crimes in the Niger delta include bank robbery, car snatching, sea piracy, child trafficking, working as political thugs, and drug trafficking (Tambari & Imoh, 2016).

#### 4.4.5: Health Problems:

Many public health problems in the Niger delta originate from unmonitored crude oil exploitation activities (Nriagu, et. al, 2016). These activities include crude oil spills, gas flaring, crude oil refinery wastewater and local refining activities which pollute the land, air and water thereby affecting human health. (Jike, 2010; Chikaire et al. 2015). The public health challenges that could arise include cancers, respiratory problems, skin rashes, kidney failures and eye problems (Bello & Olukolajo; Acey, 2016; Igu & Marchant, 2017). Lung cancer, respiratory problems and kidney failures are prevalent in areas gas flaring occurs (Pegg & Zabbey, 2013; Ordinioha & Brisibe, 2013; Nriagu et.al, 2016). During the fieldwork, I observed that some gas flare sites are close to residential properties. The numerous public health challenges faced by host community members from crude oil exploitation will be discussed further in chapter five.

#### 4.5: Under-development:

Under-development ‘is the inability, failure, refusal, or structural prevention of a people to use existing mental, physical, and material resources available to society at a given time and space to bring about qualitative and quantitative improvement standard to their lives’ (Ekanem, 2001 p.53) (see also Ogonnaya, 2011). The Under-development of the Niger delta is a problem that have arisen from the inability of the federal government of Nigeria to effectively use wealth from crude oil in the development of the region. It is possible for people to make assumptions on a standard form of infrastructural development in the Niger delta because of the abundance of crude oil.

Nevertheless, the region lacks basic amenities, the level of development in the Niger delta is inadequate compared to the huge revenue ensuing from crude oil exports (Jack, et.al, 2016; Okonkwo & Etemire, 2017). The high level of under-development is evident in the lack of stable electricity, good roads, access to good and affordable health care services, standard educational facilities, and clean drinking water (Ikelegbe, 2001; Larry & Ekundayo, 2017; Mawere, 2017). There are several opinions on the factors responsible for the deficiency in the infrastructural development of the Niger delta, one of which is the problematic terrain of the region. This claim has been refuted by some experts arguing that the terrain of Lagos state – presently the largest commercial city in Nigeria and the former capital of the country – is comparable to that of the Niger delta (Okonkwo & Etemire, 2017). Other factors hindering infrastructural development in the Niger delta include poor governance and corruption (Agbibo & Maiangwa, 2012; Okonkwo & Etemire, 2017; Akintunde, 2017; Zhou, 2017).

#### 4.5.1: Attempts at Resolving the Problem of Under-development in the Niger Delta:

The government in Nigeria at different levels from the colonial times to the present have made several attempts at solving the problem of under-development in the Niger delta. These efforts are in the form of setting up agencies to oversee development and earmarking funds for the region. However, the impact on development from these attempts have been relatively small compared to the efforts and the promises they are looking to fulfil. These parastatals are supposed to provide accessible health care, water, good roads, and electricity. Examples of the agencies that have been established to deal with the problem of under-development in the region include the Niger Delta Development Board (NDDDB), Delta Basin Development Authority (NDBDA), Oil Minerals Producing Areas Development Commission (OMPADEC),

Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) and the Ministry of Niger Delta Affairs (Babalola, 2014; Okolo, 2014; Ayapere, 2015; Eke, 2016).

In the late 1950s, the British government set-up the 'Henry Willink Minorities Commission' to recommend ways on how to tackle under-development in the Niger delta (Babalola, 2014). It was the recommendations of this commission that gave rise to the establishment of a parastatal, the Niger Delta Development Board (NDDB) in 1960 (Erring, Bassey & Odiike, 2013; Babalola, 2014). A parastatal is an organisation or industry, especially in some African countries having some political authority and serving the state indirectly. The vision of the NDDB was to bring about rapid infrastructural development in the region (Babalola, 2014). Nevertheless, the NDDB was not inaugurated in this period because it was only on paper (Babalola, 2014; Abu & Itebiye, 2015).

The recommendations of the Henry Willink Minorities Commission to establish the NDDB was re-implemented in 1978 during the military administration of General Olusegun Obasanjo. The Obasanjo led military administration rechristened the NDDB as the Niger Delta Basin Development Authority (NDBDA) (Okolo, 2014; Babalola, 2014; Ayapere, 2015; Ezeocha, 2016). It also re-structured the authority by setting up an additional 10 river basin development authorities making it a total of 11 NDBDAs in the country. The focal point of these NDBDAs was to oversee infrastructural development in all the regions of the country but they failed to do so in the Obasanjo led military administration (Okolo, 2014; Ezeocha, 2016).

After Obasanjo, President Shehu Shagari was elected into office in 1979 under the Nigerian People's Party (NPP) as a civilian President (Williams & Waldheim, 1982). The NDBDAs continued with the project of infrastructural development in this period which was from 1979 to 1983 (Williams & Waldheim, 1982). However, the infrastructural development achievements of the NDBDAs remained insignificant in the Niger delta (Babalola, 2014). This prompted President Shagari to re-introduce the derivation principle of 1.5% which gives back 1.5% of the revenue generated from the Niger delta toward its development (Okolo, 2014).

Nevertheless, in the military coup of 1983, President Shehu Shagari was overthrown by General Mohammadu Buhari. General Ibrahim Badamisi Babangida was the military head of state from 1985 to 1993 (Okolo, 2014). He increased the derivation principle from 1.5% to 30% (Babalola, 2014). General Babangida took extra steps to resolve developmental problems by setting up the Oil Minerals Producing Areas Development Commission (OMPADEC) in 1992. The OMPADEC was more effective with the infrastructural development of the Niger delta than

the NDBDAs (Omotola, 2007). Despite the efforts made by these administrations, the infrastructural development in the Niger delta remained insignificant.

This prompted President Olusegun Obasanjo on his election as a civilian President from 1999 to 2007 to rename the OMPADEC as the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) in 2000 (Olaleye, 2018). The NDDC was established to resolve the infrastructural developmental problems in the Niger delta (Isidiho & Sabran, 2015). Below is a list of suppositions by the NDDC as written on their official website. It states that the NDDC should carry out a list of functions but for this research, I have selected the functions that are relevant to the development of the region and they are as follows:

- a. Formulate policies and guidelines for the development of the Niger Delta area.
- b. It should develop the concept, plan, and implement it by following set rules and regulations, projects, and programs for sustainable development of the Niger Delta area in the field of transportation including roads, jetties and waterways, health, employment, industrialization, agriculture and fisheries, housing and urban development, water supply, electricity, and telecommunications.
- c. Prepare master plans and schemes designed to promote the physical development of the Niger Delta region, and the estimation of the member states of the Commission.
- d. Implement all the measures approved for the development of the Niger Delta region by the Federal Government and the states of the Commission.
- e. Tackle ecological and environmental problems that arise from the exploration of oil mineral in the Niger Delta region and educating the Federal Government and the member states on the prevention and control of oil spillages, gas flaring, and environmental pollution. Source: <http://www.nddc.gov.ng>.

The NDDC which was established 18 years ago has executed hundreds of developmental projects in the region. But it is still unable to resolve the developmental problems of the Niger delta. Their inability to develop the region is largely because of corruption. They have a long list of undertaken projects which includes the construction of roads, provision of portable water, power generation and health care delivery. Many of these projects remain abandoned mid-way either for the lack of funds or the ineffectiveness of the project contractor. It is on this grounds that Okonkwo & Etemire (2017) asserted that the NDDC and OMPADEC are no different because both organisations have been marred by corruption and the mismanagement of assigned funds.

The Ministry of Niger Delta Affairs (MNDA) was set up to proffer additional solutions to the developmental problems in the region seeing that the NNDC was not doing enough. It was also a way of fulfilling the infrastructural developmental promises made by President Umaru Musa Yar'adua to the people of the region during his electoral campaign in 2007 (Babalola, 2014; Bello & Olukolajo, 2016; Tobor, 2016). Apart from infrastructural development, the MNDA is expected to create employment opportunities especially for repentant militants on completion of an amnesty program (Tobor, 2016). Like the NDB, NNDC, OMPADEC and NNDC, the MNDA is not showing prospects because of corrupt practices such as the embezzlement of funds (Osaghae, 2015). Umaru Musa Yar'adua and Goodluck Ebele Jonathan were elected in 2007 as the President and vice-president of Nigeria respectively. The MNDA was established by President Umaru Musa Yar'adua in September of 2008.

In 2010, President Umaru Musa Yar'adua passed on after a protracted illness and Goodluck Ebele Jonathan took over as the President of Nigeria in line with the Nigerian constitution (Pindiga & Taylor, 2018). President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan is the first Ijaw man, from the Niger delta region to become a president in Nigeria. In 2003, President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan during the inauguration of the new board members of the NNDC charged the newly appointed members to embark on projects that will be beneficial to the people and endeavour to complete them (Okonkwo & Etemire, 2017). These efforts notwithstanding, the Niger delta is still highly under-developed.

#### 4.6: Other Problems Associated with Crude Oil Exploitation in the Niger Delta:

##### 4.6.1: Revenue Allocation and Resource Control:

As the revenue from crude oil soared, the question on what to give back to the Niger delta with respect to their contribution to the Nigerian economy became an increasingly important subject of discussion. Resource control and derivation recommends how the government and the people in the region should share in the benefits from crude oil (Shebbs & Njoku, 2016). Presently, the principle of derivation is at the forefront of the agitation by the people of the region because they think that they should get more from crude oil (Akinola & Adesopo, 2011). Revenue allocation is provided in section 162(2) of the 1999 constitution of Nigeria as amended and it states that: 'the President, upon the receipt of advice from the Revenue Mobilisation

Allocation and Fiscal Commission, shall table before the National Assembly proposals for revenue allocation from the Federation Account, and in determining the formula, the National Assembly shall take into account, the allocation principles especially those of population, equality of States, internal revenue generation, land mass, terrain as well as population density; Provided that the principle of derivation shall be constantly reflected in any approved formula as being not less than thirteen per cent of the revenue accruing to the Federation Account directly from any natural resources’.

Senator David Dafinone in discussing the present 13% derivation formula analysed the changes that have taken place on resource allocation from the colonial times as thus: between 1949 and 1964 (a) Phillipson Commission (1946) Recommended 50% to be retained by the region of origin (b) Hicks-Phillipson (1951) Recommended Derivation area of Origin 50% (c) Hicks (1953), 100% Rents/Royalties (d) Ralsman (1958) Derivation 50% (e) Binn (1964), 50% to the Region (area of Origin). Binn queried the 20% Federal share by Ralsman and returned to the 15% Federal share suggested in 1951 by Hicks-Phillipson. The Decree 13 of 1970 under Yakubu Gown further removed 20% from the then 50% of the allocation to states. The administration of Obasanjo/Yar'adua (1977), deduced the state's share on derivation to 25% (through the instrumentality of the Technical Committee on Revenue Allocation headed by Late Prof. Aboyade). The Shagari's administration of 1981 reduced it to 5% and Buhari in 1984 further reduced it to 1.5% (Dafinone, 2015; Ohiomu & Oluyemi, 2018) the derivation formula is one of the reasons there is agitation in the region.

Table 4.5: resource derivation/ allocation table.

Year	Producing state (Region) Percent (%)	Distribution pool/ Federation percent (%)	account
1960-69	50	50	
1969-71	45	55	
1971-75	45 (minus offshore)	55 (plus offshore)	
1975-79	20 (minus offshore)	80 (plus offshore)	
1979-81	-	100	
1982-92	1.5	98.5	
1992-99	3	97.9	
1999-date	13	87	

Source: Text of a world press conference organized by delegates from the South-South geopolitical zone to the national reform conference (2005:23) see also Akujuru, (2015).

Table 4.5 reveals the revenue allocation since 1960 to date. To resolve this problem and other national problems, the government have been organising constitutional conferences from time to time to find solutions to the political and economic problems. The constitutional conferences that have been held to proffer solution to some political and economic problems in the country include the 1957 conference in London, 1978 constitutional assembly contributed to the 1999 constitution. Others are the 1994-1995 conference, 2005 national political reform conference and the 2014 national conference. These conferences appear to have been unsuccessful because the suggestions from these sessions have not been implemented by the government (Oni & Faluyi, 2018).

However, according to Okonkwo & Etemire (2017), the recommendations from the various constitutional conferences has occasioned a shift in the derivation formula from 0% to 1.5%, from 1.5% to 3% and from 3% to the current 13%. In all of this, what the Niger delta region gets is insignificant compared to the revenue generated from crude oil. The people in the region are being treated unfairly especially when the benefits shared between the federal government and the people or place that generates the national resource are compared to the days of the agricultural boom (Okonkwo & Etemire, 2017).

#### 4.6.2: The Poor Relationship Between MNOCS and Host Communities in the Niger Delta:

The MNOCs in the region have their headquarters in the Western part of the world (Oliver & Obo, 2016). Those operating in the Niger delta presently includes 1) Shell Petroleum Development Company (SPDC) 2) Chevron – Texaco 3) Total Fina Elf 4) Addax, Exxon Mobil and 5) Nigerian AGIP exploration and Nigerian AGIP oil and gas (Andrews, 2015). The headquarters of these companies are in different regions of the world including the United States of America, France, Italy, and Switzerland. MNOCs have made positive and negative impacts on the Nigerian economy and the Niger delta region (Salih, 2017). The negative impacts of crude oil exploitation have been discussed earlier.

But, MNOCs have also contributed to the betterment of the region by providing educational scholarships, employment, training/skill acquisition, healthcare/enlightenment campaigns and awareness (Salih, 2017). However, these contributions by the MNOCs are always undermined by Corruption. The educational scholarships offered by MNOCs to the host communities at different levels of education should be applauded. It is a yearly offer from companies including SPDC, ExxonMobil, and AGIP for those in secondary and tertiary institutions. These awards have been downplayed because of the diversion of allocated funds by company workers and community representatives. The corruption around the award of scholarship from MNOCs will be discussed during the data analysis on the Niger delta in chapter four.

The SPDC claimed years back that job creation is one of the positive contributions made by Transnational Companies (TNCs) in the region. A statement on Shell's website also states that more than 90% of the people who designed and built the highly important Bonga North-West project were Nigerians. The Bonga North -West project is a 2014 development project by Shell located 120km off the coast of Nigeria. It uses new technology to transport, offload and store crude oil most of which are done undersea. It won the 2015 project of the year award by the Platts Global Energy Awards in New York, and a silver prize for the Project Integration Excellence Award of the International Petroleum Technology Conference (IPTC) in Doha (Offon, 2015).

The SPDC also stated that it created the 'LiveWIRE' initiative as an Ogoni-specific program to encourage the youths in the area to shun 'illegitimate sources of income such as illegal refining of crude oil in favour of job training. Since the initiative was commissioned in 2003, Shell claims to have facilitated the training of 6,350 youths in entrepreneurship skills, business

planning, and management; 50 percent of whom have been assisted to become business owners and employers' (Salih, 2017, p. 7). This might not be accurate but a few of the youths in the region are gainfully employed by MNOCs. There are also a few computer and skill acquisition programmes that are ongoing in the region which are fully sponsored by MNOCs. These companies may not have been able to build good quality hospitals in their host communities but have occasionally, organised health care campaigns such as free eye checks and medical assessment which have been beneficial.

The SPDC have been accused of collaborating with the Nigerian government in the execution of Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other MOSOP leaders which will be discussed in chapter seven. According to Ige, 2016, the SPDC was behind the hiring of members of the Nigerian police force to provide security and prevent sabotage resulting in the death of many people in Ogoni land. Families of the murdered Ogoni Nine sued Shell for human rights violations because of the violence they experienced from members of the Nigerian military (Ige, 2016). However, in 2009, Shell decided to settle out of court with these families because it was cheaper to do this than go through the legal proceedings. A day before the case was to be heard in court, Shell paid \$15.5 million to the families of the Ogoni nine (Ige, 2009). This is another example of the neutralization theory and white-collar criminality as discussed by Gottschalk & Smith (2011).

Another thing that has continually posed problems between the host community and MNOCs is the amount of compensation paid in cases of eventualities such as crude oil spills. The land use Act of 1978 reduces the amount of compensation paid by MNOCs to community members. It is an Act that is made of eight parts and fifty-one sections. A major aspect of the Act is that land is held by the state governors in urban areas and the local government chairmen in rural areas. Before the land use Act, land was an ancestral property meaning that it was passed on from one generation to the other and not sold. A part of the Land Use Act that has continually remained a threat to the people in the Niger delta is the part that states that: 'All the rights formerly vested in the holder in respect of the excess of the land shall in the commencement of this Act be extinguished and the excess of the land shall be taken over by the Governor and administered as provided in this Act'. The consequence of this is that the government can make claims to any land whenever it wants.

These conditions are difficult for crude oil host communities in the Niger delta because they are usually denied the payment of compensation from MNOCs whenever there is an

environmental problem. The small amounts paid as compensation is usually not enough to make plans for an alternative source of income while for instance a clean-up exercise is being carried out. It can result in violence. Adequate compensation will encourage peace in the Niger delta (Bello & Olukolajo, 2016). There was a call in the country for the amendment of this Act and the late president Umaru Musa Yar'adua initiated an amendment which he was unable to complete before his demise. After his death, President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan also initiated the amendment of the Act. The rigid administrative rules involved in the amendment of the act prevented him from achieving it.

Finally, the movement of the major MNOCs headquarters to Lagos, a Western part of the country is another problem between host communities and MNOCs. These companies cite militancy and kidnapping as the main reasons for this action. Host communities maintain that it is inappropriate for exploration activities to take place in the Niger delta and the flashy headquarter offices of the companies are located away from the region. Based on this, the vice president Professor Yemi Osinbanjo, in a recent statement advised MNOCs to move their head offices back to the Niger delta as a way of fostering their relationship with the region. Other efforts made by the federal government in improving the relationship between MNOCs and host communities is a recent move by president Mohammadu Buhari supporting the implementation of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) report for the clean-up of Ogoni land. UNEP is an aspect of the United Nations (UN) that is concerned with enacting and overseeing the implementation of environmental policies especially in developing countries (Lindén & Pålsson, 2013; Steiner, 2016).

The UNEP report on Ogoni land was put together in 2011 but implemented plans began in 2016 (Okonkwo & Eremite, 2017). On the inauguration of the clean-up exercise, President Mohammadu Buhari who was represented by the vice president Professor Yemi Osinbanjo promised the immediate commencement of the exercise. It has been over two years after the launch of the cleaning exercise, it is yet to begin. Also, during the flag-up of the Ogoni clean-up, the federal government promised to set-up modular refineries as a replacement to the local refining process 'kpofire'. They assured the people of inviting foreign investors to collaborate with local crude oil refineries to create modular refineries. Modular refineries are smaller refineries that will replace the local refining process carried out by militants. The modular refineries when set-up will be owned and managed by individuals from the Niger delta, it will be a way of government giving back to the region. The Vice President stated this during a town hall meeting in Abia state in the Niger delta which I attended.

### Conclusion:

Crude oil remains the main source of foreign exchange earnings for Nigeria despite the debates on diversifying the economy because of the huge revenue accruing from it. The federal government is spending a lot of money in the search of crude oil in the north indicating that the dependence on crude oil will not end soon. The exploitation of crude oil has had adverse effects on the environment and people of the Niger delta. These problems have far reaching consequences adversely affecting the economic, social and health aspect of lives of the people. Environmental degradation and under-developments are the main problems in the region and have remained unresolved. Government at various levels and times have responded in several ways to proffer solution, but these responses appear not to have made an impact. This is because, they are constantly marred by corruption.

## Chapter FIVE: The Consequences of Crude oil Exploitation in the Niger Delta. (Expectation versus Reality).

### 5.1: Introduction:

There is a large body of work on the consequences of crude oil exploitation activities in the Niger delta (Okafor, 2011; Watts, 2004; Omeje, 2005; Jike, 2010; Ite et.al, 2013; Osaghae, 2015; Dauda; 2017). In some ways, the protests and agitations in the region have drawn the attention of researchers and the international community. This is forcing the federal government of Nigeria to make efforts at proffering solutions to these problems. Whilst, MNOCs are taking steps towards implementing Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives in host communities. A few of these efforts appeared to have been successful but the problems caused by crude oil exploitation in the Niger delta have remained unresolved because they are hampered by some bottlenecks. Examples of such hindrances are corruption embedded in the Nigerian culture and, the political structure.

From the background of the study in chapter three, the major problems in the Niger delta are environmental degradation and under-development. Environmental degradation is the direct consequence of unregulated crude oil exploitation activities in the Niger delta. The effect of environmental degradation from crude oil exploitation is severe, it is responsible for the air, water, and soil pollution experienced in the region (Aluko, 2004; Uyigue & Agho, 2007; Ite, 2007; Obi, 2014; Nwankwo, 2015; Gonzalez, 2016; Courson, 2016; Elum & Henri Ukoha, 2016; Ugwu, 2016; Omeje, 2017; Adekola, et.al., 2017). Whilst, the inability of the federal government and MNOCs to encourage infrastructural development with the excess revenue from crude oil is the reason for which under-development is discussed as a problem around crude oil exploitation.

During the interviews, the respondents pointed out that in the past, everyone in the region irrespective of your other career was referred to as a farmer or fisherman. If you are from a community that there are predominantly farmers, you will be called a farmer. Whilst, if you are from a community that is an island, you will usually be termed a fisherman. Although fishing and farming activities still take place in these communities there is a decline in the quality and quantity of the harvests. There are many problems in these communities but according to the members of these six crude oil host communities, the major consequences of crude oil exploitation are environmental degradation and under-development.

The chapter identifies the environmental and social problems that have arisen from crude oil exploitation in the Niger delta based on the data collected at the fieldwork sites from six communities in Rivers and Delta states. Secondly, it compares the problems and consequences of crude oil exploitation in the region discussed in chapter four with the findings from the fieldwork. Thirdly, it analyses the array of factors that are influencing the relationship and responses from the federal government and MNOCs to crude oil host communities. It identifies corruption as one of the most preeminent factors preventing the resolution of the problems around crude oil exploitation in the region. It discusses the basis for drawing this conclusion as corruption sweeping across all aspects of the oil industry in Nigeria. Finally, it describes the role corruption plays within host communities with respect to their relationship with the federal government, MNOCS and CSOs (Gonzalez, 2016).

## 5.2. The Problem of Environmental Degradation in the Six communities:

As stated in chapter four, environmental degradation is the leading aftermath of crude oil exploitation activities in the Niger delta. I have selected six communities in Delta and Rivers states because they are the 2nd and 3rd largest oil-producing Niger delta states respectively. Their daily crude oil output are 346,000 barrels per day (bpd) for delta and 344,000 barrels per day (bpd) for Rivers state (Ibanga, 2017). Rivers state used to be the largest oil producing state in Nigeria, but it has since been overtaken by Akwa Ibom state because of the disruptions from militant organisations. The major causes of the environmental problems from crude oil exploitation as discussed in chapters four are: gas flaring, crude oil spills, crude oil refinery wastewater and local refining (Ite, et.al 2013; Akinbami & Abiona, 2014; Adekola, et.al, 2016; Idemudia & Osayande, 2016).

In these six communities, the prevalent causes of environmental degradation based on the account of the respondents, are either gas flaring or crude oil spills. This is because there were no refineries around these communities to dislodge refinery wastewater and I also did not see any local refining points around. There is the possibility that there are local refining points around these communities, but I did not have access to any of them because they are usually in the mangroves or bushes. The major problems from gas flaring and crude oil spills in these

communities were the loss of livelihood, mass unemployment, poverty, social and health problems and the destruction of the aesthetics of buildings.

### 5.2.1: How Gas Flaring Affects Three Communities:

An article written for the Friends of the Earth on gas flaring in the Niger delta in 2005 stated that the problem of gas flaring in the region began in the late 1950s, which was towards the end of the colonial rule in Nigeria. The article suggests that the British government applied double standards in dealing with the problem of gas flaring in the Niger delta during the colonial era. It claimed that although gas flaring was problematic at the time, the British government did not stop it. Perhaps, the colonial masters did not see the need at the time because they were only able to stop the practice after careful analysis in the 1970s in the UK which was after the Nigerian independence.

Gas flaring remains a major problem to the Nigerian government. One of the ways of establishing that there are gas flaring points in a community is that the atmospheric condition around can be unbearable. These three communities were no exception because they are excessively hot and unsuitable for habitation. On my first visit to community A where there were visibly three flare points, I observed that majority of the people in this community were seated outside their houses, under the trees that served as shades away from the heat. A respondent who works as a primary school teacher in the community expressed his displeasure on the problems caused by gas flaring in his community said:

‘we are suffering in this community, the most serious problem here is not hunger but heat. The temperature in our community is extremely high and as such, it gets very hot and uncomfortable, which is a function of the gas flaring points around us. If you have a faulty air conditioner, you are ‘doomed’ because you cannot sleep, even in the rainy season. As a community, we do not get compensated for all these problems. Whenever we try to reach out to the company here, our representatives and the chiefs in our community stop us, because they receive bribes from these companies, it is a difficult situation’ (com. res.5).

Nigeria is a tropical country and there are two major seasons, the dry and the rainy season (Eludoyin, et.al, 2014). There are also slight variations in weather between the north, south, east and western part of the country. The rainy season is relatively colder than the dry season. In the Niger delta which is mainly in the south, it is usually from March to November and it is

longer compared to the Northern part of Nigeria where it is from June to September. The need for an air conditioner in the rainy season means there is excruciating heat in these communities. An average annual temperature in nearby Port Harcourt is usually around 26.4 degrees Celsius ('Climate Port Harcourt'). In three of these communities, my phone recorded a temperature of 40 degrees Celsius and above which is the kind of temperature you will get in Northern Nigeria where it is extremely hot. It justified the complaint by respondent five on gas flaring causing extreme heat in their community.

I would have attached a picture of the flare points in these community but there was a restriction sign on taking pictures close to gas flaring points. However, Picture 4.1 and 4.2 below are demonstrations of gas flaring points in crude oil host communities in the Niger delta. These are the two different types of gas flaring sites that will be seen in the region.

Picture 5.1: Showing Gas Flaring Points in the Niger Delta



Source: <https://guardian.ng/news/nigeria>

Picture 5.2: Showing Shell's Gas Flare in Umuechem in Rivers State



Source: Picture Taken by Israel Aloja of Environmental Rights Action/Friends of the Earth Nigeria (ERA/FoEN), 2000

Picture 5.1 is an example of the type flare points in community A while picture 5.2 is a flare point from an offshore oil well.

### 5.2.2: How Crude Oil Spills Affects Three Communities:

Crude oil spill happens because of accidental discharge, carelessness or sabotage. It is a leading cause of the loss of livelihood, mass unemployment and poverty in the Niger delta as discussed in chapter three. The discussion on crude oil spills in these communities is usually accompanied by a lot of controversy. This disagreement has arisen because of the refusal of MNOCs or crude oil host communities to take responsibility whenever there is a spill. MNOCs argue that most of the crude oil spills are caused by host community members while the communities blame spills on the carelessness of MNOCs. There are corrupt practices around crude oil spills in these communities, details will be discussed later in this chapter.

Picture. 5.3 Showing a Crude Oil Spill Site in the Niger Delta



Source: Okafor, 2018

The three communities which had prevalent crude oil spills problems are B, D & F. The federal government of Nigeria is responsible for managing crude oil spills and timely remediation, but they have failed to carry out this function effectively. A female respondent who is a nurse at the local health centre stated that fishing and farming activities are on the decline because of the problems caused by flared gases. The consequences of gas flaring are severe as discussed in chapter four, and community members are concerned. In these communities, I observed that the leaves on crops and trees are pale yellow in colour which is usually a sign of malnutrition in plants.

A respondent who works for the local government from community C, suggested that, ‘there are a lot of problems that have arisen from crude oil exploitation activities in this community. We are jobless, poor, hungry and can no longer farm or fish. (com. res.11). It affects the soil and water bodies like rivers and seas. A middle-aged male respondent who is a car mechanic in community D expressed his concern saying,

‘there are patches of crude oil spills on the sea all the time and we still manage to catch our fishes from the sea. Doctors have warned us on the dangers we will experience for the consumption of fishes and seafood from the Rivers around us, but we do not have a choice. This is our main source of livelihood and because we live around the sea, fishes are a major part of our delicacies, but the oil spills are disrupting fishing activities. The strange thing is, whenever we report cases of crude oil spill to the oil companies, it is always classified as a case of vandalism, even when they come to clean-up, they act as if they are doing us a favour. These crude oil spills are killing us gradually and we have nowhere to go to because this is our home’(com. res.35).

Crude oil spills settle on the surface of sea water and visible. It affects the underground water table thus contaminating drinking water. According to this respondent,

‘The effect of these crude oil spills is huge, farming activities are affected as well as fishing and even our drinking water come from boreholes drilled in this community and when water is left to stay overnight, you can see patches of oil on it. I don’t know if it is crude oil, but I know that the water has oily patches on it and looks rusty. We have asked for government intervention, but we are yet to get help.’ (com. res.35).

The bigger problem is who is responsible for the spills. Majority of the oil spills in the Niger delta have been blamed on host community members by MNOCs even when that is not the

case (Pegg & Zabbey, 2013). Vandalism cannot be ruled out completely and it is imperative for companies to investigate crude oil spill sources and respond to the problem promptly to save the environment and the livelihoods of crude oil host communities. As discussed in chapter four, apart from vandalism, there is the problem of local refining which is also referred to as 'kporfire' causing crude oil spillage in the Niger delta. However, a great part of the crude oil spills in the region are caused by MNOCs.

The direct impact of crude oil spill is the loss of livelihoods in the region as discussed in chapter three. The unemployed people in the region turn to the MNOCs for jobs. But, the MNOCs are unable to employ many of these people because the job opportunities available in these companies are small compared to the number of applicants. The job opportunity in the other sectors of the economy are also few because the Nigerian economy is highly dependent on crude oil. Then again, more people are interested in the oil industry because the remuneration is higher. The youths are the most affected by the problem of joblessness and it is the main reason behind social crimes like militancy in the Niger delta and insurgency in northern Nigeria (Ordu, 2017; Obiekwe, 2018).

However, during the fieldwork, I realised that there are disparities on how well MNOCs in the region have performed in terms of employment. There are two perspectives on employment in the communities I visited. On the one hand, some community members are impressed with the employment plans in their community because they and their family members are gainfully employed. On the other hand, some of the community dwellers argue that MNOCs have failed because they or their family members are jobless. The selfishness in these opinions hinder objectivity with respect to the employment plans put in place by MNOCs in these communities.

In community D, I met a group of young people seated in a compound having a discussion, I stopped over to ask them the questions I had prepared and when I asked the question on employment in their community, below is what one of the respondents, an unemployed graduate said.

'The oil and gas company in this community are neglectful with the employment of the youths in this community. We have signed a Memorandum of Understanding on employment but they keep employing only those either related to the chiefs or relatives of our community representatives while we are asked to wait. The wait is because employments are done in turns, one after another but the wait has been endless. We are also aware that some of the jobs that should have been offered to community members

are being sold to non-indigenous people in exchange for a part of their monthly salary. A practice that deprives us of our rights and is being managed by chiefs, community representatives, and the MNOCs' (com. res. 50).

This act of selling employment opportunities might be inexplicable to people of other cultures, but it is a common practice in the region. This proposes that community representatives sell out job opportunities provided for community members by MNOCs to non-indigenous people. The people not from the Niger delta are referred to as non-indigenes. The buyer remits an agreed part of his or her monthly salary to the seller which in this case is the community representative, for as long as he or she remains employed in that company. But this practice will not be possible if members of the MNOC do not collaborate with community representatives. Community members are short-changed by their leaders in collaboration with the company in their community.

But then again, some people in the region are satisfied with the oil companies in their community. In community D, I met two young men who said they were very happy with the employment strategy utilized in their community. The literature in chapter four show that there is a high level of unemployment in the region. Nevertheless, there are some people that are gainfully employed and will not agree with the high level of unemployment in the Niger delta.

One of the respondents who is employed by a company in his community said:

'I am very happy with the employment plan in this community, it is very organised, it is done one after the other, family by family. My brother was employed when it first got to our turn, and after employment opportunities had gone around all the families, it is our turn again and I got employed into the company, I work there now but I am off duty today that is why I am home. I don't know how it works in the communities around us, but we are satisfied with the way it works here' (com. res 58).

The employment in these communities were done one family after another which have left the members of some families unemployed because they are waiting for their turn. Those that are now employed are impressed with the employment plans in their community while others are obviously unimpressed because they have not benefitted from the employment in these companies.

According to Omofonmwan and Odia (2009), the capital-intensive technologies used by MNOCs developed in the core countries generates high wage employment only for a few

persons. Based on the above, the authors argue that basic amenities like potable drinking water, health care facilities, electricity, educational facilities etc. should be provided for host communities to reduce the crisis in the region. In the Niger delta, employment opportunities in some communities are controlled, it is one family after another, and it might take many years before someone gets a job. It creates room for bribery, an aspect of corruption which was discussed in chapter three.

‘We were told that studying an engineering course makes you more employable, three of us here are engineers, petroleum engineers from the Rivers State University of Science and Technology, we are still on the waiting list. Instead, they have employed people with degrees in education while we remain on the waiting list. I am tired of this Niger delta, if you go to other countries, people would have been employed on merit, we just hope it will get to our turn soon. It is horrible for young men like us to sit-at-home doing nothing, there are expectations from our family members and kindred, but we are unable to meet them because we are unemployed’ (com. res.54).

The inability to provide for family members is an indication of poverty in these communities. Traditionally, in the region, the man of the house provides for members of his immediate and extended family. Respondent six an unemployed graduate in the community F told me that ‘the level of poverty in this community is very high. This is because a lot of people like me are unemployed and cannot provide for our families’. Unemployment is the main causal factor of poverty, for a people that can no longer farm and fish and do not have other ways of generating income for themselves. The first thing that drew my attention when discussing poverty in these communities was how the buildings looked. The buildings appeared old and worn out which could be a sign of poverty. But I discovered that it was also a function of gas flaring.

A lot of the people in these communities live below the one dollar a day poverty line because of the loss of their sources of income. The problem of unemployment in the Niger delta remains a puzzle that is difficult to unpack. The lack of employment opportunities and the inability to farm and fish are responsible for the high level of poverty in the region. In community E, I came across a family of eight, a man his wife and six children. His complaints were many but bordering around the problem of poverty and he said:

‘I am very poor as you can see because I am a fisherman and these days there are no fishes in our Rivers, it is difficult to feed and clothe my large family. I do not have a university education making it impossible for me to get employment into these oil

companies because they always ask for graduates, I am not one and for people like me that are farmers or fishermen, the companies have done nothing for us, we are in a bad place' (com. res.65).

The respondent added that: 'even those who are graduates are waiting to be employed how much more me, a common farmer with just a secondary school certificate' (com. res. 65). A university degree in the Niger delta, especially in engineering, is the vital requirement for getting into a MNOC as a staff but a university degree does not guarantee getting a job. The large revenue accruing from crude oil should afford host community dwellers an opportunity to be part of the wealth.

Another respondent in discussing poverty in the region said:

'the problem of poverty in the region can be depressing. This is because we have a lot of oil money but only a few people are entitled to it. They are the elite, they live large on the oil money and a large majority of them are from the Northern part of the country. They do not experience the problems here, but they enjoy the wealth from their oil blocks (com. res.72)'

According to Ojo (2015), 83% of the oil blocks in the Niger delta are owned by rich businessmen from the northern part of the country. This has remained a problem in the region and respondent 72 thinks that it contributes to the poverty in the region. It makes the people feel short-changed because they do not have a full right over the oil that is in their soil. To solve the problem of joblessness and poverty in the region, the federal government has put in place some strategies to reduce crude oil spillage to the barest minimum. These strategies deployed by the federal government is geared towards the management of crude oil spills in the Niger delta.

One of such efforts is the establishment of the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA). It is an organisation that focuses on effective maritime safety administration, maritime labour regulation, marine pollution prevention and control, Search and rescue. As an organisation, they are expected to do the following: sabotage enforcement, shipping development and ship registration, training and certification of seafarers, and maritime capacity development. According to the NIMASA website, emphasis is laid on the use of modern tools that guarantee efficiency and effectiveness and are determined to develop indigenous capacity and eliminate all hindrances. The impact of NIMASA in the region is

insignificant because there are many unattended crude oil spillage sites like the rivers in the communities D, E & F which were visibly polluted. The problems surrounding the failure of regulating the crude oil in the region is mainly driven by the problem of corruption in the region.

In community C, I met with a gathering of seven women reflecting on some community issues, they were willing to talk on the problems in the community. When asked on the effect of oil exploitation in their community, they unanimously agreed to have been largely concerned with the ongoing gas flaring activities in their community. They began by highlighting the health problems associated with gas flaring and one of the respondents, a full time 'housewife' said: 'a while ago, my son complained about eye problems and my daughter had skin rashes for which we have been to the hospital several times for medical treatments. The doctors are yet to find lasting solutions to these problems' (com. res,4). Gas flaring as described in chapter two is usually accompanied by health problems including those described by respondent four. There are several other health problems that could arise from gas flaring.

In September 2016, Sahara Reporters, a news agency covering Nigeria, reported that gas flaring killed thirteen people in some communities in Delta state. The chairman of the local government area asked the federal government to sanction MNOCs. However, the federal government did not respond to this request ("The Guardian NG", 2016). Gas flaring is a substantial problem in the Niger delta that is treated flippantly but needs urgent attention. An angry respondent amongst the women who is a teacher at the local secondary school said:

'we want the oil companies to know that this is our community and we cannot leave it for them. We are tired of the gas flaring problems, we cannot farm, you can see that the leaves on the crops are yellow instead of green caused by acid rain. They may have employed some of our husbands and children, but the environmental and health problems we face daily are enormous and difficult to deal with. Someone has just died from a kidney problem down the road, these ailments are rampant in recent years and we do not know who is next. These diseases are alien to us, we have only started experiencing them since the oil companies came to our community with gas flaring' (com. res.10).

According to Egwurugwu et.al, 2013 gas flaring can affect kidney function. Another study carried out by Worlu & Frank in 2018 on the relationship between air pollution by gas flaring and lung function in the Niger delta confirmed that people who lived close to gas flaring sites can show a decline in lung function within a few weeks. Gas flaring has also been linked to

hypertension by Maduka & Tobin-West (2017), the authors suggest that gas flaring laws should be uncompromising to eradicate gas flaring and its effect on the region. In the literature, it is more on the description of the problems caused by gas flaring, but I discovered during the fieldwork that the health problems associated with gas flaring increased with the closeness or proximity to gas flaring sites. In communities A, C & F, I noticed that gas flaring points were close to residential buildings and the health problems in these communities were enormous. Also, I discovered that some of the local community dwellers were not aware of the effect of these gas flaring points and do not associate illnesses to the flares. They are victims of the environmental problems caused by MNOCs in their communities (Williams, 1996; Hall, 2013)

Gas flaring activities have continued in the region mainly because of the poor penalty charged to MNOCs operating in the region which was ten Naira per 1,000 Standard Cubic Feet (SCF), when converted to pounds, it is less than a Penny. However, according to a Vanguard report of 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2018, the Federal Government has increased the penalty for gas flaring to £1.57 (\$2) per 1,000 standard cubic feet of gas for organisations producing more than 10,000 barrels per day and for those producing less, it is now about \$0.50 and about 30 cents in pounds (Eboh, 2018). Furthermore, the Vanguard report stated that an extra amount, not stated could be charged if the following occurs: 1) there is a failure to provide a measurement, 2) failure to maintain and submit logs, 3) failure to provide access to a qualified permit holder access and some other reasons as stated in the report. This new charge is inadequate, but it is an improvement on the old standards.

There are several legal and institutional frameworks in place to control gas flaring and protect the environment in the Niger delta. As stated earlier, the main problem in Nigeria is not the lack or absence of laws but that of a failure in the implementation and enforcement of the laws and legislation. Apart from implementation, it is also important that existing laws on sustaining the environment are amended to align with modern and global environmental standards and realities (Ijaiya, La-Kadri, & Jimoh, 2018). The federal government of Nigeria have announced plans on ending gas flaring in the region but have been unable to achieve it.

Presently, there is a plan to end gas flaring by 2020 and experts in the oil and gas industry in the country have disagreed with the said date, they think it is unachievable. But, the people in the Niger delta are hopeful for gas flaring to be stopped as soon as possible. There have been short-term effects of gas flaring on the region as discussed above, but the long-term effect on the people in these communities could be perilous with unknown consequences. The burden is

now on the federal government and MNOCs to take steps at ending the practice of gas flaring in the Niger delta.

Crude oil spills have been linked to several health problems including kidney failure and cancers. Medical experts are advising that fishes and sea foods harvested from polluted rivers should not be consumed. This is because, there is the possibility of sea foods and fishes accumulating heavy metals including mercury (Benson, et.al., 2007; Otitoju&Otitoju, 2013). The environmental problems were obvious and there were signs of oil spillage from the waterfront in which I rode to the community. The river is ‘masked’ with crude oil drops and the smell was pungent. A resident who is a fisherman said, ‘we have lived with the remnant of the oil spill for many years now ‘the fishes are tasteless, and they have told us that it could cause health problems’ (com. res.33).

These problems from crude oil exploitation have remained. In recent times, the giant step that the federal government has taken in solving a part of these problems is agreeing to implement the recommendations of the UNEP report in the Ogoni clean-up worth £782,530,000 (\$1 billion) (Allison et.al, 2018). The UNEP report and the Ogoni clean-up are steps taken to clean-up parts of the region from decades of the oil spill. Plans on how to execute the project are in place but it is yet to begin. Ogoni is only a part of the Niger delta region, the other parts of the region which includes communities selected in this work, should also be cleaned. These are some of the activism roles played by civil society organisations in the region because they are standing against crude oil spills and insisting that all spill sites are cleaned, and remediation is done where necessary. Crude oil spills have been linked to several health problems including kidney failure and cancers. The environmental problems were obvious and there were signs of oil spillage from the waterfront in which I rode to the community. The river is ‘masked’ with crude oil drops and the smell was pungent. A resident who is a fisherman said, ‘we have lived with the remnant of the oil spill for many years now ‘the fishes are tasteless, and they have told us that it could cause health problems’ (com. res.33).

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The components of a building such as the roofing sheets, wood and the paint on the wall can also be affected by gas flaring in the form of corrosion caused by acid rain (Ekpoh & Obia, 2010). The first observation going into communities A, C and F was that the communities were packed with unattractive buildings that require re-decoration. In communities A and C when I asked questions about the environmental problems they face in their community, the respondent, a tailor (cloth designer) pointed to the appearance of their buildings.

‘It is difficult to maintain a house in this community; our roofing sheets are rusted in a very short period so are the painted walls. We have decided to leave the buildings as they are because we spend a lot of money re-decorating them. We have asked a few experts questions on this problem because we were worried about the development. We were told that we face this problem because of the acid rain from the gas flaring point, I kind of agree with them because the colour of the rainwater has changed drastically compared to what it was when I was a little boy’ (com. res. 14).

### 5.2.3: The Under-development in the Six Communities:

These six communities in Rivers and Delta states lack basic amenities which includes motor able roads, potable drinking water and hospitals. In all six communities the only form of development that they enjoyed was constant electricity. The provision of 24-hour electricity in Nigeria is considered a luxury anywhere in the country. The federal government of Nigeria have been struggling with providing stable electricity for the people in the country for many years (Oni, 2018). Businesses in Nigeria depend on generating sets to supply electricity making the cost of production unreasonably high. Irrespective of the poor electricity supply in other parts of the country, respondents in these communities pointed out that their electricity supply is stable. It is the key amenity and infrastructural development they are benefiting from MNOCs in their community.

In community A, a respondent said, ‘the only benefit I can point out right now is electricity, we have constant electricity when compared to the other parts of the state and even Nigeria’ (com.

res.15). Nevertheless, in community D, when I flagged up the availability of stable electricity, this respondent who is a welder professionally responded by saying that ‘I agree we have constant electricity in this community but that is because these companies need this power to exploit oil from our community as well’ (com. res. 22). Constant electricity makes it possible to acquire air-conditioners and fans which are required in communities that are close to gas flaring points. Respondent 22 may not be wrong because these communities are highly underdeveloped. There is nothing physically indicating the presence of MNOCs in these communities apart from the flare points and massive fence walls used to demarcate the companies from the other parts of the community.

The poor level of infrastructural development as described in chapter two, it is the reason Isaac Adaka Boro and the others started their struggle against the government. In community C, a middle-aged woman in her early forties and a stay at home mum started by asking:

‘can you see anything in our community that indicates the presence of a ‘big’ oil company like the one you are seeing here? this is the reason we are in court. There are no hospitals, no good roads or portable drinking water. The borehole that they constructed for us is faulty and we are suffering from the waste that comes from oil exploitation. At festive periods such as Easter and Christmas, they visit our community with bags of rice and little money to distribute to the women. We do not want food, we want tangible projects. Until these companies do the needful, we will not stop fighting’ (com. res.44).

These distribution of rice as trinkets bear a certain similarity with the trinkets colonists would give to villagers during colonialism.

Nevertheless, MNOCs have argued that they do not owe host communities developmental duties because they pay taxes to the government. Even when they get involved with development, such developments are more harmful than beneficial (Rexler, 2010). An example of such development is building health centres without medicines and equipment. They encourage a dependence on MNOCs instead of the government. The government have failed too. As discussed in chapter two, the efforts of the government to resolve the problems around under-development in the Niger delta have been thwarted by corruption. The monies set aside for development are embezzled, it is either the projects are of a low quality or uncompleted.

There were no noticeable social problems like kidnapping, prostitution, crude oil theft and local refining in these communities during the fieldwork. However, the prevalent social problem in

all these communities is cultism (Taft & Haken, 2015). Cultism is a social crime that is rampant in the Niger delta communities. It is the activities of a group of young people in these communities that are considered extremely religious. They include initiation ceremonies that could inflict extreme bodily injuries leading to death and the killing of members in rival groups. In community A for instance, there are some cases of killings which were linked to politics while cultism was prevalent in all. According to respondent 69, ‘cultism is a major problem in this community. Many young boys are members of one cult or the other. We must tread carefully with these boys because they are violent and are always in possession of fire arms’ (com. res.69). In one of the communities I visited in Rivers state, there was the killing of about 60 cult members barely a few days after I had left. The killings were linked to an indigenous army general who argues that the activities of cultists in the community is affecting economic growth and has caused many to flee for their lives.

### 5.3: The Role of Corruption in the Relationship between the Federal Government, MNOCs and Host Communities in the Region:

The relationship between the federal government MNOCs and crude oil host communities in the Niger delta lacks cordiality. The discussion in chapter two states that the reasons for the failed relationship are firstly, the inability of the government to use wealth accruing from the region for its development. Secondly, the enactment of laws such as the land use act of 1978 which bestows all lands to the government resulting in little or no compensations in cases of environmental eventualities such as crude oil spills and gas flaring.

The failed relationship between MNOCs and the host communities began when they suggested that they had no properly laid out CSR plans for these communities because of the tax responsibility to the government. Implying that for these companies, the development of the region is the responsibility of the government because the taxes paid to the government should be enough. According to respondent 86,

‘the oil company in our community has not done much for us. Our community is highly under-developed. They only carryout petty projects despite the large income they generate from crude oil’ (com. res.86).

But as these communities and the international community continue to pressurize the MNOCs in the region, the companies were compelled to adjust. They now carry out a few CSR acts to

justify their continuous crude oil exploitation in these communities. As mentioned earlier, there may be other factors responsible for the uneven distribution of CSR promises amongst community members, but corruption is one of the major hindrances. A common complaint in the six communities suggest that they have a major problem with community representation.

A community representative is one that mediates between the community and MNOCs making negotiations where necessary. They are interested in getting the MNOCs to help their community with projects that offer development including scholarships, employment and grants. Many of these representatives are accused of corrupt practices because they accept bribes from MNOCs. The representation problem in these communities is usually reported in two ways. Some are satisfied while others are unhappy with the representation. The happy people are typically those that had benefitted or are currently enjoying the dividends of hosting an MNOC in their community. While those who are at a loss because they are shelved from reaping any reward from these companies are the ones complaining about corruption or weak representation by community representatives.

In the communities I visited, these offices are usually by appointment either by the paramount ruler of the community or by the council of chiefs in the community. Generally, it is expected that a community representative should serve as a delegate for the community to the company. Most of the delegates in the region have been accused of ineffectiveness and corruption despite being paid as community representatives. Also, they are usually endorsed by community rulers and chiefs making it difficult to replace them even when they are ineffective.

In community B, when asked on what their community representatives were doing about the problems in their community, one of the indigenes who is a job seeker responded thus,

‘corruption is the main problem that we have here in this community, we find it hard to trust anyone who offers to help because, in the past, there have been offers from several groups to help with negotiating with the company, but this have not yielded the desired results as people tend to back out of the cause soon. When investigated, we find out that there was bribery. These companies would rather pay bribes than do things the right way. The level of corruption is very high but am holding on and I am optimistic that I also will be gainfully employed in one of these oil companies soon’ (com. res.62).

Community representation in these communities to MNOCs could sometimes be on different levels. Apart from the community representatives described above, the other forms of community representation could be in groups. In cases where they are in groups, they stop to

act against the company and even stay away from representing their community when they are offered money by the MNOCs.

According to Makpor & Leite, 2017, MNOCs have failed to carry out developmental projects in their host community and the region has also been deprived of the idea of CSR. In a few instances where MNOCs carry out developmental projects, community members are usually left out in the initiation and execution of such projects (Makpor & Leite, 2017). The few that might be involved, will in most cases be indicted with corruption. The report from community C according to respondent 33 is that:

‘I am an indigene of this community and in my opinion, MNOCs have done little or nothing for our community. All they do is bribe a few highly placed people mainly the chiefs, provide scholarships and give employment to their kids. When we as youths want to protest, these chiefs stop us. They are aware of the problems we face but because they do nothing because they do not have the same problems as us. The bribes they collect are used to build expensive houses in this community, the city and to send their children to expensive schools. Although there are problems of acid rain on buildings, they can maintain theirs. The scholarships meant for the less privileged in the community is either sold or used by their children. The relationship between the companies and the community has been destroyed by these corrupt elites in this community’ (com. res. 33).

It is expected that MNOCs should give back to a society where they are making profits as part of their CSR, a practice which is a part of the organisational standards everywhere in the world. According to Fallon (2014), CSR is a business practice that includes initiatives that are beneficial to society as part of the organisational strategy. Most of the MNOCs have their CSR plans (Jabrili & Karam, 2018; Tran, 2019). As a way of fulfilling this global obligation, companies in the region give back in many ways one of which is the scholarships pointed out by respondent 33. It is usually provided for pupils in primary, students in secondary and universities from these host communities. But, many people in these communities are not satisfied with the selection of candidates. This is because, the MNOCs have stated that it should be for the disadvantaged, but it turns out to be for the rich only.

In community E for instance, when I asked questions on CSR, respondent 38, a student who wishes to benefit from any of these scholarships said:

‘we hear about scholarship awards provided by the companies for our community. These scholarships hardly get to us, we hear and see people, not from our community enjoying scholarships meant for our community. On this, we do not blame the companies, but we are unhappy with our community representatives, they have betrayed us. This is the reason we are making efforts to get them replaced and it is only when we have replaced them that we will know how many scholarships we are truly entitled to. Then again, I think that selling these scholarship awards would not have been possible without help from some employees in the oil and gas company’ (com. res.38).

There are incidents of corrupt practices with the allocation of scholarship positions, but a member of the host community is more likely to get a scholarship offer all through their educational life as opposed to those that are from non-oil producing communities or areas. For instance, I was able to get a scholarship from the NDDC to carry out this research because I am from the Niger delta region. The interesting part of this scholarship is that they do not influence the direction of your research and you are not expected to return to the region to work for them because they do not have any offer for you. The NDDC believes that an education can open the doors to global job opportunities for a recipient.

In discussing the failure of the federal government in the region, a middle-aged man who is a bricklayer said that:

‘when there is a spill, they claim it is sabotage, then after much pressure they pay very little compensations. Will that bring back our crops or farmland? will they do this in other countries? These oil companies are only playing with our intelligence and the government is doing nothing about it’ (com. res.45).

I have discussed compensations and the land use act of 1978 in chapter two. This act drastically reduces the reimbursement that should be paid to people in the region when there are unforeseen disasters like oil spills and effects from flared gases. It is one of the reasons for the poverty in the region because the compensations are inadequate. The people are unable to do anything tangible with the money they are given as compensation after losing their source of income and livelihood.

I discovered during the fieldwork that MNOCs make efforts at finding out the problems in these communities which is a laudable step. However, what community dwellers are apprehensive

about is that they do little or nothing with the information they gather from these exercises. In community D for instance, a middle-aged man who was in his forties and a professional photographer asked me ‘are you a representative of this company? Pointing to the gate of the company in their community even after I had introduced myself, and I said no, I am a research student. He said ‘well, occasionally, we get to see representatives from this company, they ask us questions on how we feel about their operations, but nothing has come out of their constant questioning’ (com. res.70). If the results from these exercises are implemented, the relationship between MNOCs and host communities will improve. On the other hand, if the funds for the implementation of developments in these communities are handed over to corrupt community representatives or traditional rulers, it might never get to community members.

### Conclusion:

The results discussed in this chapter relate to the aim of the dissertation on the problems caused by the oil and gas industry in the Niger delta. Environmental degradation and the under-development of the Niger delta remain the main problems that the government and MNOCs are unable to resolve for over six decades. These problems have consequences that are either economic, social or political. It leaves local community dwellers feeling left out in the oil wealth from their communities. The chapter compares the problems described in the literature in chapter two with the account of respondents in the six communities where the fieldwork was carried out. Going around these six communities and conversing with men, women, and young people of different ages and educational background, political and social class, I realised that there are no improvements in the problems faced by crude oil host communities. Instead, there are more health problems than are enumerated in the literature. Some community members are not even aware of the health problems that could arise from environmental degradation. This high level of ignorance is described in the analysis of Halls (2013) and Williams (1996) where environmental victims are often not aware of their status. There is also a higher level of poverty, far above the poverty rates in the data presented by the National Bureau of Statistics. To resolve these problems, host communities should be given the right to take up the management of the crude oil in their communities. These communities have not played effective roles because the

government and MNOCs have refused to recognise them as stakeholders in the oil industry and custodians of their environment. It will enable them to monitor the MNOCs, reporting wrong doings to the appropriate organisation and on time. However, host communities will only achieve this if they are able to refuse all forms of bribery from the government and MNOCs.

## Chapter Six: The Impact of Corruption in the Niger Delta (Corruption and Colonialism).The Historical Roots of Corruption in Colonialism:

### 6.1: Introduction:

The data on the impact of colonialism on corruption in the Niger delta is presented in this work because of the responses from CSOs in the interviews on the role of corruption on civil society activism. It proposes that there is a relationship between corruption and colonialism implying that corruption has historical and structural roots embedded in colonialism which has lingered after independence in the Niger delta. In this chapter, I will be discussing colonialism and how it impacts corruption and the Nigerian crude oil industry. Finally, the fieldwork data collected from five older citizens using oral history will be analysed at the end of the chapter.

### 6.2: An Overview of Colonialism in Nigeria:

Colonialism is ‘the process by which the European powers (including the United States) reached a position of economic, military, political and cultural domination in much of Asia,

Africa and Latin America' (Stam & Spence, 1983, p.3). It is the policy or practice of acquiring full or partial political control over another country, occupying it with settlers, and exploiting it economically. The colonisation of the world by European powers began in the 1500s and continued to the mid-1900s (Kenyon, 2016). The European countries that occupied African territories include Britain, France, Germany, Belgium, Italy, Portugal and Spain.

According to Katuka, Itodo & Okafor (2016), there are mainly two perspectives from which scholars define colonialism. One of which is the domination of an under-developed territory by a more powerful state while, the other perspective defines it as the capture and ability to control the territories of another state (Horvath, 1972; Katuka, Itodo & Okafor, 2016). A perspective of the definition portrays tyranny while the other perspective suggests that colonialism was a skilful possession. Notwithstanding, they both portray a weak and needful Africa dominated by the colonial masters suggesting that the domination was necessary and would be helpful (Horvath, 1972).

The rationale for conquering territories varied from one colonizer to the other because for some, it was expected to fill certain economic gaps in their countries. These gaps include access to inexpensive labour and the ability to collect and control free or cheap natural resources. Colonialism was another way of expressing supremacy in the stiff rivalry amongst the countries within the European polity. Colonialism was also expected to proffer solutions to some of the social struggles in these European countries at the time. These problems within Europe were poverty, unemployment, social displacement from rural areas and homelessness (Rodney, 1972; Iweriebor, 2011; Kenyon, 2016).

The colonisation of Africa began with military invasion and diplomatic pressures resulting in the eventual conquest and annexation of the continent between the 1870s and the 1960s (Gann, Duignan & Turner, 1969; Boahen, 1985; Iweriebor, 2011). All the countries in Africa were colonised by European powers in the twentieth century except for Ethiopia and Liberia which were supposedly not colonised for different reasons (Iweriebor, 2011; Fraenkel, 2018). These countries were not colonised because they were already independent nations during the scramble of Africa by the Europeans. The Ethiopians were colonised by the Italians, but the capture of the country was short-lived because they were defeated by the Ethiopians shortly after the invasion (Negash, 1987). Whilst, Liberia is a country where the freed slaves from America settled on their return to Africa.

The relationship between the Europeans and Africans was initially to trade on agricultural produce. It gradually blossomed into that of slave trade where human beings were sold as commodities in the market to be used as implements to work on farms and plantations around the world (Alumona, 2017). The inhumane nature of the slave trade was opposed by an anti-slave movement leading to a general abolishment in 1807 (Clark, 2017). After the abolishment of the slave trade the colonial masters lived within and controlled the colonies, but between 1945-1960 most of the African countries had gained their independence from the Europeans (Gann, Duignan & Turner, 1969).

Nigeria was first occupied by the Portuguese before the British government took over. States like the Hausa & Fulani, Oyo, Kanem Bornu, the Igbo states, the Benin kingdom and Lagos in Nigeria were independent before colonialism. Lagos was the first independent state in Nigeria to be conquered, as at 1861, it was already a British colony (Katuka, Itodo & Okafor, 2016; Eric, 2016). It was followed by the fall of the Sultan Attahiru leading to the conquering of the northern protectorate while, the eastern protectorate was defeated through the influence of the Royal Niger Company (Eric, 2016). As independent states, they already had an organized system of leadership headed by traditional rulers and a system that settles disputes. And, the British government controlled the territories in Nigeria using some of these existing leadership platforms (Katuka, Itodo & Okafor, 2016; Eric, 2016).

The evolution of the Nigerian state began in 1906 through a merger of the Lagos and southern colonies by Sir Walter Egerton and leading to the amalgamation of the southern and northern protectorates in 1914 (Eric, 2016). The merger of the different territories to create the Nigeria was envisioned to reduce administrative cost problems and to cut the complexities around the exploitation of natural resources located in the different protectorates. It is argued that the British government officially dominated Nigeria in 1900 despite being present in Lagos since 1861 (Agbu, 2017). Nigeria became a federation in 1954 and gained her independence from the British government in 1960.

Colonialism presented new challenges, demands and opportunities that led to the transformation of colonised indigenous social structures (Osaghae, 2006). According to Heldring & Robinson (2012), colonialism should have been lauded for introducing technology, peace and an access to modern institutions but these benefits were short-lived, they lasted only during colonialism. Furthermore, the authors suggested that the lasting legacies of colonialism are discrimination, inequality, and a negative influence on the political and economic

institutions in Africa. Lane (2004) blamed the poor political development of Africa on the historical foundations embedded in colonialism. Other legacies of the colonial administration were indirect rule, the introduction of a special native administrative tax which was a form of extortion, seizure of land and segregation and an introduction of the trade by barter system especially for mineral resources (Katuka, Itodo & Okafor, 2016).

In the long-term, colonialism appears to be unprofitable to colonies making it inconsequential (Alumona, 2017). Most of the structures introduced by the colonial masters were to enable them to run the administration of captured territories smoothly. Examples of some of the changes established by colonialism in the Niger delta includes: the imposition of a new language, Christianity, infrastructural development, British form of education, healthcare and amalgamation of independent colonies.

Before colonialism, the people in the Niger delta communicated with their indigenous languages, some of which are going extinct because of the use of English language. The new choice of language is responsible for the gradual loss of the culture, tradition and values of the people because language is the convener of these practices (Arowolo, 2010). A common language is an integral part of facilitating communication amongst people (Alumona, 2017). Apart from communication, the English language was introduced as a lingua franca to facilitate the effective day to day running of the administration in the region. The colonial government were not interested in passing the English language to the people in the region but were attentive to the ability of communicating effectively and convincing their fellow countrymen that they had good reasons for colonizing Africa (Ekeh, 1975). The English language remains the lingua franca amongst speakers with different native languages but the three major languages in Nigeria are Hausa, Yoruba and Igbo, there are over two hundred other indigenous languages in the country.

Pre-colonial African life was heavily influenced by religion because almost everything was seen and interpreted in the supernatural (Igboin, 2011). But the African tradition has since been replaced with Christianity all over Africa and the Niger delta is not exempted. Christianity was introduced by the British missionaries during colonialism and it is one of the biggest structural adjustments and legacies of the British government. the colonial masters exploited the people in the region by promoting their religious beliefs, values and ways of life (Igboin, 2011). Christianity stood against include polygamy and the reduction in the number of barbaric killings linked to the anger of the gods. The belief that the ancestors played prominent roles in

the maintenance of morality in the community hardly dies especially because of the growth in corrupt practices in the region (Igboin, 2011). The elders in the Niger delta that were interviewed as part of this research had their opinion on how Christianity influenced corrupt practices in the region, this will be discussed later in this chapter.

Before colonisation in Nigeria, there were barely any infrastructural development in the region and the people have lived in darkness without electricity. This was not peculiar to the region as there were a lot of other societies which were under-developed like America at the time (Heldring & Robinson, 2012). America is now considered a developed nation and Nigeria a developing nation. Arowolo (2010) is of the opinion that the Niger delta would have been better developed without colonialism. The major part of the infrastructural development of the colonial rule was the introduction and provision of electricity, portable drinking water supply and good roads (Phillip, 2005). Water and electricity were provided in the various regions of Nigeria to maintain a healthy lifestyle mainly for the colonial masters. Infrastructural development in these times was a deliberate act of making the region inhabitable for the Colonist. For instance, it was important for the colonial masters to move from one place to the other, so they provided roads for transportation. Infrastructural development in the colonial times was aimed at providing comfort for the colonial masters as they ruled. The selfishness in these infrastructural plans are being identified because there of the absence of innovatory plans on the maintenance of the infrastructures provided. Many of them were no longer useful after independence because of the absence of a continuity plan.

Education before colonialism in the Niger delta was suited to fit the demands of the people and it started from the home to places where age groups and peers gather (Kay & Nystrom, 1971) and education was limited to primary schools. The colonial government and the Christian missionaries initiated the British style of education in the Niger delta to facilitate communication (Whitehead, 1981). The education in this period was self-alienating, and psychologically draining resulting in the loss of pride and was not valuable (Kay & Nystrom, 1971). The colonial masters pioneered education in Nigeria using the missionaries to teach only a select few how to read and write. Before the colonialism in the Niger delta, children were taught basic lessons by older people through tales, storytelling while apprenticeship was the way in which hand trades like artistry, carpentry, design etc. were taught to those that were interested to learn (Woods, 2018; Kaschula, 2001; Abdi, 2007).

The Niger delta had an organised traditional health care system that cared for the sick before colonialism. The traditional healthcare providers who were specialists in their chosen fields were referred to as ‘herbalists’ or ‘traditional medicine men’ who consulted the gods while collecting herbs and administering treatments (Ajenifuja, 2011). However, the arrival of the colonial masters introduced the orthodox style of medicine because they were unable to understand this type of medical treatment. Even in recent times, the treatment of some illnesses is quicker using traditional medicines because most of these medicines are plant based and do not have adverse side effects (Vedavathy, 2003).

Finally, the colonial government brought together the independent colonies discussed earlier with various languages to form the nation called Nigeria. The cultural and ethnic differences of the people in the country remains a problem encouraging corruption and tribalism as discussed in chapter three (Odeyemi, 2014). The country still has a problem of cohabiting peacefully because there are incessant killings arising from inter-tribal clashes. The structural adjustments made by the British government replaced the traditional systems and encouraged corruption including taking away the fear of an unforeseen god. Corruption is also supported by tribalism in Nigeria as earlier discussed in the cases of the government and the ex-governors Alamiesiegha and James Ibori discussed in chapter five.

### 6.3: The role of colonialism in the ongoing problems of corruption in the Niger delta:

The relationship between colonialism and corruption in the Niger delta in this work will be analysed from the perspective of post-colonialism as mention in chapter two. Post-colonialism in the study refers to the period since the end of colonialism (Mahana & Maut, 2014) which is from 1960 in Nigeria. Post-colonialism is a representation of the opinions of different scholars including Frantz Fanon (1967), Edward Said, Bill Ashcroft (1989) and his collaborators, GayatriSpivak, HomiBhabha, Aizaz Ahmad (1992) and others (Mahanta & Maut, 2014). It takes account of all the historical and structural changes experienced during and after colonialism. According to Pierce (2006), ‘Corruption is the legacy of a long history of politics, state formation, and economic exploitation, and of a complex interplay between indigenous and foreign understandings (p.888).

Colonialism shaped the practice of corruption in Nigeria (Mulinge & Lesetedi, 1998). This argument draws a conclusion on how the foundation and structures of public administration in the region were laid during colonialism (Njoku, 2005; Musitha, 2016). It shaped the legal, political, religious, social and economic spheres of the Niger delta. Before colonialism, there were several offences that were punishable by death, the banishment of an entire family/shaming, flogging and imprisonments. The application of these corporal forms of punishments discouraged wrong practices.

According to Mulinge & Lesetedi (1998), corruption during colonialism was introduced in three different ways: 1) the introduction of a monetary tax system that was aimed at extorting money from colonies 2) the appointment of warrant chiefs encouraged and imposed 'undue' power on a selected few that applied vested power to extort money from local people 3) the administrative style (the principle of divide and rule) introduced during colonialism enabled the colonial masters to subdue their colonies thereby encouraging corrupt practices.

Katuka, Itodo & Okafor (2016) suggests that the only significant contribution made by the colonial masters to Africa was corruption. They made this argument claiming that what would have been considered as a contribution to Africa by the colonial masters would have been technological advancement. But African countries that were developing technologically before colonialism are still regarded as developing countries implying that the legacies of colonialism are the faulty historical and structural foundations of corruption.

This point is further buttressed by the literary account of authors like Chinua Achebe in *Things fall apart*. He suggested in his work that corruption was arguably at its barest minimum in the pre-colonial times because the idea of doing anything contrary to the rules and regulations of a community was punishable by the banishment of the person and his or her family members. Family members watched out for each other making sure that they were doing right because punishment affects an entire family not just the individual. At its core, the African tradition was associated with a god or deity always punishing offenders (Musitha, 2016). The fear of being punished by an unseen god/deity was a major form of deterrent from indulging in corrupt practices.

The repercussion of colonialism on Africa is disagreeable because it introduced corruption, capitalism and oppression (Igboin, 2011). Examples of the ways the colonial masters influenced corruption in the Niger delta includes administrative style, the encouragement of treacherous opportunities in former colonies, dependence on foreign powers and companies,

unaccountability, disrupting the existing political structure. The style of public administration is an important stimulus to the practice of corruption in the Niger delta. It was different from the African traditional system (Harneit-Sievers, 1998; Arowolo, 2010; Alumona, 2017). A key part of the public administration of colonialism was the appointment of warrant chiefs, court messengers and interpreters (Ebitu, 2016). These offices appeared necessary in the colonial time, but the public officers carried out their new functions making sure to please the colonial masters and themselves, putting aside the feelings of their local community members (Njoku, 2005; Ebitu, 2016). Their practices were characterised by extensive corruption, extortion and an oppression of the people.

According to Pierce (2006), corruption was expressed in the way taxes were assessed and collected in northern Nigeria. The tax assessment officials during the pre-independent era demanded for bribes to enable them reduce measurements on farms owned by northerners which will eventually reduce tax liability. Furthermore, the author suggested that the colonial masters were aware of the wrongdoings of their officers but failed to stop them because they were largely interested in collecting taxes.

The appointed warrant chiefs were rich and respected in their communities, a scenario that currently plays out in the region. In the Niger delta, financial contributions to families and community begets respect and could bring about conferment of titles (Aghalino, 2000; Ebitu, 2016). Then again, a possible question that could arise is are these officers not indigenous people, why were they corrupt? They were corrupt because they had the backing of the colonial masters, they could no longer be punished by the community, so they no longer obeyed these rules. Corruption in places where it is hardly noticeable is usually controlled by a strong laws or legal system.

According to Njoku (2005), 'the advent of the structures of European colonialism, invented an uneven socio-political landscape, placing public officers over their communities and thus reducing the power of the people to exercise a meaningful pressure on public figures or calling them to order' (p.100). The colonial masters formed new public systems like the court and installed warrant chiefs, court messengers, interpreters as if communities required new leadership systems to function (Harneit-Sievers, 1998; Owolabi, 2007; Alumona, 2017). Corruption in public offices began before the independence.

Before the Nigerian independence on October 1st, 1960, there was the setting up of a panel of inquiry to investigate Dr. Nnamdi Azikiewe one of the first indigenously elected politician on

investing public funds in the Africa Continental Bank (ACB), a bank in which he had an interest (Adegbulu, 2010; Katuka et. al, 2016). Azikiwe was indicted of wrongdoings on the 6th of January 1956 by the panel of inquiry headed by Foster Juttai Commission of Enquiry (Adegbulu, 2010; Katuka et. al, 2016). Also, a few years after independence in 1962, Adegbulu (2010) stated that, Chief Obafemi Awolowo was accused of corrupt practices by members of his political party, Action Group (AG), he too was indicted with corrupt practices. He was accused of using his position as a public officer to divert public funds into unauthorized projects. In 1967, 15 other officers in the mid-western government were also found to be corrupt (Adegbulu, 2010; Katuka et. al, 2016).

Colonialism 'left' a legacy of corruption by encouraging vicious opportunities in the countries of the former colonial masters. Looters of African national treasuries lodge the money in the banks of the Western colonial masters and escape trial into those countries abroad' (Katuka, Itodo & Okafor, 2016 p.15). The cases of the late Chief Dieprieve Solomon Peter Alamieyeseigha of Bayelsa and James Ibori of Delta states as described in chapter 2 of this work are a few examples of politicians in the region saving looted funds abroad. After the Alamieyeseigha's money laundering scandal, alleged that 5 leading UK banks and another at Switzerland are fuelling corruption in Nigeria. The banks are Barclays, NatWest, Royal Bank of Scotland (RBS) and HSBC, as well as Switzerland's UBS (Aljazeera "UK banks 'aided Nigeria corruption", 2010)

As at the time of the report, the banks did not fail in their responsibility but are accused of encouraging corruption by accepting millions of pounds without verifying the source. While there is a major fight against corruption in Nigeria, most of the embezzled funds are saved in foreign banks especially in Europe Recently, banks in the UK are tightening rules to prevent the collection of laundered funds nevertheless, some UK banks are still a haven for corrupt politicians to hide their loots. Also, the Nigerian government is partnering with foreign agencies to return looted funds but some of these funds may never be returned because of the secrecy involved in the transactions.

Another residual process of colonialism is the dependence on foreign power and companies. Crude oil exploration in the Niger delta has been managed by MNOCs long before independence and it has not changed. A few of these companies are no longer in the region but there are newer MNOCs arriving the region. Some of these companies have helped in sustaining corruption in the Niger delta. In 'June 2004, 'Shell, one of the largest oil contractors

in Nigeria, admits it has inadvertently contributed to the country's poverty, environmental degradation, violence and corruption through its business activities, but spurns call for the company to leave. (Mohammed, 2013 p.128). It has fired a few of the staff after many years of practicing corruption in the Niger delta.

The foundations of unaccountability during colonialism encouraged corruption especially in the management of natural resources including coal and oil (Dike, 2005; Osaghae, 2006). However, Tombs and Whyte (2015) argue that, the behaviour of corporate organisations in countries with colonial legacies and those without are the same. As discussed in chapter five, MNOCs in Nigeria are powerful because of their relationship with the federal government. The discovery of a natural resource should be beneficial to the public and revenue accruing from them should be used for development and the good of everyone. But in the Niger delta as earlier discussed in chapter four, corruption has resulted in the embezzlement of huge oil revenue by only a privileged few. Corruption has allowed MNOCs to short change the peoples of the region because corporate crimes impact and victimise the already vulnerable (Tombs & Whyte, 2015).

Notwithstanding the impact of colonialism on corruption, the failure of the MNOCs is partially beneficial to the Nigerian government. The crimes MNOCs commit in the Niger delta is backed by the support they get from the federal government. According to Jike (2004), the Niger delta was rich in mineral resources even before colonialism, it was these resources that attracted foreign traders like the Portuguese and the British government. One of the raw materials that was in high demand at that time was oil palm, it was the main commodity of interest to the colossal Royal Niger Trading and was used by soap making industries in Britain (Jike, 2005).

The consequences of colonialism in the Niger delta are enormous and they range from under-development to corruption, poor administrative standards, joblessness and highhandedness in governance (Alumona, 2017). Ekeh in 1975 argues that the colonial administration was illegitimate, exploitative, introduced corruption, and nepotism amongst others. Africa was a place where raw materials were produced and taken to Europe to produce consumer goods, some of these consumer goods are brought back to be consumed in Nigeria, this style of administration has created developmental problems in the country and was largely exploitative (Alumona, 2017).

Colonialism disrupted the existing political structure by bringing together people of different languages and ethnicity that were unwilling to be brought together to form a country called Nigeria for the sake of reducing cost and easing governance. The result of this merger is the

reason why there are incessant political and religious crisis in the country, Muslims against Christians and one tribe against another (Katuka, Itodo & Okafor, 2016). In conclusion, people will ordinarily practice corruption, but formulation and implementation of laws will deter them from carrying out corrupt practices. The implementation of formulated laws and status is the major way to maintain law and order in a country.

Nigeria is always ranked high on the corruption index as one of the most corrupt countries in the world (Treisman, 1999; Swamy et al., 1999) because of the failure of the judiciary in the country. The other aspects of colonialism are the use of military approach, marginalisation of communities, gender oppression, introduction of courts that are biased and the competition between the natives and the elites for power (Katuka, Itodo & Okafor, 2016).

#### 6.4: The impact of colonialism on corruption in the Niger delta; a Tale of the Elders:

The data for this chapter was collected using oral histories in Creek-town and Bonny in the Niger delta. Presently, Creek town in Cross Rivers state is a quiet town with less than a thousand inhabitants. It used to be a major settlement and a slavery business centre for the British until the 1950s. There are a few physical evidences to show contact with the colonial masters such as the buildings in bricks that housed the colonial masters. Bonny on the other hand, is a coastal town in Rivers state which plays host to some of the major oil and gas companies in the state. It was also a host to the colonial masters serving as a sea port because it is located at the brink of the Atlantic Ocean. Data collection from Creek town and Bonny is to understand the experiences of older people with the colonial masters. How colonialism impacted the practice of corruption and why it has lingered in the Niger delta.

These accounts are built on the communal and personal relationships and experiences with the colonial masters as inhabitants of these communities. On oral history, there are five respondents who are above 60 years of age, three of them in Bonny and two in Creek town were interviewed using the oral history method. This part of the chapter is a description of the impact of colonialism on corruption in the region. It will explore the structural and historical foundations of colonialism and how it impacts the practice of corruption in the Niger delta from a post-colonial perspective, a study on how the past affects the present.

Corruption is a menace in the oil rich Niger delta because of the adverse effects it has on the region. As discussed earlier, scholars have proposed several reasons for the rise in corruption in the region, but what is crucial in this work is to analyse how corruption became prominent during colonialism and the factors driving the growth in the region after colonialism. The questions that I seek to answer with this fieldwork are: how corruption became a prominent practice during colonialism and discuss how a colonisation process that ended 58 years ago still impacts the region.

I will begin by describing how bribery which I have discussed earlier in chapter three and has become a part of the culture of the Niger delta people was introduced during colonialism. The Niger delta is known for their act of gift giving which is an old African culture. It is a part of the tradition and culture of the people in the region and was the way the colonial masters ‘warmed’ their way into the hearts of the people. They were enticed with beautiful gifts that were readily not available in the region and it was difficult for them to differentiate between bribery and gift giving initially. Respondent one believes that corruption became a prominent practice in the colonial times. She is a retired teacher and she said

‘the colonial masters were able to get into our communities when they started offering bribes to the heads of the community in the form of gifts. I was told by my parents that it was how slavery was introduced in the region. The art of giving enticements to get something in return was a major part of colonialism and it is practiced till date’(res.1).

The gifts paved the way for requests from the colonial master to be granted, it was way of showing gratitude and appreciation. Bribery, gift giving, and slave trade are the reason many African countries are poor (Nunn, 2008). The colonial masters favoured only a select few and they were the chiefs and community leaders. Bribery has taken over the region and a major causal factor in abandoned projects.

The other way corruption was introduced in the region was through the collection of taxes. Before colonialism, there was nothing like tax collection in the region, people made contributions to common developments and celebrations voluntarily. But as described earlier using the example of norther Nigeria, tax collection was a major part of the colonial system after they had introduced the monetary system. Tax collection was carried out by warrant chiefs, they collected taxes in monetary forms and agricultural produce including animals like goats, chicken, cows and rams. Money and farm produce exchanged hands for a better relationship with the colonial masters.

One of the reasons the Niger delta has remained under-developed is because there is a high incident of corruption, bribery and oil theft (Assi, Amah, & Edeke, 2016). These incidences of corruption are practiced everywhere in the region, but the main culprits are the politicians because they practice bribery. Respondent three, a retired engineer was firm on how the appointment of these new forms of leaders influenced the practice of corruption in the region. His response precisely was

‘a major problem of corruption started when the colonial masters introduced the court clerks, messengers and warrant chiefs. They were friends with the traditional rulers in the communities making the other members of the community feel less, the clerks served as messengers oppressing the people. They were the first to learn English language from the colonial masters and they made wrong interpretations to defraud the people and collect items including yams, goats and other foodstuffs to feed their families. They forcefully collected things from other members of the community using the Whiteman as the excuse’ (Oral res.3).

These messengers were probably not sent by the colonial masters, but they were also not cautioned by them. They could do whatever was good in their ‘eyes’ meaning their relationship with the colonial master placed them above the law. It is the model of leadership practiced in the region. Example is, the politicians are an elite class, they extort money from their subjects and public funds yet, they are going around free, not tried or prosecuted. As discussed earlier, the present administration of president Buhari has its main agenda as the fight against corruption but has failed to try members of its cabinet that are involved in corrupt practices. Instead, members of the opposition are tried by the EFCC regularly and imprisoned when they are found wanting. Making the fight against corruption by the Buhari’s administration biased thereby replicating the colonial style of governance after 58 years of independence.

Respondent four is a retired principal of a secondary school in Port Harcourt, she was affirmative that corruption came to prominence with the colonial masters, she said,

‘corruption is a colonial problem although the other members of the community who worked with the White man further buttressed it. The colonial masters were the real oppressors because the Whiteman collected everything, he wanted from community members. He used people as slaves to serve him and achieve his desires’ (Oral res.4).

This respondent argued that corruption became prominent in the colonial times because of the exertion of excessive power by the British government on the citizens in the colonial days. The

colonial masters and their warrant chiefs exercised excessive power over the people during colonialism in acts such as the collection of taxes (Joireman, 2001; Klein & Miers, 2013). She stated that it was not because the locals, warrant chiefs were interested in dealing badly with fellow countrymen, but it was because pleasing the 'Whiteman' was compulsory and these community members went overboard to achieve it.

Colonialism has had a lasting effect on the region because it is the first civilized model of governance introduced to the people. A model followed tactically up until date representing how the past affects the future. Today, people in governance are treated as 'higher' citizens and given preferential treatments because of their portfolios in politics. To examine how this model was developed during colonialism and how it has impacted the present. Respondent five, a retired permanent secretary at the ministry of water resources in Rivers state responded by saying that

'one of my experiences with the Whiteman and the warrant chiefs was that they asked for a lot of reverence. For instance, we are all going to stand while they are walking past as a sign of respect and whatever they said was final, their decisions cannot be overturned' (Oral res.5).

This supported the point of respondent four, the colonial masters demanded a lot of respect and things done according to specification, failure to do so will attract some sort of punishment. This is a style of leadership that has impacted the region so much that politicians are treated with a lot of respect not because of their contributions but because they hold public offices that should be respected even when they are involved in wrong doings.

Other changes experienced in these communities during colonialism according to respondent one was the introduction of Christianity. She said,

'before the Whiteman, we lived in closely knitted communities and we were mainly farmers and fishermen. We practiced our traditional African religion where we had to relate with our ancestors, but the white man introduced Christianity, making light of all our gods and ancestors' (Oral res.1).

I have discussed Christianity above and the roles it played in colonialism, but this respondent said that colonialism made the African traditional region unattractive to practice. He argues that this was the main reason the practice of corruption became prominent.

Respondent two agreed with respondent one and suggested that the way Christianity preached forgiveness which was contrary to the beliefs of the African tradition was a major push for corrupt practices in the region. He highlights this by saying that

‘it was hard to accept the religion of the Whiteman initially but gradually we have almost all become Christians. Before the Whiteman, it was difficult to do evil in our communities, you will either be banished or sent to the evil forest. Sometimes it could be just the individual and other times an entire family as such, people were very careful about what they did because of the kind of punishment that will accompany misdeeds are usually extreme. These punishments were supposedly meted out by the gods’ (Oral res.2).

These extreme forms of punishment allotted to defaulters includes the abolishment of the offender or the entire family of the offender/public shaming, death according to the dictates of the gods. A major point these respondents raised was that in these times, a family name was of uttermost importance and whatever evil a man or woman commits affects the family name. Therefore, it was important to make such enquiries before marriage or any form of a long-time relationship including business. For example, if a man steals, it is assumed that his entire family are thieves. These stigmas go from generation to generation preventing people from committing acts that will shame other family members. But a major aspect of Christianity is the practice of forgiveness and these respondents think that it has extensively encouraged people to indulge in corruption. Christianity has its high points, but the respondents think that people get involved in wrong doing wilfully with a strategy of asking for forgiveness afterwards.

A major point raised by respondent 1 who is also a retired teacher is that the judicial system introduced by the colonial masters is a major contributor to corrupt practices in the region.

‘The courts in the colonial times encouraged corruption and are still doing so because, you are a suspect until proven guilty even if you were caught in the act. The consequence of this is that a good lawyer can defend you in such a way that you can be set free. Also, the judicial system from the colonial times encouraged bribery meaning that those who are rich can buy justice for themselves and the poor might be prosecuted over an offence they did not commit. This is because they might sometimes be unable to afford a good lawyer and cannot pay bribes’ (Oral res,1).

The introduction of a judicial system that proposes subtle penalties as opposed to the pre-colonial times cannot deter people from practicing corruption. Before now, the fear of the gods

was a deterrent to practicing corruption. The courts in Nigeria have also not proven to be an ideal place for fair hearing. Apart from the courts, in recent times, institutions like the 'Human Right Watch' are advocating against such barbaric acts of justices as were practiced in the pre-colonial times. Braithwaite is arguing against "stigmatic shaming" making an example of someone and thrusting them outside the community (Braithwaite, 1989). Stigmatic shaming which is what characterizes much of the way punishment is meted out today and is what characterised the traditional societies of Nigeria, is not the most effective method. Inasmuch as, I do not support the violation of human rights, I think that the way to fight corruption in Nigeria will be to encourage fair hearing and adopt more stringent penalties.

### Conclusion:

Colonialism has great influences in shaping the Niger delta including the practice of corruption. The impact of colonialism on corruption in Africa have been argued by several scholars but there is limited literature on its role in the Niger delta. Corruption is a major problem in Nigeria and impacts the oil rich Niger delta with great consequences. The arguments established in the oral history interviews conducted in the region amongst older citizens show that corruption came into prominence during colonialism. It was influenced by the administrative style of the British government. These practices have lingered over the years and are now incorporated into the culture of the people causing enormous problems. Example of such practices that is problematic is differentiating between gift giving and bribery. The act of bribery is one of the many corrupt practices of CSOs hindering activism in the Niger delta at a time it is much needed. Therefore, one way of resolving the problem of corruption in CSOs will be to understand the impact of colonialism.

## Chapter Seven: Societal Responses - Civil Society Organisations:

### 7.1: Introduction:

There is a difficulty encountered by scholars and advocates in providing a unifying definition for civil society. It means different things to different people in so doing, lacks precision (Edwards, 2009). Based on the above, it is important to define civil society and what it represents in the Niger delta. This research will contribute to showing how civil society operates “on the ground” in the region. In this chapter, I will describe civil society and how it is practiced in Africa and the Niger delta. On the civil society discussion in the Niger delta, emphasis will be laid on how CSOs are shaping and championing environmental activism. The chapter will also analyse efforts made by CSOs in resolving the other problems around crude oil exploitation in the region.

Civil society activism in the Niger delta is pertinent for the region because of the problems around environmental degradation, under-development and sometimes resource control. These problems are ignored by a highly crude oil dependent Nigeria despite a global shift to more environmentally friendly energy options in recent times. As will be discussed in this chapter, CSOs are responsible for creating awareness and ensuring that the federal government and MNOCs are held accountable for these problems. But they experience some hindrances as they carry out acts of activism in the region. The impact of corruption is bigger than the other impediments and the role it plays in civil society activism will be introduced in this chapter.

### 7.2: Understanding the Concept of Civil Society:

The term civil society was originally coined during the 18th-century Scottish enlightenment by Adam Ferguson, Adam Smith, and David Hume who were Scottish enlightenment philosophers (Ignatieff, 1995; Cox, 1999; Carothers & Barndt, 1999; Roginsky & Shortall, 2009). For these philosophers, civil society is overseen by law, a part of the state meaning that it cannot be differentiated from the state (Mary, 2003). They gave prominence to civil society as creating

the market and not been created by the market. It was on this ground that Ignatieff in 1995 stated that:

‘civil society was inconceivable without a market, it was not a creature of the market. Indeed, the reverse was the case. As the Scottish philosophers opined that it was a civil society - especially the pressure of its public opinion - that determined how free, efficient, and honest a market would emerge’ (p.130).

The Scottish enlightenment thinkers model of civil society also proposed that civil society is not necessarily about democracy as it will strive wherever there is good governance. In this instance, good governance represents the ability to carry out public affairs effectively, in a way that the people governed are satisfied. The idea of prospering with good governance was demonstrated citing the example of France and how civil society flourished in ancient France even when it was not a practising democracy (Ignatieff, 1995). Nevertheless, civil society was a key part of democracy in Northern America and other parts of the world. Although there are success stories on civil society activism globally, the different styles and forms of practices compound the problems around defining it. An analysis of how civil society is described shows the different opinions of scholars.

Civil society is a contested concept with varying definitions (Fadakinte, 2015). Below are some definitions of civil society. According to Hegel, civil society is self-organised but should be controlled and directed by the state to serve its purpose which is the common good of the society (Lewis, 2002). He maintained that the state should play a major role in the management and control of civil society in line with the Scottish enlightenment thinkers. Alexis De Tocqueville is a French aristocrat that was sent by the French government to the US in the 19th century. On his return, he stated that civil society is established to meet the different needs of the society. The French aristocrat also suggested that “democracy in America and the main figure in the modern ‘liberal-individualist’ approach is another way civil society has evolved over the years.

According to Alexis De Tocqueville, civil society should be built around community spirit, volunteerism and independence from the ruling political power to lessen the domination of a state. Tocqueville suggested that the foundation of civil society is the relationship between citizens and the non-political organisations (Buchowski, 1996). In his view civil society is made up of ‘voluntary associations’, groupings of citizens that come together to achieve a goal or set of goals and then disband once they have achieved their aim. In this sense it is at the very core

of what democratic action and participation should be about. He observed and theorised civil society using an organisational pathway, the various forms of organisation (Buchowski, 1996; De Tocqueville & Bryant, 2000).

Whilst, Antonio Gramsci in 1971 defines civil society as a space or ground that is different from the state. This ideology was influential to Eastern Europe and Latin America and was effective in resisting authoritative rule in the 1970s. His ideology can be linked to research on social movements which seeks to transform structures and identities stating that, civil society should be different from the state. He argues that civil society should be independent of the state so that they can act against the case when the need arises.

Other definitions of civil society are as follows: according to Hearn, (2001),

‘in a bottom-up sense, civil society is the realm in which those who are disadvantaged by globalisation of the world economy can mount their protests and seek alternatives in a ‘top-down’ sense, however, states and corporate interests influence the current development of this current version of civil society towards making it an agency of stabilizing the social and political status quo’(Hearn, 2001, p.1; see also Cox, 1999, pp.10-11).

Generally, in practice, civil society refers to voluntary associations that are different from the political, state and market but are driven by democratic dimensions of honesty, civility, and unity (Roginsky & Shortall, 2009). It is a collection or network of civil associations that are intended to promote the effectiveness and stability of democracy and the mobilization of citizens for public causes (Foley & Edwards, 1996). In this definition of civil society, democracy is a key aspect of civil society and this points away from how the term was initially defined by the Scottish philosophers. The Scottish Enlightenment thinkers proposed that the absence of democracy should not be a problem for civil society. All that is needed for civil society to strive is good governance, where accountability is the core. The description of the various views on civil society above is an indication of how the term has evolved from the foundations laid by the Scottish enlightenment thinkers.

Civil society is now sometimes being used as an analytical construct, a political or policy tool driving the solution to a group of people whilst helping in projects such as poverty elevation and stimulating action (Lewis, 2002). According to Edward (2009), it might also proffer solutions to economic, societal, and political problems. Irrespective of the different opinions on what civil society represents and how it can be utilised, there are certain important

characteristics that all CSOs should possess or share according to Salamon & Anheier (1998). This analysis is based on the data collected from thirteen different countries on what they refer to as the non-profit organisations which is supposedly the space between the market and the state, where CSOs occupy.

**Table 7.1: Characteristics of Civil Society**

Organised	Salamon & Anheier (1998, p.214) argue that there should be some sort of organisational structure and institutional reality which should be expressed in the possession of a legal document. It should serve as a guide for the organisation and in instances where this is absent; documentation should be demonstrated in other ways.
Private	the organisation can receive support from the government but must be perceptibly different from the government. They must be self-reliant and away from the government. The state should possess the power to maintain law and order but not too strong to oppress its subjects. There should also be a good relationship between the state, economy, and civil society as this will lead to growth, equity (even-handedness) and stability (Salamon & Anheier, 1998).
Non-profit Distributing	a CSO is a non-profit organisation however, if there are convincing reasons and instances where profit is generated, it must be reinvested into the organisation and not shared amongst stakeholders.
Self-governing	Every CSO should have a meaningful degree of autonomy and independence as this is important for them to function unbiasedly. Therefore, it should be different from the family, community, and the state.
Voluntary	A CSO should be charitable and optional.

### 7.3: The Civil Society Practice:

Civil Society is a contested concept within academia as described above. It has been described by reference to include Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) which can sometimes be referred to as Non-Profit Organisations, and interest groups. The others are protest waves and cycles, and social movements which are in the form of militant organisations in this work. The differing definitions for these terms compound the snags around conceptualising civil society (Piotrowski, 2015). The practices of these different groups intertwine and there might be no differences between them most of the times like it is in the Niger delta.

In the Niger delta, CSOs are the coming together of NGOs, self-help groups and militant organisations. I have made this classification because of the roles these different organisations play in bringing improvements to the problems in the Niger delta. NGOs are non-profit organisations operating independently from the government that are interested in resolving social, environmental and political problems. While self-help groups are non-violent organisations formed by community members to resolve the everyday problems they face. Examples include advocacy groups, women's groups and community organisations. Militant organisations engage in violence as a way of addressing crude oil related problems in the region with the government and MNOCs.

One way of addressing the civil society confusion will be to analyse the origin and changing uses of the term. Civil society became a prominent practice in the days of social movements in the Central and Eastern Europe. It was a fight against dictatorship in governance around the 1980s and the democratisation of Latin America (Kaldor, 2003; Walzer, 1991). After the impacts made by the social movements in Central and Eastern Europe, civil society has become a globally used term with some exactness to the definition (Rau, 1991). The next high point for civil society which provides a clearer description of how it can be defined was the Polish case. It highlights the struggle by social movements in the mid-1970s to create a space independent of the state for themselves during communism in Poland (Bernhard, 1993; Piotrowski, 2015). Civil society activism in this era was represented as social movements giving rise to the success story in Poland.

Social movements in Poland were headed by Komitet Obrony Robotników (KOR) which when translated in English, means 'Workers Defence Committee' (WDC) (Bernhard, 1993). The philosophy of KOR was to cater for the welfare of workers that were exposed to some forms

of oppression by the state. KOR was not the only social movement in Poland at the time. With the help of the other organisations, which were essentially unions, it operated an independent press that secretly printed and distributed informative papers on workers' rights. This collaboration with the other social movements enabled them to develop a resistance forcing the dictatorship party-state to tolerate these organisations.

This tolerance did not create organisations that were independent of the state, but one emerged in 1980 following massive strikes by the working class. The strike was based on a twenty-one-point request in the Gdansk Agreement leading to the signing of a legal document between the state and CSOs (Bernhard, 1993). They secured the right to strike and to form an independent trade union. The "solidarity" trade union, which then became the larger mantra of the social movement. Solidarity was outlawed during martial law and went underground. After 1989, it morphed into a sort of political party which won the first democratic elections. The leader and cofounder of Solidarity (an electrician working in the shipping docks in Gdansk), Lech Walesa, became the first post-communist president.

The autonomous CSOs after the agreement in Poland lasted only for a year with the declaration of a martial law in 1981 (Bernhard, 1993). By 1988, after two small strikes it became clear that the fight against civil society will not succeed. Consequently, the status of a civil society that is independent of the state was re-claimed (Bernhard, 1993). This reclamation gave rise to negotiations enabling civil society members to contest for some seats in the parliament leading to the democratization of Poland. The European peace and human rights groups were the support system for the Eastern Europeans resulting in the signing of the Helsinki agreement of 1975. These new forms of liaison with the international community forced the Polish government to improve in the areas they were lacking. There were a few other attempts by CSOs in other parts of the world like the Latin American collaboration with the North American human rights groups on the human rights legislation. These practices from Europe and Latin Americans changed the way civil society was practice in the 1990s (Mary, 2003).

#### 7.4: The Functions of the Civil Society:

Generally, there are certain functions that CSOs should carry out in a society. According to Ilal, Kleibl and Munck (2014), there are seven functions of CSOs, and they include the protection of citizens, monitoring for accountability, advocacy and public communication, socialization,

building community, Intermediation, and facilitation between citizens, state and service delivery. Table 7.2 is a brief description of the functions of civil society.

**Table 7.2: Functions of Civil Society**

Protection of Citizens	CSOs have a function or responsibility of protecting the citizens of a state. They carry out this purpose by standing up against the state where necessary.
Monitoring for Accountability	CSOs also have a function of monitoring the accountability of government to its citizenry which includes standing up against corrupt practices.
Advocacy and Public Communication	CSOs have an obligation to speak up for or against happenings which includes poverty, marginalization, and environmental degradation.
Socialisation	CSOs create room for socialisation because it will enable citizens to develop tolerance one for another, help them find a point of compromise and develop mutual trust. The attitudes developed through socialisation could help in promoting democracy and peace amongst citizens.
Building Community	The idea of a civil society brings people together and encourages bonding amongst citizens. Where people of different races and ethnicity come together to form a group, it helps to bridge societal gaps.
Intermediation and Facilitation Between Citizens and State	CSOs play the role of negotiating with the state and balancing power between the citizens and the state.

## 7.5: Civil Society in Africa:

Civil society is a western construct which was mainly practiced in Europe and America (Ehrenberg, 2017). In agreement with the above, Walzer in 1991, proposed that ‘in the West, by contrast, we have lived in a civil society for many years without knowing it’ (p.1). Academics have argued that civil society cannot be practiced in non-Western societies including Africa (Blaney and Pasha, 1993, Maina, 1998). An argument that has been authenticated using the foundations of colonialism as the barrier on civil society activism in Africa.

On colonialism hindering civil society organisations from striving in Africa, Adam Ferguson in 1767 wrote that ‘Africa has a weakness in the genius of its people that did not inspire the virtues which relate to freedom and, required in the conduct of a civil affair’ (Lewis 2002, p.575 see also Ferguson, 1995). In cases where oppositions strive in Africa, ethnicity and religious differences could cause a break (Chabal & Daloz, 1991). The steep-lines on which these organisations were formed may have hindered them from being targeted for the ‘common good’ of the society. This is because, the CSOs in the West are formed for the general wellbeing of the society. For the African CSOs to be replicas of their western counterparts, they must be formed for the common good of the society. Civil society is fragile and because of its fragility, the chances of its survival in Africa is unlikely (Putnam, 2000).

CSOs are spontaneous organisations formed by citizens to solve concrete problems in the society. According to Edwards (2009), the ability of CSOs to thrive is mainly determinant on the community. If there is a collapse of community life such as people minding their business, then CSOs will not flourish. Therefore, what is important is the ability to point out the variations in the scope and use of the term civil society because there are different names coined for it in different societies (Roginsky & Shortall, 2009). Notwithstanding its origin, civil society is now being practiced universally (Blaney & Pacha, 1993). There might be variations in the practice because, even in the West, there is little agreement on how civil society should be practiced (Lewis, 2002 see also Hann & Dunn, 1996).

The Western domination of the world has also encouraged the penetration of the practice of civil society to other parts of the world (Cox, 1999). The author argues that civil society might be weak in some parts of Africa but that does not imply that Africa lacks the freedom to conduct civil affairs. It is not just the Western penetration which is colonialism that has introduced civil society in Africa. Civil society began before colonialization, providing support for community politics. During colonialism, civil society was perceived as a threat to the colonial masters

(Makumbe, 1998). Africa have experienced practices that fight for the common good of the people, but such practices were often not referred to as civil society (Bratton, 1989). In Africa, CSOs are largely characterised by the struggle against the government, authoritarian rule, exerting pressure and control on state institutions to preserve and transform their identity (Makumbe, 1998).

The African civil society have played major roles including the democratization of countries on the continent, promoting accountability in governance, fighting for independence, fighting against dictatorship in governance and for human rights. Whilst the Western model of civil society sees autonomy as the most important characteristic of the organisation, the African model creates an amicable relationship between the state and society (Hearn, 2001). This is because complete autonomy might be difficult to achieve in Africa for reasons such as funding that are usually distributed through the government to avoid corruption in CSOs. Differences may abound between the Western and African style of civil society, but it does not prevent civil society from striving on the African continent, because it is now a global practice (Kaldor, 2003).

In Africa, civil society is directed at changing the structure and approach of governance (Lewis, 2002). Therefore, in Africa, civil society is defined in accordance with the African contexts but not deviating completely from the original model of the West (Orvis, 2001). This is because, it will not be necessary to carry on with the argument of origin. The discussion should rather be focused on the current identification of civil society with autonomous forces and its impact in Africa (Cox, 1999; Hearn, 2001). According to Orvis (2001), civil society in Africa should be defined as a public space that can be formal or informal having collective activities that are autonomous of the state but considers the legitimate existence of the state sphere.

For the definition of civil society in this work, I will adopt that of Ikelegbe which states that,

‘civil society is characterised by common interests and identities, civil and public purposes, and collective and autonomous actions. It is a layer of voluntary, popular, public and social action of non-state actors that utilises social, cultural, political and ethnic networks and non-state activities, in pursuance of objectives, which are usually public in nature’ (Ikelegbe, 2001, p.436).

In Africa, civil society is an aggregate of institutions with members that are involved in non-state activities. Examples of these groups are voluntary associations, household life, economic

and cultural productions (Makumbe, 1998). According to Ako & Ekhatior (2016) civil society include but are not limited to the following:

‘(a) Social groups such as those representing women, children, the youth, the elderly and people with disability and special needs; (b) Professional groups such as associations of artists, engineers, health practitioners, social workers, media, teachers, sport associations, legal professionals, social scientists, academia, business organisations, national chambers of commerce, workers, employers, industry and agriculture as well as other private sector interest groups; (c) Non-governmental organisations (NGOs), community-based organisations (CBOs) and voluntary organisations; d) Cultural organisations; and (e) social and professional groups in the African Diaspora in accordance with the definition approved by the Executive Council’ (p.185).

Africa is currently experiencing a rise in the number of NGOs which is a part of civil society. But, Chabal & Daloz (1991) are proposing that the rise in the number of NGOs in Africa does not mean a growth in civil society if they fail to produce a Western-style kind of civil society. They argued that what is common in Africa is that states market the sufferings of their people and are indirectly benefiting either as state or individual politicians from managing these NGOs. Smith (2010) in his book ‘A Culture of Corruption: Everyday Deception and Popular Discontent in Nigeria’ describes the establishment and management of the growing number of NGOs in Nigeria as a way of practicing corruption. In as much as I will agree to an extent of corrupt practices by NGOs which will be discussed in chapter seven, there are some CSOs in Nigeria that are not corrupt. Corruption is a national problem in Nigeria, and it will be inaccurate to assume that everyone in the country is corrupt.

It is also improper to compare the CSOs in one national setting to another as this could be misleading (Salamon & Anheier 1998). The differences in the practice of civil society in Africa enables us to think policy and citizenship under the emerging conditions of global change (Lewis, 2002). Most importantly, I think that the idea of civil society should be encouraged in Africa because it is a good thing. Civil society is important for the future of political development, economic progress and governance in Africa (Haberson, 1994). Nevertheless, there must be an analysis on the process and structure so that it is not just a static practice or an historical concept.

There are numerous examples of civil society in Africa. For instance, in Ghana, when crude oil was discovered in the country, the people decided to prepare ahead. The preparations were done considering the failures of some African countries in the management of crude oil. According to Heller (2016), CSOs in Ghana were already thinking ahead on how to manage the oil industry in the country. Civil society is also big in Nigeria and an example of an active civil society practice in recent times in the country are campaigns organised by the Bring Back Our Girls (BBOGs). In April of 2014, 276 schoolgirls were kidnapped from a community called Chibok in northern Nigeria (Zenn, 2014). The Bring Back Our Girls (BBOGs) group which is a collection of women fighting for the release of the adopted girls demonstrated physically and utilized all the social media platforms available to them. They received support globally, the wife of the then American President Michelle Obama also supported them with placards reading 'Bring Back Our Girls (BBOG)'. It has been three years already and about a hundred of the girls have been released.

#### 7.6: Civil Society in the Niger Delta:

The CSOs in the Niger delta are burdened with an enormous task of managing the consequences of crude oil exploitation activities in the region. CSOs and local community dwellers have increasingly been at the forefront of the crisis in the Niger delta. This is because, the Niger delta crisis is a multi-level crisis manifesting as a lack of development and environmental degradation including the loss of livelihood, mass unemployment, poverty, social and health problems (Adekola et.al, 2016; Ayanlade & Proke, 2016; Okechukwu & Ukeje, 2016) as discussed in chapter four.

Civil society in the Niger delta is a collection of violent and non-violent organisations that are aimed at solving problems around crude oil which is for the common good of the Niger delta people. I have classified these groups as NGOs and self-help groups (non-violent) and militant organisations. Civil society in the Niger delta like their Western counterparts are interested in pushing for environmental and economic accountability, poverty elevation, fighting against oppression and serving as a watchdog to expose corrupt practices by government officials. And, these organisations have responded to the problems in diverse ways.

Fundamentally, in the Niger delta, these past two decades have witnessed opposition from CSOs which are in the form of NGOs, self-help groups (women organisations, youth, community and advocacy groups) and militant organisations (vigilante/cult and confraternity). These struggles are over what is perceived as ‘poverty in plenty’ which stems from the neglect by the federal government and MNOCs operating in the region (Jike, 2004; Ite, 2007; Agbiboa & Maiangwa, 2013). CSOs and their activities worldwide have been built mainly around democracy and accountability (Ferguson, 2014; Fernandes, 2015; Heller, 2016). But the struggle in the Niger delta is more communal, ethnic, and regional. It is a demand to increase developmental activities in the region, a fight against environmental degradation and the quest for resource control, (Ikelegbe, 2001; Cox, 2013).

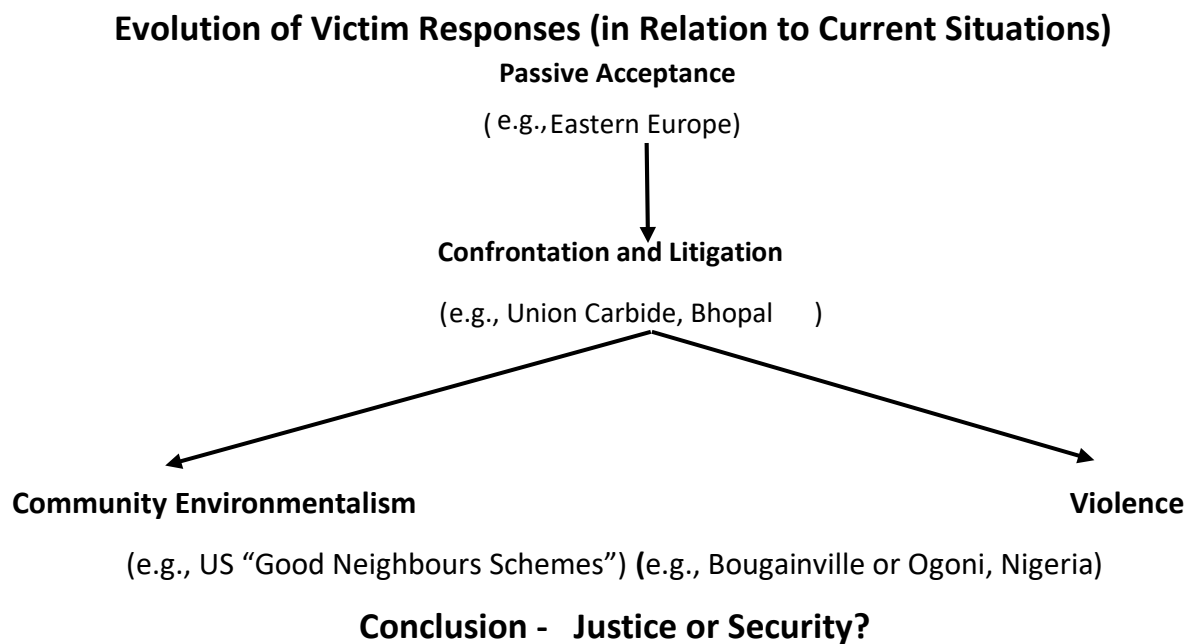
These problems have arisen because of the inability of the federal government to resolve the problems around crude oil exploitation and resource control. These are the factors contributing to the resistant struggle from the region especially because the Nigerian economy is dependent on crude oil. There are various parameters used by academics in measuring the level of Nigeria’s dependence on crude oil. The result of one analysis has classified Nigeria as the state with the highest level of crude oil dependence. According to Ikein, 2017, 99.6% of the foreign exchange earnings in Nigeria is from crude oil. This high dependence on crude oil makes the Niger delta the most important region in the country but one of the poorest regions in Nigeria and globally (Umoh & Peter, 2014; Ajayi, 2014; Wilson, 2014; Bello & Olukolajo, 2016). CSOs in the region have outlined the problems in different ways.

These problems have arisen because of the inability of the federal government to resolve the problems around crude oil exploitation and resource control. These are the factors contributing to the resistant struggle from the region especially because the Nigerian economy is dependent on crude oil. There are various parameters used by academics in measuring the level of Nigeria’s dependence on crude oil. The result of one analysis has classified Nigeria as the state with the highest level of crude oil dependence. According to Ikein, 2017, 99.6% of the foreign exchange earnings in Nigeria is from crude oil. This high dependence on crude oil makes the Niger delta the most important region in the country but one of the poorest regions in Nigeria and globally (Umoh & Peter, 2014; Ajayi, 2014; Wilson, 2014; Bello & Olukolajo, 2016).

For example, there is an organisation for every problem including the fight against poverty, environmental degradation, gas flaring, youth restiveness, human rights and job creation. They all have their vision and mission statements, but their common goal is to ensure that the people in the Niger delta share in the wealth accruing from the region. A number of these organisations

are vocal in their struggle while others are involved in the grassroots empowerment of host communities. Teaching them on how to make demands from the federal government and MNOCs. The evolution of victim responses by Williams (1996) relates to the current situation in the Niger delta and is displayed on Fig. 7.1. In the Niger delta, the extraction of crude oil from communities is by passive acceptance which has resulted in confrontation and litigation. This is through community environmentalism and violence. In the Niger delta, confrontation and litigation are through civil society activism. Community environmentalism is by NGOs and self-help groups (groups formed by community members to resolve the problems around crude oil exploitation).

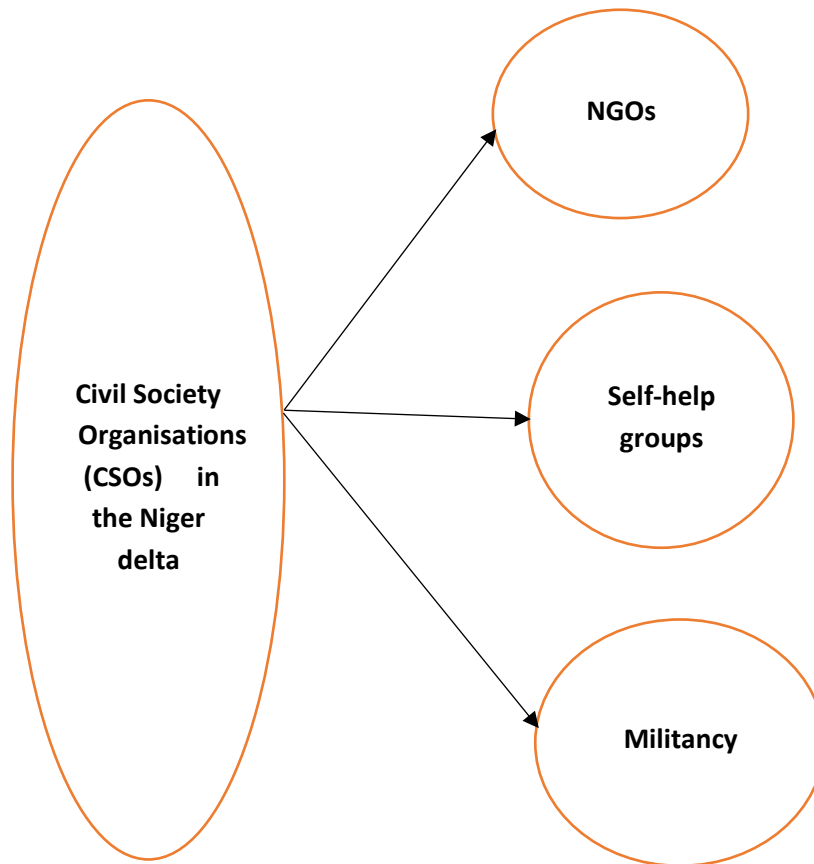
**Fig. 7.1: Showing Evolution of Victim Responses**



Source: Williams, 1996

Societal responses can escalate whilst the militant organisations make efforts to resolve these problems through violence. There are thousands of these CSOs in the region and their grievances are with the federal government and MNOCs. As represented on Fig. 7.1, the people in the Niger delta are seeking justice to control the natural resource in their community or a form of security. The security should be in the form of the provision of jobs, basic amenities, health care and the ability to enjoy the benefits from crude oil. The Fig.7.2 is a representation of how CSOs in the Niger delta is classified in this work.

Fig. 7.2: A Representation of CSOs in the Niger Delta



#### 7.6.1: Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs):

NGOs are separate from the government, they stand in the space between the government and the citizenry. The NGOs in the Niger delta are a major part of the struggle for development, cleaner environment, and resource control. According to Smith (2010) ‘globally, the proliferation of NGOs is commonly tied to the end of the cold War and efforts to expand both a neoliberal economic order and a liberal democratic approach to governance. Among donors interested in promoting democracy and development in Africa and elsewhere in the so-called Third World, NGOs have been key engines in processes of positive change. The optimism about NGOs derives from a general sense of NGOs “doing good,” unencumbered and untainted by the politics of government and the greed of the market’ (p.245).

However, corruption is a major problem in Nigeria, and it plays a major role in civil society activism in the Niger delta. The corruption of the NGOs was also a problem the national assembly in Nigeria wanted to address. A bulk of the corrupt practices are said to be from the sources of funding which is usually from foreign donors. It is the reason behind the attempts made by members of the national house of representatives in passing a bill that should regulate NGOs in the country. The bill on NGOs was sponsored by the deputy majority leader of the house of representative Umar Jibril Buba in September 2017. In discussing the bill, Honourable Jibril stressed that churches, mosques and quasi-financial organisations are not NGOs or CSOs and should be exempted from this bill.

Honourable Umar Jibril Buba was supported by other members in the house because it was a campaign to monitor the corruption practiced by NGOs in the handling of Internally displaced persons (IDPs) because of the Boko Haram insurgency in Northern Nigeria. The introduction of the bill in the house of representative resulted in heated debates by technocrats and social analysts in Nigeria. They insisted on the importance of NGOs in Nigeria including being a vital part of the democratic process, filling the gap between the people and the government and providing jobs for the unemployed in the society. They think that this type of monitoring system will deprive these NGOs of their primary characteristic which is being independent from the government.

Below is a statement by Umar Jibril Buba on the 27<sup>th</sup> of September 2017 reciting the importance of the NGO bill. His statement was sent to premium times, a newspaper company in Nigeria and it reads thus:

‘Some NGOs collected funds for North-East IDPs and disappeared

...Churches, Mosques, Esusu, Market Women Associations not affected.

1. Religious bodies and organisations are NOT NGOs

2. Our quasi-financial institutions at local levels are NOT NGOs! These organisations have existed for centuries to serve businesses and commerce of our market women and traders. However, recent developments have shown that;

— Some people registered NGOs, solicited for funds and disappeared. That happened recently in the North-east.

— Some NGOs are used to fund the activities of terrorist and insurgents! etc.

The NGOs bill, therefore, is primarily to set-up a commission to regulate their activities and provide a platform for robust relationships between them and the government for the interests of Nigerians'. The NGO bill has not been passed and Umar Jubril who sponsored the bill passed on earlier in March of 2018. Irrespective of corrupt practices amongst some NGOs, there are an important part of the struggle against the federal government and MNOCs in the region. These efforts notwithstanding, there is corruption in civil society activism which will be analysed in chapter eight.

### 7.6.2: Self-Help Groups:

The marginalization of the people in the region is one of the reasons there are struggles by self-help groups in the region. The theory of relative deprivation suggests that people will tend towards the formation of social movements when they are deprived of essentials as mentioned in chapter three is seen in the Niger delta with the introduction of self-help groups (Aniche, 2019). They are formed to fight for the rights of the people to the huge wealth from crude oil exploitation by the federal government and MNOCs. Nigeria is the conglomeration of 250 ethnic groups, 140 of these ethnic groups are in the nine states of the Niger delta (Asuni, 2009; Central Intelligence Agency 2016). These ethnic groups are not highly populated. The Izon /Ijaws which is the largest ethnic group in the region is relatively small compared to the major ethnic groups in Nigeria like Hausa and Fulani, Yoruba, and Igbo. The distribution of the Nigerian population within the major ethnic groups are as follows: 1) Hausa, and Fulani, 29% 2) Yoruba 21% 3) Igbo 18% 4) Ijaw 10% 5) Kanuri 4% 6) Ibibio 3,5% and 7) Tiv 2,5% (Okolo, 2014). The Ijaws are only 10% of the Nigerian population making the residents of the Niger delta argue that the neglect from the federal government dependent on their population size.

Other reasons for the formation of these groups are under-development and environmental degradation discussed in chapter two. However, as earlier stated, MNOCs claimed to have paid taxes to the government and as such do not hold developmental plans for host communities. Apart from the claims made by multinationals, these companies have also maintained a good relationship with the government, heads of the community, chiefs, and community representatives. These select few were friends of the MNOCs and are regularly advocating on their behalf. The continual resistance from the companies and the state gave rise to more

protests which could not be stopped by traditional rulers and other friends of the MNOCs (Onduku, 2001).

In the past when the protests were weaker, traditional rulers pleaded with the protesters to make peace. The roles played by traditional rulers were many-sided. When they received bribes from the federal government and MNOCs, they supported them against their communities. However, the persistence of these problems is making some of the traditional rulers change their perspectives and critically examine the problems in their communities. Examples of self-help group in the Niger delta are include women Organisations, advocacy and community groups.

The Women Organisations were influenced by some other forms of CSOs that have been practiced in the past in Nigeria examples of which are those initiated and organized by the wives of military heads of states. These were pet projects of the wives of former heads of states in Nigeria and they include Better life for Rural Women ran by Maryam Babangida from 1985-1993 (Nwagha, 1992; Abdullah, 1995). Immediately after her was Mrs. Maryam Abacha (1993-1998) with the pet project titled 'Family Support Programme/Family Economic Advancement Programme'. Others were Hon. Justice Fati Abubakar (1998-1999), for her it was the 'Women's Right Advancement and Protection Alternative'. While Mrs. Stella Obasanjo (1999-2007), ran the Child Care Trust; Mrs. Turai Yar'adua (2007-2010), headed the Women and Youth Empowerment Foundation (WYEF). The immediate past First Lady, Dame Patience Jonathan (2010-2015), ran the Women for Change Initiative (Iheanacho, 2016).

At the state level which were smaller units controlled by the wives of the state governors referencing the pet projects of the wives of the head of state. These pet projects which were aimed at empowering the wives of heads of states, to make money for themselves and mobilize women to support their husbands (Iheanacho, 2016). These associations improved maternal health and provided funds to rural women for petty trading. Unknowingly for these women, working with these pet projects developed women groups that were strong enough to fight against oppression from MNOCs in the Niger delta (Dibua, 2016). These were the women groups that started demonstrating peacefully at the gates of MNOCs on the plight of the people in their communities. Nevertheless, the appeals by these women in the early 1990s were usually compensated with little gifts in the form of money, cows, rice etc. distributed amongst community members as a way of pacifying them (Obi, 1997; Augustine, 2001). Unfortunately, women groups were unable to achieve much, leading to the formation of other self-help groups.

Majority of the ethnicities in the Niger Delta have formed advocacy groups to formally promote their collective interests. Typically, they agitate for substantive ethnic and communal demands using non-violent methods. They have played important mediating roles in negotiating community interest with government and corporate entities. Other examples of advocacy groups in the region apart from the women group is the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP). They issued the 1990 Ogoni Bill of Rights to the federal government and demonstrated. Some of these groups do fit with the western model of civil society however, it is closer to Tocqueville's model.

It took three decades after the death of Comrade Isaac Adaka Boro as will be discussed in the militant organisations before the protests organised by Ken Saro-Wiwa. He was an acclaimed playwright and environmentalist whose inspiration was drew from Isaac Adaka Boro. Between 1985 to 1990, Ken Saro-Wiwa produced and directed one of Africa's 'hottest' Television series titled 'Basi and Company'. The differences between the struggles of Isaac Adaka Boro and Ken Saro-Wiwa was that the focus for Ken Saro-Wiwa was the Ogoni people whilst Isaac Adaka Boro, took a regional path, the Niger delta (Boele, Fabig, & Wheeler, 2001; Doron & Falola (2016). The Ogoni people live in small territories close to Port Harcourt and their communities are rich in crude oil (Watt, 2008). The protest organized by Ken Saro-Wiwa adopted constructive criticism and dialogue as a way of publicizing the problems in Ogoni land against the federal government and Shell Petroleum Development Company (SPDC).

Ken Saro-Wiwa took the following steps in addressing the problems in Ogoni. Firstly, Ken Saro-Wiwa sent what he called an intellectual piece. It is a report on the plight of the Ogoni people to the federal government and the Shell Petroleum Development Company (SPDC). Copies of the documents were published on the national dailies in the country (Kaur, 2012). Secondly, the document sent by Ken Saro-Wiwa was titled the Ogoni Bill of Rights (Boele, Fabig, & Wheeler, 2001; Senewo, 2015). It is a 20-point declaration that proclaims a political right to self-determination, the right to control and use their economic resources to develop Ogoni land. In the document, the Ogoni people were also demanding for the payment of reparations by the federal government and petrol-businesses. They were also seeking compensation for the pollution and destruction of their living environment, as well as the right to protect the area from further degradation (Kaur, 2012; Simon, 2016; Osha, 2016; Abdulsalam, 2016).

Thirdly, two years after the passage of the bill, neither the federal government nor SPDC responded to the requests on the declaration of the bill, the Ogoni Bill of Rights (Crayford, 1996; Thomas, 2017). According to Umukoro, 2018, the refusal to address the problems in Ogoni land led to the formation of a group called MOSOP (Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People). It was a platform to bolster the goals of the Ogoni Bill of Rights. Its main agenda was the passing of a resolution that gave SPDC in Nigeria a 30-day notice to quit. The SPDC was the company targeted in Ogoni because it is the only company that operated in Ogoni at the time. The following event was a peaceful demonstration by the Ogoni people against SPDC to entreat the company to stop crude oil exploitation activities on their land. The protest held as planned on the 4<sup>th</sup> of January 1995, after SPDC continued crude oil extraction in Ogoni ignoring the 30-day notice that was issued. It is the largest and most peaceful demonstration ever held against a MNOC in history (Watt, 2008; Cox, 2013).

During the protest, Saro-Wiwa declared that the Ogoni people were on a protest to publicly reassess the Ogoni Bill of Rights which they had presented to the military head of state General Badamisi Babangida, SPDC, and the Nigerian nation. About three hundred thousand out of the five hundred thousand people in Ogoni land participated in the protest. Saro-Wiwa was also rapt in bringing to the forefront the Ogoni people as an autonomous and self-determined entity (Watt, 2008). A few days after the protest, there was a crackdown resulting in the death of about 2000 civilians and rendering tens of thousands of people homeless (Pegg, 2000). This was the development that led to the arrest and trial of Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other Ogoni and MOSOP leaders (Pegg, 2000; Cox, 2013).

The arrested MOSOP leaders were 1) Ken Saro-Wiwa 2) Barinem Kiobel 3) Saturday Dobee 4) Baribor Bera 5) Nordu Eawo 6) Daniel Gbooko 7) Paul Levera 8) Felix Nuate and 9) John Kpuine. The nine MOSOP leaders were tried by the military head of state, General Sani Abacha who ruled from 1993-1998. They were convicted for the crackdown and murder of 2000 Ogoni people (Saale & David, 2014; Doron & Falola, 2016). The trial and execution of the Ogoni leaders were spear headed by the Abacha administration although, there are suspicions that Shell influenced the outcome of the proceedings (Doron & Falola, 2016). The international community condemned the judgement passed by the military tribunal in Nigerian on the grounds of human right violation but were unable to deter General Sani Abacha. The execution and burial of the nine Ogoni leaders took place on the 10th of November 1995 in Port Harcourt (Saale & David, 2014). There are hundreds of similar groups in the Niger delta now.

These are groups formed by community members to address the problems in their community. There are many of these groups in the region examples of which include Movement for the Reparation of Ogbia, Bayelsa Indigenes Association (BIA), The Urhobo Political Stakeholders Forum, Ndokwa Aborigines Rights Protection Council and Movement for the Survival and Advancement of Ekeye Ethnic Nationality. They are like the advocacy groups described above but these are interested only in their community.

### 7.6.3: Militant Organisations and the Responses from the Government:

Marginalization is the root cause of the struggle from the Niger delta and it was pioneered by some prominent indigenes of the region and supported by armed groups. Armed conflict is not new to the Niger delta, it started in the 19th century. Examples of such conflicts are ‘the deportation of King Jaja of Opobo in 1887, the Nana of Itsekiri in 1892, Overnaram in 1897, King Ibanichuka of Okrika in 1896, and the deposition of king Koko of Brass (Tamuno 1972). In tracing the origin of militant organisations in the region, Joab-Peterside (2007), suggested that militant organisations and armed conflict in the Niger delta can be traced back to when there was a

‘military adventurism resulting from the establishment, expansion, and consolidation of the Southern Nigeria Protectorate between 1900 and 1913. During this period, there was a brute force in the region organized through the protectorate troops and the Nigerian police, who were either directly used in punitive expeditions, patrols, and escorts or maintained as a threat against the people of Niger Delta’ (p.3).

The other example is the Akassa Raid of 1895 which took place in Brass against the domination by the British Merchants (Al Chukwuma, 2013). After the Akassa Raid, there was relative peace in the region until 1960s which I would like to refer to in this work as the crude oil era. This era sets out with a significant protest organized by Isaac Adaka Boro who launched the Boro’s Niger Delta Volunteer Service on the 3rd of February 1966 (Kaur, 2012; Onuoha, 2015; Gilbert, 2014; Imhonopi & Urim, 2016; Adunbi, 2015).

The agitation became necessary when the federal government and MNOCs refused to make efforts at responding to the appeals of traditional rulers and politicians on the infrastructural

and environmental problems in the region. The federal government responded by deploying federal forces to subdue the movement of Isaac (Kaur, 2012). The federal forces succeeded in halting the protest, arresting, and sending Isaac Boro to jail. However, Isaac Boro was granted Amnesty by Yakubu Gowon, the military head of state during the Nigerian civil war in 1967. A release agreement was reached to enable Boro take part in the Nigerian civil war that began in that year. The militant leader Isaac Boro was killed during the civil war on the 9th of May 1968 resulting in the termination of the struggle of Boro's Niger Delta Volunteer Service (Tantua & Kamruzzaman, 2016).

Confraternity and cultism in the Niger delta were influenced by confraternities in the USA. In the US, fraternities are social organizations for socializing and for business networking. They provide introductions into the world of business and help up and coming (and privileged) college graduates get jobs. But, in the Niger delta, they have taken their own path and appear to be more criminal in their operations. They started off as University-based 'confraternities' dating as far back as 1952, with the founding of the Pirates by Professor Wole Soyinka. They are often business offshoots or 'street cults' that typically operate in and around major cities.

Usually, they are not politically motivated, but they frequently serve as mercenaries or allies of other armed groups and may join political militias during elections (Amadi, Imoh-Itah, & Obomanu, 2016). Many also engage in bunkering, drug trafficking, piracy, and robbery, gang wars between cult groups flare up with some regularity. Examples of confraternities include the Pirates (inactive), the National Association of Sea Dogs, Black Axe, and Vikings. Cults include the Deegbam and the Deywell, Outlaws, and Greenlanders, all of which are still in operation. In the Niger delta, they proceeded to becoming a major part of militia (Aghedo & Osumah, 2015 see also Francis, Deirdre, and Rossiasco, 2011). It is members of these cult groups that were a part of the militant organisations in the region.

Community-based 'vigilante' groups are a longstanding institution in many parts of the Niger Delta. They assure communal defence and protection from criminals or predatory enemies. Sometimes they engage in oil-related border disputes with neighbours. Since the 1990s these local groups have assumed increasing importance in the absence of adequate official policing at the community level. Rogue vigilantes have also become a law unto themselves and practice extra-judicial killings, seizure of personal property, and other serious human rights violations. Examples include the Bakassi Boys (Aba), the Bush Boys (Okrika) and the Isongofaro (Nembe

Ogbolomabiri) (Aghedo & Osumah, 2015 see also Francis, Deirdre, and Rossiasco, 2011). They have also become a major part of militant organisations in the region.

After the death of Ken Saro-Wiwa and the other Ogoni leaders, attempts were made in opposition against the federal government and the MNOCs giving rise to the Kaima declaration. This declaration was named after the Ijaw town called Kaima which is regarded as the headquarters of the Ijaw tribe (Onduku, 2001; Guruji, 2015). The declaration highlights the suffering of the people in the region and was the reason a conference of the 40 clans in the Ijaw tribe was organised (Onduku, 2001; Duruji, 2015). It is the beginning of the recent militant organisations in the region. The outcome of the Kaima declaration generated a lot of problems in the oil industry. One of which is the declaration of a state of emergency in Odi, a major Ijaw town in Bayelsa state. It was accompanied by a lot of bloodshed and destruction (Onduku, 2001).

The Kaima declaration is the basis on which the Ijaw Youth Congress (IYC) was formed (Graf, 2014) and militant organisations began again in the Niger delta. The IYC is a group that is focused on the problems in the Niger delta rather than a single ethnic group like the Ogoni case and Ken Saro-Wiwa's MOSOP. It has produced prominent militant leaders in the region like Alhaji Mujahid-Dokubo and Government Tompolo (Intelligence, 2016). Presently, most of the leaders of IYC are on self-exile because they belong to the opposition political party, the People Democratic Party (PDP). As the IYC became prominent, they expressed concern over the problems in the region by writing letters and memos to the federal government and MNOCs. These encounters with brutal suppressions and armed conflicts in the Niger delta began immediately after the 2003 general election when Nigeria was transitioning from military leadership into a democracy.

The two vigilante groups that became prominent in Rivers state were the Niger Delta Vigilantes (NDV) whose leader was the Okrika Born Ateke Tom and the NDPVF headed by Alhaji Asari-Dokubo (Bekoe, 2005). These militant organisations were a coming together of young men hired by the Niger delta governors and politicians to achieve their political ambitions in the elections of 2003 (Kew & Phillips 2013). They based their formation on claims that they are interested in ensuring that the federal government and MNOCs resolve the problems around crude oil exploitation in the region. They threatened the federal government and blew up crude oil pipelines disrupting oil exploitation activities and causing a decline in the daily output on

crude oil production in the country. This had an adverse effect on a heavily crude oil dependent economy like Nigeria.

There was a constant clashing of the groups either internally or externally giving rise to the incessant shootings in and around Port Harcourt, Rivers state. The activities of these cult groups kept MNOCs uncomfortable in carrying out crude oil exploitation activities in the region. As a safety measure, the headquarters of most of the oil companies in the region moved to Lagos and their staff evacuated from the region. This development prompted President, Olusegun Obasanjo to invite the leaders of the two groups, NDV and NDPVF, Ateke Tom and Alhaji Asari-Dokubo respectively in September of 2004 for a peace agreement (Bekoe, 2005). The peace agreement signed on the 1st of October 2004 is to disarm and rehabilitate the militants in these groups in conjunction with the Rivers State government (Kew & Phillips 2013). The peace agreement was not a success because barely 6 months after, the militants purchased more sophisticated arms and became battle ready (Bekoe, 2005; Kew & Phillips 2013).

At the time, militant organisations were only in Rivers state because Delta state was peaceful. But, shortly after, a group called the Federation of Niger Delta Ijaw Communities (FNDIC) surfaced in Delta state. The group's main motive at the time was to represent the marginalized Ijaw ethnic group in delta state. The spokesperson of the group was Chief Dr. Oboko Bello and headed by Chief Government Ekpemupolo popularly called Tom-Polo in the region (Asuni, 2009). Tom-Polo is the bunkering lord of the region who has amassed wealth from the sale of stolen crude oil and local refining. The wealth from crude oil theft and local refining placed him on the rank of the highest officer on the platform of FNDIC because of his huge monetary contributions to the group.

The FNDIC controlled Delta state and became uncontrollable, especially as some other groups came into view and one of the first major ones was MEND in 2006 (Watt, 2004; Tantua & Kamruzzaman, 2016; Courson, 2016). MEND is a collection of all the militant organisations in the region (Ikelegbe, 2005; Ibeanu, 2006; Orogun, 2010; Aghedo & Osumah, 2015). The group launched itself into the Nigerian scene through the kidnap of crude oil company workers in Port Harcourt in January of 2006 (Mbah, 2013; Okoli & Nachanaa, 2016). An example of the kidnapping strategy for MEND was the preparation of a list of requests targeted at the problems in the Niger delta (Nwokolo & Aghedo, 2018; Tantua, Devine, & Mantachie, 2018). Kidnapping became prominent in the region through MEND (Oriola, 2016; Okoli & Nachanaa, 2016; Enyidah-Okey Ordu, 2017). The act of kidnapping has since been adopted in the other

states in Nigeria controlled by large kidnapping kingpins and networks highlighting a well thought-out and managed kidnapping syndicates.

Watts (2007) argues that MEND is a threat to the nation and its major source of revenue and the export of crude oil. In a statement released by the then field Commander Tamuno Godswill in 2006, the group had some demands which includes the release of two of their leaders Alhaji Asari-Dokubo, Joshua Macaiva and the late governor of Bayelsa state Chief Dieprie Alamieyeseigha. The other requests made by the group were the immediate and unconditional demilitarization of the Niger Delta. This is because at the time, there were many military personnel in the region, guarding oil facilities and host communities to ensure oil exploration activities do not stopped. It spurred other militant organisations to adopt a similar strategy the last request on their list was the immediate payment of \$1.5 billion compensation from Shell approved by the Nigerian national assembly covering four decades of environmental degradation. Most of the requests listed above have been granted but MEND is still a major militant group to reckon with in the region (Watts, 2007; Ezech & Ndukaihe, 2017).

These threats from the region changed the narrative of governance at the federal level for the Niger delta people because when the late President Umaru Musa Yar'adua was elected into office, Goodluck Ebele Jonathan was selected as the Vice President as stated earlier discussed (Oluduro & Oluduro, 2012). One of the campaigns promises made by president Umaru Musa Yar'adua was to stop the agitation in the region so that there will be peace in the Niger delta again. He fulfilled a part of his campaign promises by introducing the Amnesty programme in 2009 for all repentant militants which was globally applauded (Akinwale, 2010; Oluwaniyi, 2011).

In his address to the nation before offering Amnesty to the militants, President Umaru Musa Yar'adua said

‘the offer of Amnesty is predicated in the willingness and readiness of the militants to give up all illegal arms in their possession, completely renounce militancy in all its ramifications unconditionally and depose to an undertaking to this effect. It is my fervent hope that all militants in the Niger Delta will take advantage of this Amnesty and come out to join in the quest for the transformation of our dear nation’ ( Ikelegbe & Umokoro, 2016, p.26).

The offer of Amnesty was based on a report sent to the federal government in accordance with the recommendations of a committee headed Ledum Mitee on the Niger delta (Imongan &

Ikelegbe, 2016). The recommendations on the Amnesty Programme is backed-up by section 175 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (Oluduro & Oluduro, 2012).

The Amnesty Programme improved the relationship between the Niger delta people and the Nigerian government. It is a major effort by the federal government to restore peace, provide education and employment for ex-militants in the region (Egwemi, 2010). The Amnesty Programme is a shift on the part of the federal government in resolving the problems and making the region safe (Oluduro & Oluduro, 2012). The Amnesty Programme was initially to last for only 60 days (Idonor, 2009; Ikelegbe & Umokoro, 2014) but it has persisted for well over eight years.

The benefits of the Amnesty Programme to the people in the region includes the education of militants, the payment of monthly allowance to jobless and repentant militants, skill acquisition, and the provision of employment for repentant militants. Some militants that trained abroad are back to the region, employment after education remains a major hindrance. It makes it difficult to say the Programme is successful, but it was a shift in the narrative of the region. Nevertheless, after the death of President Umaru Musa Yar'adua, the vice president Goodluck Ebele Jonathan was sworn in as the president of the federal republic of Nigeria, he became the first President from the Niger delta region (Kew & Phillips, 2013; Obi, 2014; Ugor, 2016). A position that has never been occupied by someone from the Niger delta. It is important for people from the region to hold such positions because of the contributions of the region. President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan was re-elected into office for another four-year period which makes it six years as the President of the Nigerian nation.

The peace in the Niger delta was short-lived and President Mohammadu Buhari on his appointment had announced that he would deal decisively with anyone involved in oil theft, pipeline vandalization, insurgency, and insecurity in the Niger delta (Onuoha, 2016). This threat from the presidency was to deter militant organisations and prevent the formation of new groups. Nevertheless, the Niger Delta Avengers (NDA) was formed on the 30<sup>th</sup> of January 2016. Their base is in the Southeast Local government area in Warri. It is one of the recently established, and the most prominent militant organisations in the Niger delta (Babatunde, Norafidah & Tapiwa, 2016; Courson, 2016; Intelligence, 2016; Onuoha, 2016).

The NDA announced that they would launch 12 missiles if the government and multinational oil companies fail to meet their demands (Opafola, 2016). The possession of such sophisticated war machinery by a group in the Niger delta remains a mystery to the federal government. This

is because, before the NDA, the Amnesty Programme of the federal government gave the impression that it was a success, nevertheless, it has failed to address the root cause of the problems in the Niger delta (Babatunde, Norafidah & Tapiwa, 2016). The NDA is the most organised militant group in the region because their website <http://www.nigerdeltaavengers.org> is always up to dated. Below are a few requests made by the NDA and important to the viewpoint of this research are:

- a. Establishment of maritime University in Okerenko, Delta State.
- b. Negotiation with the government because of developing the Niger Delta region rather than giving out monetary compensation.
- c. The implementation of the 2014 national conference report.
- d. Cleaning up oil polluted lands in the Niger Delta and paying compensations to all producing communities.

Source: (Opafola, 2016, p.74).

The NDA came into prominence in 2016, it is a major threat to an oil-dependent economy like Nigeria. Their attacks reduced crude oil output from 2.2million barrel per day to 1.4 million barrels per day (Intelligence, 2016). Since they became known, they have claimed responsibility for twelve out of nineteen attacks in the region since January 2016 (Intelligence, 2016). According to Onuoha in 2016, some of the notable attacks by the group include the blowing up of the Bonny Soku line carrying natural gas on the 10th of February 2016. They also carried out an attack on the Trans Forcados pipeline (TFP) – which is one of the most strategic pipelines in the region after the government failed to respond to their demands within a 14-day ultimatum. As the attacks on crude oil and gas pipelines by NDA increased, the presidency sent military troops to the Niger delta to engage in a gun battle with the NDA (Onuoha, 2016; Babatunde, Norafidah, & Tapiwa, 2016; Oriola & Adeakin, 2018).

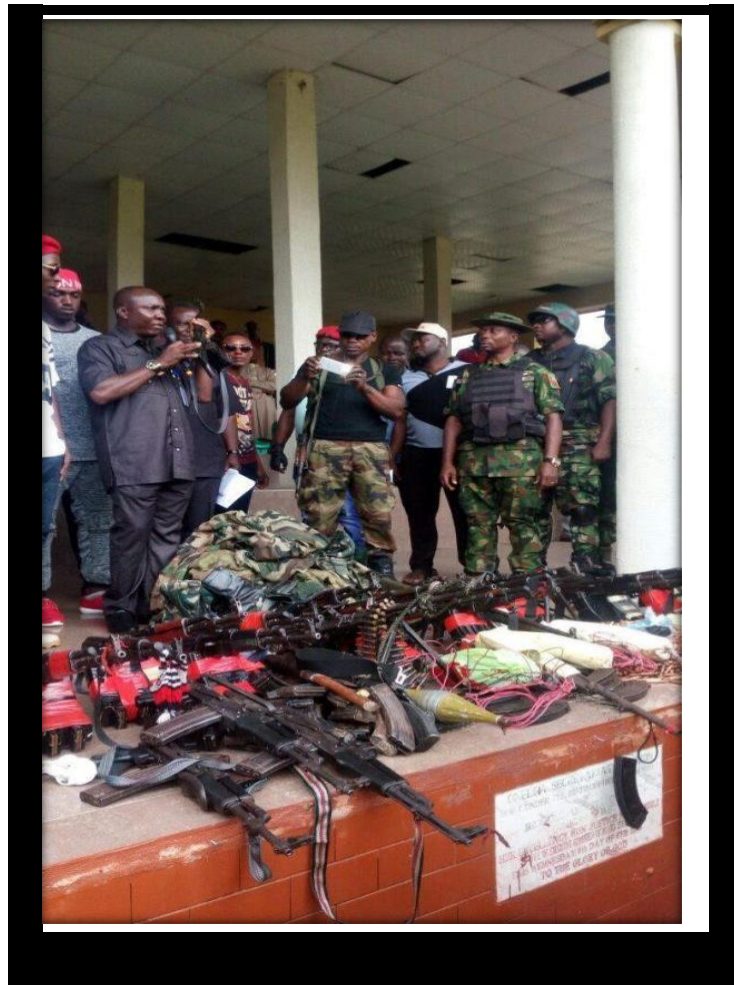
The NDA had acquired sophisticated weaponry and were at a loggerhead with the Nigerian military. While the military was tackling the NDA, another group called Red Egbesu water Lions (REWL) announced their existence on the 19th of May 2016 (Onuoha, 2016). The REWL is an Ijaw group operating in the South Ijaw Local Government Area of Bayelsa state (Intelligence, 2016; Onuoha, 2016). They announced that they will partner with the NDA and another group whose agitation is not on the Niger delta struggle called the Indigenous People of Biafra (I.P.O.B.) (Niworu, 2017). The REWL carried out an attack on the 17th of May 2016

on an AGIP- NAOC pipeline (Intelligence, 2016). The group is also a part of the Joint Niger Delta Liberation Force (JNDLF) (Onuoha, 2016; Intelligence, 2016).

The JNDLF is a coalition many of the militant organisations in Bayelsa state (Intelligence, 2016). The first press statement issued by the group in June of 2016 was vowing to launch 6 missiles in the region. That it would hit all those infrastructures that were built with our oil and gas monies in this country. Furthermore, they suggested that they will make (the) federal government and oil companies suffer. As they have made the people of the Niger Delta suffer over the years from environmental degradation and environmental pollution. A study carried out in 2007 showed that there are about forty-eight militant organisations in the region with over 25,000 members (Asuni, 2009). MEND and the Niger Delta Avengers (NDA) are the most prominent of the militant organisations. Members of these groups live and function from the creeks and are a major threat to the government and MNOCs (Watts, 2008; Egwemi, 2010; Courson, 2011; Dode, 2012).

The governor of Rivers State Barrister Nyesom Ezenwo Wike had also offered Amnesty to repentant cultists in the state on the 16th of September 2016. This is an effort by the government to reduce the incessant killings and kidnapping from cult activities in the state. This Amnesty offer asks that cultists return firearms in their possession within 60 days of the offer. It was also supposed to last for 60days, but this also is ongoing. There is a display of surrendered arms in October 2016 in picture 5.1. Traditional rulers and government representatives go around communities, holding meetings with the youths and receiving returned firearms. The inability of these offers of Amnesty to resolve the problems in the region is an indication that it is not the answer to the problems in the Niger delta region (Raimi, Bieh & Zorbari, 2017).

Picture 7.1: Showing Arms Surrendered by Cult and Militant Organisations in Rivers



Source: Victor (2016)

These organisations are fighting for the common good of the Niger delta to reduce environmental degradation and encourage development. However, they are face by some problems including Finance, Interference of the government and sometimes corruption. The biggest hindrance of civil society activism identified in this research is corruption. The role of corruption in civil society activism will be discussed in chapter seven and eight.

Militant organisations are legitimate and are a part of CSOs in this research because of the roles they are playing in resolving the pressing problems in the region. Unlike the other forms of CSOs discussed in this chapter, they express themselves using violence. Armed militias are typically self-motivated and self-sustaining. Modern Ijaw militias have been inspired by Adaka Boro's 1966 revolutionary bank of 150 freedom fighters. Today's militia men move freely between locations and groups, and this fluid structure makes them highly adaptable. Most

militias sustain themselves with oil bunkering, well-paid security contracts from politicians or oil companies, political enforcement, armed services, piracy, or trafficking in drugs and weapons. Examples of these militant organisations from the early 1960s include Adaka Boro Niger Delta Volunteer Force (NDVF), echoed by Asari Niger Delta People Volunteer Force (NDPVF), Ateke Tom's Niger Delta Vigilante Movement (NDVM, also called the 'Icelanders') and John Togo's Niger Delta Liberation Force (NDLF).

### Conclusion:

Civil society is a contested concept. It is a globally emerging modern practice that can possibly be used as a policy tool in politics (Fadakinte, 2015). The most suitable definition of civil society in this research is that it is a collection of violent and non-violent CSOs that are geared towards working for the common good of the region. The failure of government to respond adequately to the problems in the region is responsible for the formation of violent CSOs. The region has been granted an increased percentage on resource control and the implementation of the amnesty programme which has provided quality education for repentant militants because of the application of force using arms struggle. It has become necessary because of the failure of the federal government to use excess funds from crude oil to bring improvements to the lives of the people in the region. The inclusion of militancy as a part of civil society was discussed using William's model on the evolution of victim responses which argues that CSOs take different forms under certain conditions and the theory of relative deprivation. Violent and non-violent CSOs interface to resolve the problems around crude oil exploitation. Also, the core characteristic CSOs should possess is that it must distinguish itself from the government, but this has not been completely possible because of corruption. If CSOs shun corruption, they could practice active activism like their western counterparts.

The analysis in this chapter comes from the interviews conducted with CSOs (NGOs, self-help groups and militant organisations) supplemented with ethnographic observations, news stories and other relevant published materials. As stated in chapter two, I have interviewed 25 members/heads of CSOs during the data collection. However, only one of the respondents is a militant and this is because, they are harder to access and are potentially dangerous. In this chapter, I will be discussing the forms of activism CSOs embark on. How CSOs relate with the crude oil host communities, government and the complexities/problems around their

relationship with members of host communities. Also, the chapter is an analysis of data collected in the Niger delta describing the obstacles faced by CSOs as they carry out their functions. These impediments are enormous, but corruption appears to be the major hindrance to an active CSO in the region. The impact of corruption on CSOs can be seen in terms of their interactions with multiple sectors. This includes corruption within or outside the CSOs, their relationship with MNOCs, the federal government, donor organisations, and crude oil host communities.

## Chapter Eight: The Role of Corruption in Civil Society Activism in the Niger Delta.

### 8.1: Introduction:

The data analysed in this chapter comes from the interviews conducted with CSOs (NGOs, self-help groups and militant organisations) supplemented with ethnographic observations, news stories and other relevant published materials. As stated in chapter two, I have interviewed 25 members/heads of CSOs during the data collection. However, only one of the respondents is a militant and this is because, they are harder to access and are potentially dangerous. In this chapter, I will be discussing the forms of activism CSOs embark on. How CSOs relate with the crude oil host communities, government and the complexities/problems around their relationship with members of host communities.

Also, the chapter is an analysis of data collected in the Niger delta describing the obstacles faced by CSOs as they carry out their functions. These impediments are enormous, but corruption appears to be the major hindrance to an active CSO in the region. The impact of corruption on CSOs can be seen in terms of their interactions with multiple sectors. This includes corruption within or outside the CSOs, their relationship with MNOCs, the federal government, donor organisations, and crude oil host communities.

## 8.2: How Civil Society Organisations are Responding to the Problems in the Niger Delta:

Civil society activism is an important part of nation building (Bendix, 2017). The Niger delta is faced with problems around environmental degradation (loss of livelihood, mass unemployment, poverty, social and health problems), under-development, and resource control. The advocacy roles played by CSOs in the region are geared towards bringing improvements to the lives of people in the crude oil host communities where crude oil exploitation activities take place (Grant, & Vasi, 2017; Obi, 2018). The interviews were conducted with representatives of 25 CSOs and the discussions were on the impact of corruption on civil society activism in the Niger delta.

The demographics of those interviewed are displayed on table 8.1. The highest number of the respondents are between the ages of 30-40, they were 15 in number and they are the youngest respondents.

Table 8.1: Demographic Details of Respondents

Age Range of CS Heads/Members	Number of Respondent
30-40	15
40-50	5
50-60	3
70-80	1
80-90	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>

As stated in chapter seven, CSOs are a combination of NGOs, self-help groups and militant organisations. Table 8.2 defines CSOs in the Niger delta.

### Classification of CSOs in the Niger delta

<b>CSOs</b>	<b>Definition</b>
NGOs	The NGOs in the region are non-profit seeking organisations that fight for the common good of the people. The ones selected for this research are making efforts at resolving different problems around crude oil exploitation. Some have international affiliations and other are locally formed
Self-help groups	Self-help groups are making efforts at ensuring that the government and MNOCs are held accountable for their unsustainable oil exploitation practices in the region. They interface with NGOs in ensuring that communities are developed, environmental degradation is reduced, and the members are employed. They are the groups that protest at the gates of MNOCs as discussed in chapter two. It is the protests of these group of people that sometimes force MNOCs to carryout CSR activities in communities. There are thousands of self-help groups in the Niger delta, every community has at least one.
Militant Organisations	Militant organisations are an important part of the CSOs described in the region because of their contributions in bringing improvements to the region. They try to resolve these problems with the federal government and MNOCS using violence.

There are several reasons for which people in the Niger delta are involved in civil society activism. As described by Bernhard in 1993 on the Polish case, the CSOs in the Niger are struggling to be independent of the state to proffer solutions to the problems around crude oil exploitation. But, the joblessness in the Niger delta as discussed in chapter four and five and a good salary also make working for CSOs attractive. Smith (2010) stated that some of the people employed by NGOs in Nigeria are working for these organisations because of the unavailability of other forms of employment. The problems around unemployment in Nigeria is the reason CSOs are an essential part of the Nigerian labour market offering employment to thousands of jobless people. However, this is a new way that people in the Niger delta are getting involved in civil society activism.

In most cases, the salaries paid by CSOs are relatively higher than those offered by other privately-owned organisations. Especially, those CSOs that have affiliations with international CSOs (“Salaries of Non-Profits and Non-Governmental Organizations in Nigeria” 2018). Respondent one who is a lawyer in his 40s and an employee of an international CSO with a branch office in the region said:

‘I used to work for another organisation as a lawyer and I left because I was poorly paid. Since I joined this international CSO as a lawyer, I can say that I have achieved so much financially. I am here because of the positive sense of achievement. I do not have any plans of leaving this organisation anytime soon because I am been able to meet the financial needs of my family working here. However, I am from Ogoni and I am passionate about resolving the problems of crude exploitation in the region. It affects me closely’ (CSOs, res.1).

The ability to meet the needs of the family which includes extended family members is a major part of the Nigerian culture and a good salary will be helpful. Making a high remuneration the attraction for many jobseekers. But passion is also an important part of retaining a job for many years. For respondent one, as an indigene of Ogoni land, the number of environmental problems in his community was also a major drive for him.

CSOs in the region do more than providing job opportunities for inhabitants. According to Kleibl, & Munck, (2017),

‘in the new civil society discourse, NGOs roles have been expanded to a watchdog role and an increasing number of social accountability and governance orientated NGOs emerged, claiming to represent the voices of the poor and marginalized vis- à-vis the state. They provide opportunities for political engagement and offer arenas for community participation in sectors such as health (in HIV and AIDS)’ (p.206).

The CSOs selected for the data collection are mainly set-up as advocates on the crude oil related problems caused by the carelessness of MNOCs and the failure of the federal to effectively monitor their operations. As discussed in chapter four, CSOs are also concerned with the poor utilization of profits made from crude oil exports in the development of the region by the government and MNOCs. In solving the above problems, the forms of activism embarked on by CSOs in the Niger delta include: advocacy against gas flaring, leave the oil in the soil, the right to ownership and reporting environmental pollution. Others are ensuring basic rights, sustaining the livelihoods of the people, accountability with crude oil revenue/benefits,

advocacy against poverty, environmental campaigns, women's right in the Niger delta with regards to oil exploitation and a right to jobs.

One way that the CSOs in the region respond to the problems around crude oil exploitation is by advocating against gas flaring. Respondent three who is a Doctor of Theology and a Catholic priest manages an NGO which is a coalition of 25 NGOs working together to stop gas flaring. He responded to his effort at resolving the problems in the region by stating that:

‘the need to set-up a CSO that will tackle the issues around gas flaring was a necessity because, on my return to the Niger delta from the United Kingdom there were no such organisations in the region. As we are beginning to see that, gas is the present and we have more in terms of gas reserves than crude oil in the Niger delta’ (CSOs, res.3).

Countries like Norway are utilizing gases that should have been flared for other purposes bringing profit to the government and making oil companies environmentally responsible. Gas flaring is a major environmental problem in the Niger delta caused by crude oil exploitation as discussed in chapter three. Also, in chapter four, I have described the effect of flared gases on the people and aesthetics of the buildings in the communities I visited for the fieldwork. Respondent three is advocating for an understanding on what can be achieved if flared gases are used for other purposes such as cooking and exportation to countries where it is needed.

Furthermore, respondent three argues that MNOCs are not interested in exploring the uses of flared gases in the region because they have not been held accountable for the problems caused by gas flaring. As discussed in chapter four, the fines may have been reversed, but is it enough to stop gas flaring? The respondent said that:

‘if a business is done in a way that it spoils the land and water then, it raises questions on our minds because the amount of money spent afterwards will be inconsequential. CSR is not so much about how much money you give to the community that you have polluted. It is about asking the question; how do I do my business such that it will not affect the people around it? CSR should be about how companies do their businesses’ (CSOs, res.3).

Gas flaring is detrimental to the environment and health of residents especially when residential properties are close to flare sites as discussed in chapter four. The health challenges arising from the ignorance in the region has also been discussed in chapter four.

Since the federal government and MNOCs are negligent in dealing with crude oil exploitation in the Niger delta, one of the CSOs have started a new campaign tagged ‘leave the oil with the

soil'. This campaign has been tied to climate change and a quest to stop further crude oil exploration in the region. The CSO is building their aims and objectives to align with global realities and possibilities. Respondent one who is an environmentalist pioneering the campaign said:

'it is a wakeup call for the people in the Niger delta to go and be creative. This will not be achieved immediately but there will be a transition period. Crude oil is the biggest form of carbon emission in the world. But in countries like Chile, they are running on renewables, why can't we do same here. The towns Oloibiri and Warri are samples of what happens when a once bobbly community with oil companies starts packing up, it is time we start thinking around this. We must think creatively and what we will do to create development outside of oil. As an organisation, this is our own way of saying to the people in the region, 'wake up' (CSOs, res.1).

To achieve the above, he went on to say that 'occasionally, 'we bring people from different communities together to share ideas' (CSOs, res.1). This is because sometimes the people in the Niger delta do not understand the narratives of things happening in their community and the sensitization exercises are vital. These exercises are discussion sessions held by CSOs to explain to community members the problems that have arisen from crude oil exploitation.

CSOs are responding to the problems in the Niger delta by trying to put forward the reasons host communities should be considered as stakeholders in the oil and gas industry. This consideration is expected to give them a right to ownership. The federal government, MNOCs and all other oil companies operating in the region are stakeholders in the oil and gas industry in Nigeria. What then is the place of the host communities? The recognition of host communities as stakeholders in the Nigerian oil and gas industry could change the narrative in the region. Communities will become more responsible for their environment and will ensure that the federal government and MNOCs are held accountable in the way they extract and manage crude oil. This will mean an inclusion of the host communities in the decision-making of the Nigeria oil and gas industry. In stating why this is relevant, respondent one said, 'we are also now working with the communities and not for the community by this I mean, we get them involved in the projects and giving them have a sense of belonging. They are also becoming more responsible for their environment' (CSOs, res.1).

Respondent 16 is the head of a CSO also advocating for the right to ownership for the Niger delta people inhibited by the Land use Act of 1978. The act states that:

‘All land compromised in the territory of each State (except land vested in the Federal government or its agencies) solely in the Governor of the State, who would hold such Land in trust for the people and would henceforth be responsible for allocation of land in all urban areas to individuals resident in the State and to organisations for residential, agriculture, commercial and other purposes while similar powers will with respect to non-urban areas are conferred on local governments.

The commencement date of the act is the 27<sup>th</sup> of March 1978. This CSO is of the opinion that it is improper for the federal government to intimidate the Niger delta people with the Land use Act. This is because, adequate compensation is a fundamental human right of host community dwellers.

CSOs are also advocating for the payment of adequate compensation whenever a damage that affects the environment and the livelihoods of community members occur. This will enable MNOCs in the region to carry out oil exploitation activities carefully. The inadequacy in the payment of compensation as stated in the Land Use Act of 1978 is one of the reasons CSOs in the region are advocating that host communities be considered as stakeholders in the oil and gas industry. It is also mandatory because, as stakeholders in the oil and gas industry, ‘what ownership gives you is the right of decision-making over what is yours. But when the federal government give licenses to whom it pleases, without due consultation with the host communities, this is an act that should be considered as a recipe for disaster’ (CSOs, res.16). The exclusion of host communities in a decision-making process that affects them is inappropriate. It is a major set-back in resolving the problems in the Niger delta.

According to respondent 13, the exclusion of host communities as stakeholders in the oil and gas industry is posing problems to CSOs, MNOCs and the federal government. He said,

‘a major problem they have with host communities as CSOs is on the perception of community members. Whenever we are in a community to carry out a task, community members would always ask if the project is for the civil society or the community’ (CSOs, res.13).

They fight against developments in their community because they do not understand that every project carried out in their community is for their good. They act as if the projects will be more beneficial to the contractors or the CSOs that are sometimes involved in the supervision. This could be one of the hindrances to the development of the region.

The federal government have successfully side-lined the people in the region quoting the land use act of 1978. This is enabling MNOCs from paying adequate compensation when the need arises. Instead, they sometimes give solitary recompenses such as bags of rice to members of host communities. This action makes community members believe that MNOCs want them to be perpetually dependent. These acts undermine the confidence of the people and prevent them from aspiring higher. Respondent 10 who is the head of another NGO and an environmentalist activist, said: ‘this is the only country where community members are not regarded as stakeholders in the oil and gas industry. In other countries, they are responsible for what goes on, on their soil’ (CSOs, res.10). It is a mistake of the federal government and MNOCs for not considering host communities as an integral part of the oil exploration process. This is a scourge on the communities because, host community members are affected the most by crude oil exploitation activities.

Another respondent who is an accountant professionally but now manages a CSO in the region said his organisation is interested in the ensuring basic right in the following ways:

‘Our vision is one of new global economic and social contracts, which corrects the asymmetry of power in negotiating social contracts between stakeholders in the global economy. Our vision is one that ensures basic rights – including economic and social development – are not sacrificed in one part of the world to the benefit of another. Our mission is to support the efforts of those affected by extractive industries and weak governance through rights-based community empowerment. We strive to protect human rights and demand responsive governance’ (CSOs, res. 6).

With the way MNOCs and the government is responding to the people in the region, it is important that they understand their fundamental right and make efforts to protect same.

Additionally, a CSO is interested in sending out reports on environmental pollution in communities to NGOs outside the country. This is to get the support of an international NGO in their fight against the government and MNOCs. The head of the CSO in Port Harcourt, who is an environmentalist said that they have trained local environmental officers.

‘we do not pay them, but we find ways of making it worth their while, they get trained and better equipped, they are also made to travel abroad for short courses as compensation. We do not perceive this as payments, but we see it as compensation for the time spent in carrying out the project’ (CSOs, res.22).

It is also a way of practicing inclusive activism where the host community members and the CSOs come together to solve the problems that they face daily. In practicing inclusive activism, they support the local economy by patronising local businesses in communities especially in providing refreshment for meetings when the need arises.

CSOs are also campaigning on preserving the environment which is important to the region. Respondent 10 said:

‘we are a campaign organisation and do campaigns on the environment, the democratization of development and making development perspective. Campaign on gas flaring, oil pipelines, air quality regarding gas flaring, the impact of pollution on flora and fauna and leadership roles especially for women on issues around pollution and we also work on renewable energy. Furthermore, we do training, sensitization of locals, we try to bring communities to that point where they understand the law and processes before the documentation that are signed. We advocate that communities nominate people that are known to be part of the documentation process, we equip them with the skill and confidence for negotiations by designing a template in this regard. We have also tried to intervene in the process so that we can form local level committees to be part of the process’ (CSO, res.10).

As discussed in chapter four, environmental degradation is the main problem that have arisen from crude oil exploitation in the Niger delta. I stated in chapter four that some community residents are unaware of the environmental consequences from crude oil exploitation in the region. This type of advocacy creates awareness for host community members. If this is done in all the communities, some of the environmental and the health problems could be averted.

As discussed earlier in chapter four, crude oil exploitation activities are tampering with the livelihoods of the Niger delta people. This CSO presents themselves as an organisation that is interested in sustaining the livelihoods of the Niger delta environment. The respondent here said, ‘we still stand our ground and protect the interest of our people and the communities because these are our resources. The oil companies are tenants, why should we run away, we will be there and do it properly’ (CSOs, res. 22). CSOs in the region are optimistic that advocacy and activism will help the people in the Niger delta deal with the problems they face from crude oil exploitation.

Respondent 12 who is a professional estate surveyor before becoming the head of the CSO said:

‘we monitor and try to eradicate the high rate of poverty in Niger Delta. It is our goal and endeavour to fostering human rights and make provisions to development. We are interested in enhancing basic social amenities and ultimately aim for effective projects that will benefit both the poor and the rich alike. In addition, the body is duty bound and will take it as a priority to expose leaders even our own who are guilty of embezzling public funds and to work with the appropriate bodies e.g. police commissioners, Financial Crime commission and various media authorities to expose and tackle those neglected regions in the Niger Delta’ (CSOs, res. 12).

There responsibilities as an organisation are enormous.

The other form of advocacy practiced in the region is protecting the rights of women in the region. These CSOs are concerned about the women because,

‘they are always left out in the compensation sharing process. Women should be an integral part of the process, not just the youths, men and community leaders because in most of these communities they are the breadwinners of their families, some of them do this by going fishing’ (CSOs, res.11).

The rights of women remain a major part of the advocacy because of the traditional belief in the region where women are regarded less than men. A situation that plays out even amongst children in the family, the male child is usually regarded as more important than the female.

Their husbands represent them when compensations are paid on their farmlands or fishing settlements. The men partner with the traditional rulers to monopolise the compensation.

Five other respondents (CSOs) were passionate about the sufferings of women in the region and as part of their campaigns, they have advocated against the traditional rulers’ and chiefs and are fighting for the inclusion of women in the compensation process. traditional rulers and chiefs sometimes get the bulk of compensation. This is because according to this respondent:

‘there are a lot of irresponsible men in these communities and as such, even the education of the children is mainly the responsibilities of the women. They feed their families and they are the ones that go fishing and are most hit by environmental degradation of any sort. But they are usually excluded from the compensation process because they are women, and this is wrong. This is a major part of our advocacy as an organisation (CSOs, res.15).

This form of advocacy is gradually becoming a major part of civil society activism in the Niger delta because of the ways in which women are treated especially when it comes to the payment of compensations.

An example of how this type of advocacy is playing out in the region is when one CSOs looked at about '15 communities in Akwa Ibom state and a few more in Rivers state especially with the current clean-up in Ogoni where women will participate in advocacy and negotiations' (CSOs, res. 22). It is the idea of putting women at the background because of tradition despite their contributions in the region that has resulted in CSOs advocating mainly on injustices against women. These women groups are a part of the advocacy in the region but have regarded as a special group because they are also a part of other advocacy groups.

As stated in chapter two, I have interviewed only one militant because of the difficulties and danger that could be experienced in reaching out to them. This militant group is interested in standing for justice, peace, and equity. The representative of the militant group, a lawyer said that 'we provide security for oil companies, trying to stop sea piracy and have appealed to the MNOCs for employment' (CSOs, res 21). Furthermore, he said: on their part, they have reassured these MNOCs that if they provide jobs and some social amenities, they will protect them from other groups. They work together with other CSOs to make sure that there is security for MNOCs while they make requests for development and the employment of young people in the community. The respondent also said 'we are a militant group, but we are peaceful. We have reached an agreement with the companies in this community that if they provide jobs for the people, there will be peace. They have not provided many jobs, but we are dialoguing' (CSOs, 21). Some other forms of activism they carry out are disease control and pollution prevention.

As discussed in chapter seven, militant organisations were responsible for the approval and execution of the amnesty programme by the federal government of Nigeria. These groups are a threat to government and MNOCs. They have made great contributions in the Niger delta struggle making it difficult to isolate them in the discussions on CSOs in the region. They have acted as CSOs in some instances standing their grounds and ensuring government and MNOCs proffer solutions to the problems in the region. Respondent 11 in discussing the role of militia in civil society activism said: 'the militants, cultists and the youths in these host communities show that they have a mind of their own, unless they agree with you, you cannot do anything

in their community' (CSOs, res.11). For CSOs, forward movement in the Niger delta means respect for each of these stakeholders and they carry out their acts of activism.

### 8.3: CSOs and the Complexities Surrounding Crude Oil Host Communities in the Region:

Environmental degradation and under-development are the major problems in most of the crude oil host communities in the Niger delta (Mohammed, Robinson & Aliyu, 2014; Kaur, 2014; Aduloju & Okwechime, 2016 as discussed in chapters four and five. A total of ten out of the 25 respondents are concerned about environmental degradation in the Niger delta. Three of these CSOs are local branches of international NGOs and the remaining seven were formed locally. Foreign affiliations imply that these NGOs are funded by governments and individuals outside the country. While those that are formed local get funding from everywhere local or international.

The organisations that are ranked under environmental activism are those interested in ensuring that crude oil-related environmental problems are reduced and that oil companies whether multinational or local are held accountable for their actions. One of the respondents, res. 20 representing his organisation who is a geographer stated that they are interested in

‘protecting the natural environment and the people and wildlife that depend upon it by linking environmental security, human rights, and social need. They intend to achieve the following through:

- a. Creating and implementing solutions where they are needed most – training local people and communities who are directly affected to investigate, expose, and combat environmental degradation and associated human rights abuses.
- b. Provide training in the latest video technologies, research, and advocacy skills to document both the problems and solutions, working through the media to create public and political platforms for constructive change.
- c. Raise international awareness of the issues our partners are working locally to resolve’.

The environment in the Niger delta region is badly degraded from crude oil exploitation activities. It is the obligation of the federal government, MNOCs and host community members to make inputs on how to resolve these problems. Host communities have always exonerated themselves from the ongoing degradation in their communities, but they are contributing to it.

A respondent who is an economist said, ‘I agree that the MNOCs are responsible for environmental degradation in these host communities, but I must also say that the communities have a role to play too’ (CSOs, res.14).

Stakeholders in the oil and gas industry have failed in their responsibility to protect the environment including the host communities. They have failed in playing their roles effectively as custodians of their environment and communities. They care less, and this respondent stated that he noticed that host community members are not visibly concerned about the environment even after saying so. He described the problem thus:

‘this is a problem that is associated with exclusion of host communities as stakeholders in the crude oil industry by the federal government, these communities feel left-out of a natural resource that should be managed by them. As a result, they cause more harm instead of protecting their environment’ (CSOs, res.14).

This is the reason CSOs that are advocating for the communities. Sometimes, ‘these communities have an entitlement mentality meaning that they feel entitled to the proceeds from the natural resource in their community but are unable to take responsibility for the problems in the region’ (CSOs, res.4). This mentality of entitlement is often expressed in different ways example of which is in how the youths of host communities ask for monetary compensations/inducements before the commencement of projects. These are projects that will be beneficial to them and their community. In some instances where the contractor refuses to offer this bribe, the project might not be executed, or the contractor will be replaced with another that will comply with their requirements.

The mentality of entitlement is a form of corrupt practice by the host communities and is sometimes difficult to understand if you are from other cultures. This type of monetary compensation paid to community members or youths is commonly called either as ‘mashing ground’ or ‘community levy’ or ‘deve’ depending on the community. The ‘mashing ground’ syndrome is an hindrance to tangible developments in the region. Apart from the problems of terrain and the corruption of government officials as discussed earlier in chapter two above, host communities have also prevented infrastructural developments in the region by asking contractors for bribes.

To achieve better results, host community members are expected to change their perception towards development in their communities. CSOs apart from advocacy are taking steps at changing the perception of community members by working with them. Respondent seven in

discussing how they are trying to achieve this said, ‘we now work with the communities and not for the community by this I mean, we get them involved in the projects especially the youths, we make them have a sense of belonging’ (CSOs, res.7).

Then again, ‘this is not a problem of the youths alone but the traditional institutions such as the kings, chiefs and members of the king’s cabinet. The chiefs can sometimes cause a lot of problems for contractors’ (CSOs, res.10). Traditional rulers are an important part of the community, they are the leaders and as such, they make negotiations on behalf of their communities. The traditional rulers in the region were a major part of the problems because they sometimes align with the federal government and MNOCs collecting bribes and share compensation amongst themselves (Ikelegbe, 2005).

Some of the respondents were able to describe their experiences with host communities. Respondent five is the head of a CSO and a member of a visiting team set-up by Shell to visit their projects. It is a voluntary role and the responsibility of CSOs in the region. He said,

‘what I saw in some of the communities amazed me, I realised that people in these host communities are ultimately not interested in the development of their community. They are only concerned with collecting money for themselves. An example was when we visited a laboratory, that was supposedly furnished by a contractor who was one of the chiefs in the community. We discovered that the Bunsen burner was on the floor lying about with no proper equipment in the laboratory. We found this out just as I have described it because we did not tell them, I mean the contractor that we were coming. This is an act of corruption from the host community. If we had informed him of our arrival, he would have borrowed equipment and perhaps arranged the laboratory properly for an inspection. The man had received all the money from Shell and the few equipment he had purchased were lying on the floor, this is corruption’.

Host communities complain about the absence of developmental projects by MNOCs in their community and when they are afforded an opportunity to develop their community, they embezzle such funds. Another respondent said:

‘I also visited an hospital furnished by a so-called ex-commissioner, who must be a top-ranking government official. I went into the hospital and there was no hospital equipment, rickety beds, absolutely no mattresses on the bed and it was evident that nobody ever used these faculties. There is a conscious corruption manifesting itself in

so many ways in the Niger delta. Nevertheless, with our advocacy, I am very happy and must confess that the traditional rulers have been very helpful lately' (CSOs, res.10).

The corruption in the crude oil sector in the region can come from any of the stake holders even federal government is not exempted as described by respondent 10. Some traditional rulers as described earlier were considered a major part of the problems in the region. However, this is changing as some are now advocating against the federal government and MNOCs. Apart from the accounts of the respondents, traditional rulers are becoming apprehensive on the level of under-development and environmental degradation in their communities and are taking steps to correct their wrongs.

CSOs are changing the narrative of host communities hindering development in the Niger delta by sensitizing members of these communities. They do this by explaining to them that whenever the contractor is willing to share the contract money with the people in the community, he or she will also carry out a project below specification or sometimes leave the projects uncompleted. Which is not in the best interest of the community because projects could be sub-standard or abandoned thereby leading to under-development. CSOs are also advocating on ways to bring an end to the 'mashing ground' syndrome in the Niger delta by educating and partnering with the youths and traditional rulers in these communities on the benefits of infrastructural development in their community.

They get host community members into thinking through on what will befall their communities when MNOCs finally leave the region using the examples of Oloibiri and Warri as earlier mentioned. CSOs have organised meetings with traditional rulers and seminars for youths and women organisations. They argue that 'Education is key,

'we need to educate our brothers and sister around the oil producing communities. The problems are enormous but what we are mainly concerned with now is sensitizing community members on the dangers that might befall them if they continue to prevent the citing of developmental projects in their communities because of their quest for little fees like mashing ground' (CSOs, res.10).

Apart from preventing the development in their communities, host community members have also been accused of having partnerships with oil spill clean-up contractors thereby contributing to environmental degradation in their communities. If oil spill occurs occasionally, most of the environmental clean-up contractors will perpetually be out of a job. As a result, the contractors sometimes liaise with residents of host communities to vandalize crude oil pipelines

so that they will be paid for the clean-up. This is the main reason MNOCs are quick to claim that most of the oil spills in the region are not from faulty pipelines or accidental discharge, but it is a function of vandalisation.

An example is when Shell was accused of destroying the environment in Ogoni land. As a defence, they claimed that oil spills and environmental degradation in Ogoni land were mainly cases of sabotage. Although, this was ruled out in the case of Bodo Vs SPDC in 2014 because the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) reports of 2011 on Ogoni land showed that the spills were because of equipment failure. The MNOCs in the region blame the vandalisation of crude oil pipelines which is a causal factor in cases of oil spill on members of the host community because they are aware of the relationship between clean-up contractors and the host communities.

This case involved 15,000 claimants from Bodo community. The Joint Investigation Team (JIT) Shell offered £4,000 (four thousand pounds) and settlement was refused but after a few months, Shell admitted liability and settled out of court to preserve their image in the sum of \$83 million which was shared amongst the 15,000 claimants. To further maintain their integrity and clear themselves of wrong doings, Shell agreed to be devoted to the cleaning of the Bodo community (Yusuf & Omoteso, 2016).

The above case might have been proven to have been caused by Shell's faulty equipment, but host community members are sometimes involved in sabotage. Some members of the CSOs interviewed have experienced the inputs by host community members in destroying the environment through vandalisation. They have taken steps at enlightening community members on the dangers of vandalising oil pipelines. As a part of their experiences, one of the respondents said:

‘I was in a community to inspect an oil spill site as an independent inspector and I realised the spill was man-made. I decided to investigate by asking a few of the community members and someone disclosed to me, saying that community members sometimes are employed to vandalise crude oil pipelines by contractors to oil companies to ensure that their contracts on clean-up come regularly’ (CSOs, res.11).

They take part in acts like this because they get monetary inducements for causing spills.

Furthermore, respondent three argued that community members also extend spill sites, he described this by saying that:

‘we have seen instances where community members make farrows so that the spill can get to their land for them to be included in the compensation. Even when the spill did not get to their land therefore compounding the problem of environmental degradation in communities’ (CSOs, res.3).

These are some of the reasons MNOCs might refuse to take responsibility for crude oil spill sometimes or refuse to pay adequate compensation. To resolve problems like this, CSOs are training environmental officers who are to collect information on the environment in their communities.

‘We prepare communities with the skill and confidence for negotiations and we designed a template in this regard. We advocate that communities nominate people that are known to be part of the documentation process. We have tried to also intervene in the process so that we can form local level committees to be part of the process’. (CSOs, res.3).

Apart stopping practices described above, this is also to prevent cases whereby, the chiefs and a few communities elect share the money collected as compensation amongst themselves.

Traditional rulers are either advocates for their communities or a part of those receiving bribes from the federal government or MNOCs. The role they play is dependent on a few factors such as their level of education and the problems in the communities they head. Educated, traditional rulers are standing up against the federal government and MNOCs. While those who do not understand the futuristic impact of these problems in their communities are still collecting bribes.

The examples above show that most members of the host communities are not interested in developing their communities but are rather concerned with getting the money for themselves. Apart from liaising with clean-up contractors, host community members sometimes partner with MNOCs to cover up for these organisations when they fail to carry-out clean up exercises effectively. According to respondent 3, they do this by covering spill sites with clean soil at night. This is displayed thus:

‘I was asked to come and inspect an oil spill clean-up job carried out by a very prominent multinational oil company here in the region. On arrival with my team members, as independent inspectors, we realised that the soil was imported to the spill site. There was no remediation done on the site when asked why, we were told

community members were given bribes to fill spill site with clean soil which they did at night' (CSOs, res.3).

This is said to be a regular occurrence as CSOs complained about the little stipends given to community members to cover up for MNOCs, they short-change their communities/people. In most cases, they claim to have cleaned-up such sites but practically,

'at the various point where the MNOC claimed to have cleaned, the paperwork was terrible. On the field we found that at about 0.5 metres there was no hydrocarbon or a stench. At one metre, there was hydrocarbon and a little deeper there was hydrocarbon and a strong stench which means that the soil was imported to the spill site and there was no remediation done on the site' (CSOs, res.3).

MNOCs are not working alone and even CSOs are sometimes side-lined because these companies involve military personnel. The military have always played a role in the oil industry in the Niger delta. They were a part of the Ken-Saro-Wiwa's story in chapter seven and responsible with destroying illegal/stolen crude. They are either working for the MNOCs or the federal government depending on the situation. An example is when a respondent talked about the coalition of the military and MNOCs preventing CSOs from getting to contaminated sites in a community. This is because 'there is always money changing hands when MNOCs are involved' (CSOs, res. 3).

In cases like this, all that CSOs rely on is the fact that advocacy can help the situation. Therefore, the problems in of these community are sometimes in themselves because there is a greedy lot that has set themselves over others in the community. The elite members of host communities have received the power from the masses because, there is a major problem of corruption supported by tribalism in Nigeria (Smith, 2010). In cases where these elites are arrested for prosecution by the government, their community members will be the ones to ask for their release as exemplified in the case of the ex-governor of Bayelsa state, Alamiyeseigha.

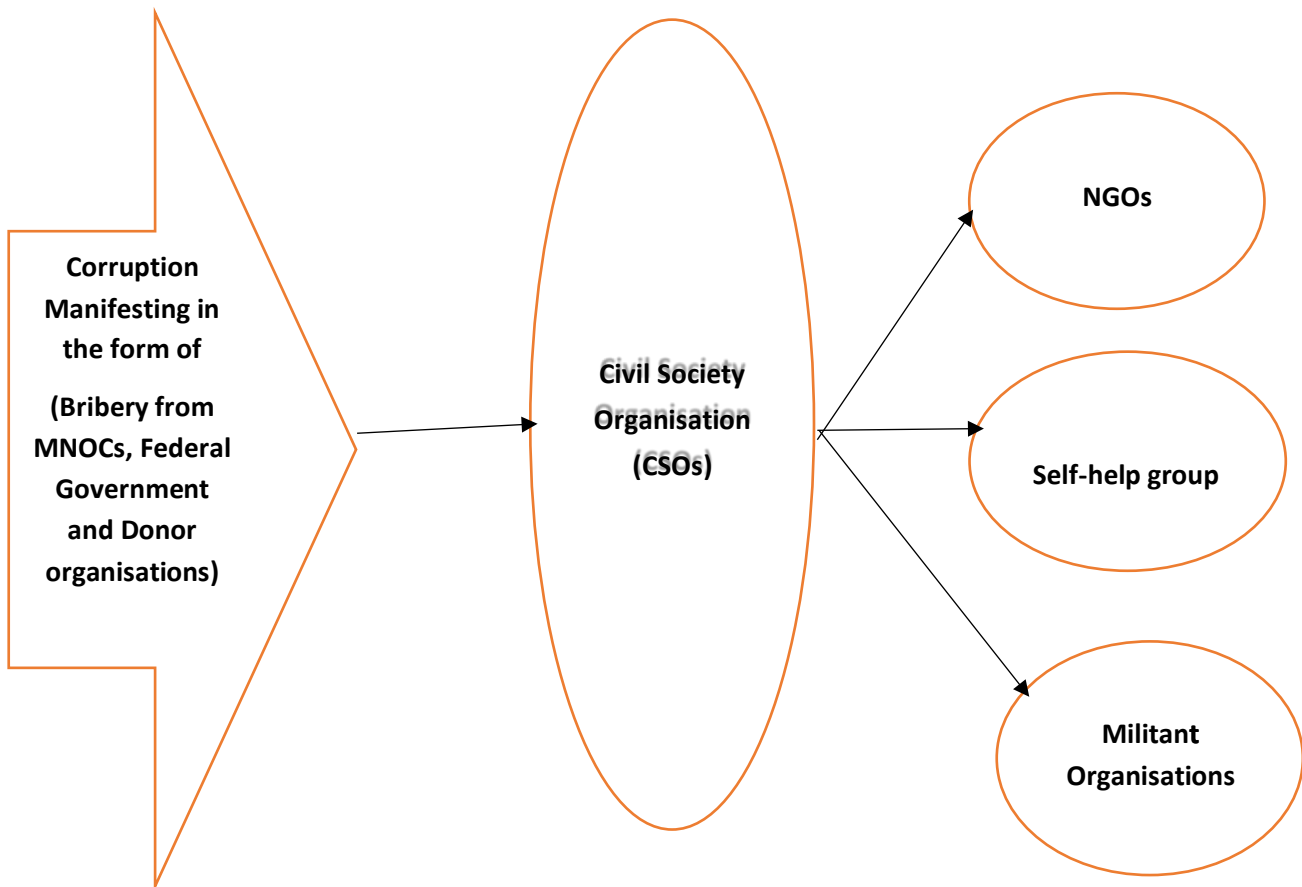
On the continual conflicts in host communities, respondent three has stated that there are members of host communities that are conflict entrepreneurs. This means that, there are people that make money from conflicts. They do so by standing as community arbitrators collecting monies from the federal government and MNOCs in a bid to resolve these problems. Respondent three described this by saying that 'the more conflict, the more the money they make and as such, they stand in the way of peace, so that the communities are in perpetual

turmoil' (res.3). In most cases, the people who are perceived as perpetrators of these problems are the elite members of the community. Host community members are expected to stand-up and ensure that their communities are environmentally feasible and allow infrastructural development. Host community members should avoid giving preferential treatments to the elite (Smith, 2010; Okeke-Ogbuafor, Gray, & Stead, 2017).

#### 8.4: The Impact of Corruption in Civil Society Activism:

The 2017 corruption analysis by the Transparency International (TI) is aimed at highlighting the importance of civil liberty which is the ability to speak freely in the fight against corruption. According to the research conducted by TI, there is an indication that countries with the least protection through NGO activities and the press have the most horrid rates of corruption. Until now, some CSOs are also sometimes formed to embezzle funds (Abdallah, et.al. 2014). The corruption in civil society activism can be analysed in different ways such as corruption within the CSOs, between CSOs, the CSO and a third-party organisation like MNOCs, CSOs and government institutions and CSOs and international donor organisations. Fig. 8.2 is an explanation of how corruption impacts civil society activism in the Niger delta.

Fig. 8.2: Corruption in Civil Society Activism in the Niger delta



Whether it is within or outside the CSO, there are several ways in which corruption can impact CSOs as they go about carrying out acts of activism in the Niger delta. Examples of this include through their sources of funding, bribery offered by the federal government or MNOCs, from contractors and even community members protecting either a contractor, MNOC or the federal government. The findings from the fieldwork shows that corruption is a major problem impacting civil society activism in the Niger delta. The corruption of these CSOs prevents them from fighting for the common good of the region at a time when crude oil prices are dropping and oil gradually losing its value on the global market.

The advocacy and agitation by CSOs in the Niger delta are directed mainly at the federal government of Nigeria and MNOCs. CSOs are of the opinion that, it is difficult to separate the federal government from MNOCs. This is because they believe that they are partners. This partnership is expressed in the way that the federal government fails to implement the laws they themselves have crafted to govern the activities of MNOCs. The federal government should monitor MNOCs on output and not on regulations because of the importance of crude oil to the Nigerian economy. It is not the duty of the MNOCs to ensure the implementation of the laws

executed to regulate their activities. The federal government should stop all forms of partnership with MNOCs and act as a governing body over these companies by effectively monitoring them to achieve a cleaner Niger delta.

The poor implementation of the laws in the Niger delta is blamed on numerous factors amongst which is the poor budgetary allocation to enforcing agencies, the lack of adequate equipment and an absence of the technical capacity to check these organisations. A member of one of the CSO I interviewed, a social scientist before becoming the head of a CSO. He thinks that ‘the government is playing politics with the Niger delta, they as a matter of necessity should prove that they are sincere’ (CSOs, res.17).

The need for sincerity on the part of the federal government of Nigeria has arisen because of some of the irregularities in the relationship between the federal government and MNOCs in the management of crude oil funds in the region (Obi, 2018). There are instances where CSOs who act as independent inspectors to community sites are offered bribes by members of government representatives. These bribes are intended to enable CSOs act against community members but support the MNOCs. This is to further strengthen the bond between the federal government and MNOCs.

These irregularities/corrupt practices are some of the reason CSOs are making efforts at staying away from the government and MNOCs. They argue that a relationship with the government or MNOCs could negatively affect their activism. They recounted examples of some of their experiences and respondent three said,

‘our relationship with MNOCs is not very cordial but when we say something about their company or locations, they are quick to respond via the media. If I am invited to a meeting with an oil company, I will go with about five of my colleagues so that we all can take minutes during the meeting. This is because we do not trust these companies. If you attend these meeting alone, they could at some point during the meeting bring a sheet for people to write their names on, which should form a part of the attendance’ (CSOs, res.3).

Such lists could be used for something other than attendance, it might be used as evidence around money changing hands so, ‘I am very careful and would attend meetings with at least five of my colleagues’ (CSOs, res. 13). As a result, MNOCs on their own do not want us to get involved because they think we are too ‘holy’. Consequently, members of CSOs argue that there is a tendency of corruption in MNOCs. Furthermore, respondent one went on to state that:

‘there are groups that are liaising with MNOCs and these groups think we are too ‘holy’ and I agree with them, there are grey areas, but I think you can play this game either from inside or outside but sometimes, if you are inside, you can be bought over if you are not careful’ (CSOs, res.1).

He highlights the ability of MNOCs to offer and give bribes to CSOs to change the narrative of these organisations in the region. These CSOs stay away from relating with MNOCs.

On their relationship with the government managed parastatals the respondent said:

‘we are working on our relationship with them, it was not very cordial initially but now we are working with government parastatals like the ministry of Environment, the National Environmental Standards and Regulatory Enforcement Agency (NESDRA), DPR, and the secretaries of environmental committee of the national assembly. But we have had a good time with NESDRA, and we are trying to arrange meetings between them and the communities, so they can reach out to the communities. ‘They are usually poorly funded and might not be able to fund meetings like that, this is the gap we are going to fill’ (CSOs, res.1).

And at the state level,

‘we are working even at the state level with the ministry of environment especially with the ‘soot’ which is a residue of the local petroleum refining process. As a way of helping, we train community people on how to collect samples to check air quality in the labs. This we do so that community people are trained to detect strange things in the air they breathe, and it could be a way of providing jobs for them as well. We are currently looking for funding in that direction and we have been discussing this with the commissioner for environment here in Rivers state. I think we need to continue the engagement with the government’. (CSOs, res.1).

Corruption also manifests itself in the relationship between CSOs and the federal in the example below. The committee on Environment at the national assembly, were invited by a CSO because they wanted them to put together an environmental law for Nigeria which has not been passed till date. But when they were invited to Port Harcourt, the CSO did not have the financial capacity to meet all that they required. Members of this committee were making requests such as monetary compensations from the CSO. These are some of the practical problems CSOs face trying to lobby members of the national assembly.

This is a major problem with the Nigerian political class that will not make sense to people in the Western parts of the world. Everything must be politicized, and money must always change hands even when it is for a good cause. The respondent gave a narrative of his experience in Canada as compared to what happens in Nigeria and he said, ‘it is difficult here in Nigeria to reach parliamentarians and this is different when you look at developed countries like Canada where I had had meetings with parliamentarians some years back without any hassle’ (CSOs, res.3).

In the last election in 2015, new parliamentarians were elected, and a few were members of CSOs before their elections. Based on the above, he responded thus:

‘even those who were members of CSOs that are now in the national house of assembly. I particularly tried to reach out to one who told me that we did not contribute to his campaigns and election and now that he has been elected, we want favours. He advised us to contribute for those who are willing to contest next time so that we can benefit from them when elected’ (CSOs, res.3).

It is difficult to deal with government representatives in the country without offering bribes even in an administration that has its main agenda as fighting corruption.

But then again, there are a few of the groups that are yearning for this relationship with the government and MNOCs. Respondent seven claims his organisation does not have a relationship with the federal government or MNOCs but are interested in developing one. He said,

‘we do not have any relationship with the companies and the government, we have been trying to have meetings with the minister of petroleum and the minister for Niger delta affairs but that has not been possible. My predecessors used to have a good relationship with these companies, but I do not. Not even the state governors are willing to meet with us and I think they are playing politics and they think that we might counter the things they are doing that are not right and that we will speak out’ (CSOs, res.7). These class of organisations would like to build a relationship between them and the federal government/MNOCs, but it has not happened.

There is this third class of CSOs that have worked with the federal government and MNOCs in capacities such as serving as independent monitors to oil clean-up sites for MNOCs and representing communities in the negotiation of compensations. Respondent four said:

‘I have worked closely with the major MNOCs serving as a part of several independent monitoring committees. I do not get paid by these companies because that is our stand as an organisation. However, I must state categorically that you must be very disciplined and careful to work with these oil companies otherwise you might just be engrossed in some shady things such as bribes.’

This goes to buttress the reason some CSOs are making efforts at staying away from the federal government and MNOCs.

Another CSO said they have worked with the government and MNOCs. They worked with the government and have received funding from them to carry-out sensitization programmes in communities and he also had this to say

‘we have worked with the government, but we determine the designs and we stood our grounds. We have bad stories, not just about the government but our people, the Niger delta people. Some of the repentant militants have refused to learn. When we were contracted to carry out free computer training with an offer of a free laptop on completion, some of the militants collected their laptops and sold them to Igbo traders. So, the Niger delta problem is multi-faceted, we the members of the community do have major roles to play too in which we have failed’ (CSOs, res. 20).

In working with the federal government and MNOCs, CSOs sometimes have their reservations. This is ironic and counterproductive given that these are the two entities best situated to deal with problems CSOs are attempting to address and fix. Some will out rightly stay away while those who get involved stated that they are careful with their relationship with the federal government and MNOCs. They have a dogmatic ideology that they cannot work with the federal government or the MNOCs because in as much as they are sceptical about them, it will be counter-productive to say that they cannot work with them. Rather it is expected that they stand their grounds and protect the interests of the communities and the people they represent. It might not be necessary for CSOs to form partnership with the federal government and MNOCs but is important to have a relationship such that they can communicate.

The corruption impacting civil society activism in the Niger delta can also be expressed in the ways CSOs source for funds. There are numerous sources of funding for CSOs in the region which can broadly be categorised as foreign and local funding sources. The source of funding for CSOs is the determinant of how the organisations will carry out their civil functions. Examples of how funding influences CSOs are, it directs the acts of activism, decides the

project type, location, beneficiaries and duration. Respondent one acknowledged this by saying that ‘funding is usually tied to particular projects and in most cases, you cannot liberate funds for other purposes’ (res.1). The funding body usually puts a restriction on how funds should be utilised. The provided funds are tied to the project that the donor is interested in and CSOs are not allowed to use donations otherwise, no matter how important the other project may be.

As earlier stated, funding can come from foreign or local donors for the CSOs in the Niger delta. There are numerous funding organisations and one of which is though the Catholic church. The funding for seven out of the 25 CSOs interviewed is from the Catholic church. Why is the Catholic church funding the CSOs in the Niger delta? a respondent said that, ‘the Catholic church is funding our organisations because the problems in the Niger delta are issues of justice that mostly affects the poor. It is the role of the Catholic church to secure justice for the helpless and the poor’ (res.23). This is an explanation for the large number of catholic priests involved in NGOs in the region, they are funded by the church. It shows that the problem in the Niger delta has been received internationally as a problem of social justice.

The Dutch government is another way CSOs in the region are funded. Ten of these organisations including two already funded by the Catholic church, get sponsorship from the Dutch government. The funding from the Dutch government is a sense of responsibility for the oil in the region, the taxes received from MNOCs. A respondent claimed that:

‘the Dutch government fund CSOs in the Niger delta because some of the MNOCs in the region pay taxes to them. Undertaking the funding of projects in the region is a way of giving back to the society where MNOCs make huge profits from which they pay their taxes’ (CSOs, res.24).

The European union has in the past funded five of the CSOs that I interviewed. Respondent 22 opined that: ‘the European Union always has a lot of money to fund CSOs in Nigeria’ (CSOs, res.22).

The funding of CSOs in the region can also come from the American government, the World Bank, and philanthropists. These funding are for several forms of development include the provision of clean water, health care facilities, computer literacy etc. in the region. These CSOs are happy to receive funding from individuals that are philanthropic but according to respondent 25, ‘the problem with the funding from philanthropists is that it can be short lived.

The individual can stop funding at any time leaving behind several uncompleted projects' (CSOs, res.25). Finally, CSOs are also sometimes self-funded, and this respondent said, 'our office is built from our money; donor agencies do not give you money for capacity building because they want you to be dependent' (CSOs, res.15). For individuals that are interested in solving the problems around them, they fund their CSOs and are not dependent on external donors.

Local donor organisations or wealthy individuals can also fund CSOs. These local sources of funding include patrons of CSOs, former presidents', heads of state, state governors, senators, MNOCs and even individual philanthropic individuals. Five of the CSOs interviewed agreed to receiving funds from local donors. However, ten other CSOs claim to have a policy of not collecting funds from local donors even if it is the federal government and MNOCs. The general belief amongst these CSOs is that that international donors are transparent. They believe that the funding from local sources could result in the lack of accountability. The reason for this refusal of funds from local donors according to a respondent is 'to avoid getting into a space where there is the similitude of corruption because foreign donors are more accountable than their local counterparts' (CSOs, res.6).

The CSOs in the Niger delta that have agreed to accepting funds from local donors argue that any donor can be corrupt either foreign or local. They recount their experiences with local and foreign donors saying:

'we have been funded and have worked with local government agencies, but we determine a lot of things. One of the jobs we did was to organise trainings for repentant militants. We realised during this time that government was transparent but most of our boys were not willing to learn or better their lives. They get the laptops and sell them out to non-indigenes, that is where the corruption is and not with the donating government agency' (CSOs, res.22).

Furthermore, they said they have also worked with foreign donors, they come from countries that appear to be less corrupt than Nigeria does not mean that they will not be corrupt or practice corruption outside of their countries. An example is the European union, according to the respondent,

'the funds from the European Union are enormous, but to fund a particular project, they will send their own people because they are very suspicious of Nigerians. So, they

spend most part of the funding making sure their expatriates are comfortable and leaving little to the real project' (CSOs, res. 22).

The huge amounts spent in the maintenance of the lifestyle of these expatriates can result in uncompleted projects, defeating the aim of the funding. Examples of the expensive lifestyles of these expatriates are living in houses with 24hour military security, cleaning, laundry and gardening services. They are also provided with luxurious cars and drivers

Consequently, the location of a donor organisation does not determine corruption or corrupt practices. Donor organisations can practice corruption outside of their countries where the regulations are porous (Kalu, 2018). The large expenditure on logistics by these organisations prevents a continuity process from donors after they would have paid for a project. A respondent claimed that corruption begins with funding, especially from foreign donors. She pointed out that they have had also bad experiences with foreign governments that claim to fund CSOs but spend most of the funding money in paying for co-ordination for their officers.

'I will authoritatively tell you that relying on foreign funding agencies and companies will always leave projects in between. This is because these organisations do not have budgets for maintenance, and this is a corruption of black people who are very dependent. Most funding agencies are fatigued after two or three years and unless you have a funding of your own, you are in trouble. In most cases, the foreign donors are looking for weak NGOs who are more dependent and can be pushed around. I think this is an act of corruption. Donor agencies also do not give you money for overheads and capital, they do not give you money for the capacity building, therefore, they fund you to be dependent' (CSOs, res. 13).

The accusation of corruption by donor organisations is not always corruption but a problem embedded in the cultural differences between the CSO and the donors. Foreign donor organisations expect to get a receipt for every expenditure which will not work in the Nigerian business environment. The failure to provide an evidence of purchase can appear as an act of corruption before these donor organisations. The head of this CSO said:

'you know how it is here in this country, it is almost impossible to get receipts for all your purchases. So, we buy receipt books and produce receipts for all our expenditure. That is the only way we can show that we are accountable, and this can sometimes be considered as a corrupt practice by our donors' (CSOs, res. 25).

When I asked if he writes the correct amount he said ‘yes’ but it is difficult to accept such responses because of the common practices of corruption around the Niger delta. For example, even at outlets where receipts are provided, a consumer can ask that the prices of good purchased are inflated. CSOs can practice corruption in the ways they show accountability and spend donations in the region. Accountability within CSOs is not limited to these organisations but the Nigerian nation. This is because, the relationship between international donors and local CSOs appear to be changing all the time.

Local NGOs are treated as service providers when they should be a part of the initiators. It shows the relationship the Whiteman had with the locals in the colonial times. This respondent stated that: ‘After all, corruption is a problem that started with colonialism. The colonial masters introduced corruption and now they accuse us of being corrupt’ (CSOs, res.13). It is based on responses like this that I decided to ask questions on the structural and historical origins of corruption. This is important because it will provide an understanding on why corruption remains a problem that affects all aspects of the Nigerian economy.

There are also instances whereby, CSOs apply for funds and once they receive such funds suddenly, the organisations shut down and the people involved will no longer be found. This is another way these CSOs practice corruption but respondent 13 also said that: ‘sometimes, they do not want to practice corruption, but they lack the expertise to effectively carryout the project for which they were sponsored. Either they under-bided or they just realised that the expectation of the project was more than they envisaged’ (CSOs, res.13). either way, this is an act of corruption.

The misappropriation of funds donated to CSOs gave the rise to the sponsorship of the NGO bill by the late Umar Jibril Buba discussed earlier in this chapter. Although the bill has not achieved its aims, it was intended to scrutinize how funds from donor organisations are utilised by CSOs. The corruption of CSOs within the organisation according to Ukase & Audu (2015) is that,

‘although most CSOs claim to be fighting corruption, the way, and manner they expend funds and monies given them by donor agencies within and outside the country leave much to be desired. In fact, this has made a significant population of the country conclude that some of the organisations are set up to siphon funds or embezzle grants given to them by foreign organisations. In some cases, the members go out in search of bribes’ (p. 188).

Irrespectively of the claims by these organisations of not practicing corruption, some of them are corrupt and they siphon funds allocated to them. Corruption prevents the execution or completion of projects and hinders acts of activism in the region. But no CSO agreed to getting involved in corruption. For instance, respondent 10 speaking on corruption in their organisation said, ‘we do not have anything to do with corruption, we condemn the act of corruption vehemently and it is left for the agencies concerned to take action’ (CSOs, res.10). Who then is corrupt?

The CSOs I interviewed all rebutted practicing corruption but were willing to point out other CSOs that were involved in corrupt practices. Respondent 22 analysed the corruption in other CSOs by saying that ‘an example of how CSOs practice corruption is when they get involved in projects, they had no idea on how to execute. This will result in either an abandoned or failed project. An organisation that lacks the capability of carrying out a computer training programme but because the funding appears to be lucrative, bids for it and gets it. On receiving the funding, will fail to execute the project because they lack the expertise’ (CSOs, res.22)

Corruption can be practiced amongst CSOs. An example of how CSOs practice corruption amongst themselves hindering acts of activism in the region is:

‘our CSO was a part of the team that advocated against Shell in Bodo – a community in Ogoni land. Months later, as he was travelling to London, I came across the head of another organisation that doubles as the community’s legal representative on the plane. The fellow explained to me how Shell has finally agreed to compensate the people of Bodo community. Respondent I expressed his excitement on hearing the good news, but the head of that organisation responded by saying that, ‘the good news is that we can share from that compensation. He said he was reaching out to all the CSOs involved in the negotiation process, to come for their share of the money’. I refused the offer by telling this colleague that as an organisation, we are not interested in sharing in the compensation that is meant for a community. For us as an organisation, advocacy is free, we do not want to get paid’ (CSOs, res. 1).

Furthermore, he said he is aware of some CSOs that were a part of the sharing process. The corruption amongst CSOs short-change the people by sharing in their compensation and reducing the amount that should have been received by each recipient. This makes more complex the case of corruption amongst CSOs in the Niger delta.

In the past, there were assertions that the government presents the sufferings of the people in Africa to international organisations to get funding. When they do, they make their relatives head these organisations and siphon money from these CSOs. Lately, it has been discovered that when CSOs lack funds, they go to the government and this could impact civil society activism as the government might set out the rules on how they should respond to the grievances in these communities (Ukase & Audu, 2015). CSOs in the Niger delta are sometimes offered bribes by government officials to force them into adjusting field reports for example on spill sites. It is not all the CSOs that are involved in corruption but there are a handful of them that have collected bribes from the government in the past thus directing their reports to favour the government.

The 25 CSOs interviewed all denied collecting bribes from MNOCs or the federal government because they have made it clear that they will carry out their duties at no cost and will accept nothing from the MNOCs. However, some CSOs pointed at other CSOs that have collected bribes for projects like that of Bodo described above. It is easier to talk about corruption when it involves another person or group. The members of most of the CSOs I visited were quick to state that there are some CSOs away from theirs that are involved in corrupt practices with the MNOCs. They were refuting these claims because they understand that corruption can hinder an active civil society in the region.

On the 7th of October 2017, an audio message surfaced on blogs in the region and on several social media platforms used by Nigerians where the member of a prominent CSO was offering to bribe someone to attend an event organised for CSOs in Lagos, Nigeria by the government. Money was going to be changing hands during the meeting. The government wanted to use that meeting to address CSOs responses towards them. Some of the CSOs that were in attendance will not agree to collecting bribes from the government. Meetings like this underrates the federal government's fight against corruption in the nation (Dumbili & Sofadekan, 2016). Corruption in CSOs is complex because they should serve as watchdogs against the federal government, getting involved in corruption further compounds the problems.

Notwithstanding the problem of corruption within CSOs, Nigeria has enjoyed contributions from CSOs even before colonialism. In view of this, Ukase & Audu (2015) suggested that as a country,

‘we have witnessed the useful contributions of the civil society, especially the Save Nigeria Group, Occupy Nigeria Group, NLC, Trade Union Congress (TUC), and others such groups to the inquiry into the oil subsidy removal and subsequent probe into the corruption in the oil sector by the National Assembly. Also, a legal rights advocacy group, Legal Defence and Assistance Project (LEDAP) took the National Assembly to court, citing the Freedom of Information Act, 2011, to compel the NASS to state their actual salaries, yet the National Assembly is still foot-dragging. Today, the country is faced with so many security challenges ranging from militant organisations in the Niger Delta as kidnapping rages in the East and the Boko Haram insurgency in the North. All of these have been attributed to the poverty level in the country, which is because of corruption (Ukase & Audu, 2015, p.186).

It is only CSOs that are interested in salvaging the region that will not indulge in corrupt practices irrespective of the offers from the ‘rich’ oil companies or government officials/organisations. Respondent 22 who is in his 80s and a retired professor from a prominent university in Nigeria said that they have seen NGOs ‘come and go’ and corruption is the main reason behind NGOs ceasing to function after a while. He said, ‘we have been here since 1992 but many of these organisations have disappeared from the radar screen’ (CSOs, res.22). CSOs should be focused on the tasks ahead of them, to accomplish their aims and objectives by shunning greed. A significant function of a CSOs is that, it is not a profit-making venture. With respect to the above argument, respondent 22 also said that

‘we have seen and experienced corruption in our many years as an NGO. We have been asked for bribes by communities, oil companies have also offered us bribes to underplay what we have seen on site. Corruption is everywhere in the Niger delta. It takes a strong CSO not to be moved by money in the region’.

There is corruption in the country, but CSOs should stay away from corrupt practices and fight against them where necessary. Corruption is a deterrent to the civil society struggle in the Niger delta. According to this respondent,

‘we as CSOs have not been overwhelmed by corruption, but we have seen corruption in the communities by their unnecessary and wholesome demands. Some community members have made sure that they benefit unduly from the problems of their communities. On the side of the companies, we have also seen a lot of corruption but have remained unmoved’ (CSOs, res.2).

He suggested that multinational oil companies are willing to pay any amount to be presented in a good light for the annual reports and to the federal government. They would rather pay bribes which are short cuts than do what is right in their host communities.

### 8.5: Literature Versus this Research:

Corruption manifests itself within and amongst CSOs in the region in diverse ways. As stated earlier, it could be in the relationship between the CSOs and MNOCs, the source of funding and how these funds are utilized. This research is focused on the impact of corruption in crude oil related civil society activism in the Niger delta. It is like the work of Smith (2010) in that he describes the corruption practiced by NGOs in Nigeria. But different because this research focuses on the Niger delta, crude oil related problems and on all other organisations that have been described as CSOs in this work. The difference between my research and that of Smith (2010) is that he was interested in NGOs while this research discusses CSOs as the combination of NGOs, self-help groups and militant organisations.

Smith draws a relationship between joblessness and the formation of NGOs in Nigeria. He argues that NGOs are set-up by jobless individuals to syphon donations for personal use leaving a fragile organisation that can cease to function at any time. The author argues that the elite control the relationship between Nigeria and international development donors thereby contributing to the fabric of corruption and the maintenance of inequality in Nigeria. The international support they receive have also been marred by corrupt practices by the international organisations. Despite the differences in our research path, I agree with Smith that there is corruption in CSOs in the Niger delta. I agree with him that Nigerians are concerned with the problem of corruption and are committed to seeing a less corrupt nation. I also agree with NGOs syphoning funds allocated to them for certain projects.

Smith also discussed the embezzlement of funds for personal gains in NGOs. However, I discovered also that the managers of these NGOs from the findings of the fieldwork might not be interested in embezzling donated funds. But they sometimes lack the expertise to carry out the projects they have bid for. The lack of expertise can also lead to bidding lower amount for a project and on winning the bid, they realise that the project cannot be executed with the said sum. The organisation is shut-down, and the manager goes into hiding to avoid being

caught up with the law. Therefore, the corruption in and amongst CSOs are multi-faceted, sometime with an intent to embezzle funds and other times forced by the circumstances around a project. This is an addition to the analysis of the corruption of NGOs in Nigeria.

Smith also stated that as wealthy Western countries have adopted neoliberal strategies for development, emphasising civil society and privatisation over government-controlled social welfare programs, greater amounts of donor resources have been channelled to NGOs. Nigerian elites have responded by creating a plethora of NGOs designed to tap and control these resources. Politicians and other elites manipulate the promises of development, claiming to assist the most desperate and marginal in Nigeria's large impoverished population, even as they funnel a disproportionate share of development aid into their own pockets – and their overseas bank accounts.

I agree with Smith that there is a manipulation by the political elite to divert funds. However, unlike Smith who wrote on corruption, NGOs and development in Nigeria, my research is on CSOs and crude oil in the Niger delta. Although I sensed some form of corruption in some of these organisations through their responses but, they all denied any form of wrong doing. In collecting the data for CSOs in the region, many of the NGOs I have cited in this work are organisations that have international affiliations with branch offices in the region. The organisations I have looked at are mainly formed to stand against MNOCs and the federal government on the environmental problems in the region.

#### 8.6: Anti-corruption Agencies and Corruption in the Niger Delta:

The arrangement of semi-structured interviews for the two major anti-corruption agencies Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) in Nigeria was a little stressful. They have branch offices in Port Harcourt, Rivers state where I lived but they were unable to grant interviews because the research questions that should be answered are classified information which can only be given out at the head offices in the FCT, Abuja. I was asked to write a letter to the chairmen of these agencies at their head office in Abuja to book an appointment. The response to my letters were slow but I was able to fix the appointments for an interview on different days

with these agencies. There was no need to re-label these organisations as they are well known in Nigeria.

The interviews with EFCC and ICPC was a mixture of telephone interview and face to face interviews respectively. I wanted to have more than one interview at EFCC, but it was not possible because I could speak to only one person. During the interview, I was told that there were a lot of cases on corruption with these agencies some of which were reported by individuals and others are from the government and some by CSOs. I was particularly interested in those that had to do with oil, CSOs and the Niger delta. There were a lot of embezzlement cases on oil money and grants to CSOs. CSOs indicted with corruption charges were mostly made on complaints on the mismanagement of funds by sponsors showing the complexities around corruption and CSOs funding in the region.

The EFCC and ICPC were established for various reasons as discussed earlier. The EFCC is currently being headed by Ibrahim Madu who is devoted to the fight against corrupt practices nationwide. This was a telephone interview lasted almost an hour and the EFCC official I interviewed on phone started by saying that

‘fighting corruption is a major part of the campaign promises of the current administration and the government is working hard to achieve it. There are manifestations of our success story on the fight against corruption. We have some cases on CSOs that we have handled and some that we are handling. Most of the cases are complaints made by donor organisations. There are instances whereby CSOs have failed to carry out projects for which they were sponsored. There are several reasons for this such as the lack of knowledge, manpower and insufficient funds. In other cases, some of these CSOs were formed not to carry out projects but for personal gains. These CSOs risk prosecution when convicted, there are a few of them that have been convicted but most of which are usually not published’ (EFCC, res.1).

When CSOs are involved in corrupt practices, they will fail to resolve the problems in the Niger delta that are discussed in chapter two and four earlier. These problems require urgent attention.

Respondent two from the EFCC when responding to the question on corruption in CSOs stated that:

‘Nigeria has a major problem which is corruption expressed mostly in the form of bribery. One major case we are looking at regarding a CSOs is on how these organisations insist that some parts of the compensation paid to a community in the

Niger delta should be paid to them. The quest for cuts which is usually bribery is against the law of this land and we must all stand against it. To think that an organisation that should protect the masses is asking for bribes to process the payment of compensation due them is unacceptable to us. We are investigating the matter and if they are found wanting, they will surely be prosecuted. We are an agency that was formed to fight corruption in Nigeria and as you can we have done that for many years now' (EFCC res.2).

At the ICPC, I interviewed four respondents that were senior members of the organisation, their responses on corruption and CSOs in the region appeared to be similar. Respondent two suggested that:

'there are a few CSOs cases we are handling, and they all have to do with the mismanagement of funds donated to these organisations. The reporting bodies are usually donor organisations outside the country. We have informed one CSO in the Niger delta on the case we have against them, but they are yet to respond'. The use of donated funds for personal use has been discussed in chapter seven.

Respondent five in discussing the problems around CSOs in the region and donor organisations abroad said:

'We settled a case between a CSO and a donor organisation abroad. It was different because the head of the CSO did not embezzle the said fund but lacked the expertise to complete the project. The settlement was for him to find someone who can do the job. That was our settlement and we have not heard further complains from either the donor organisation or the CSO' (EFCC, res.5).

There were a few other cases I was not opportune to hear about because of the confidentiality rules around these organisations. Also, they answered the questions generally because they did not want to give full disclosure of those involved. There are recent claims that the responsibilities of the ICPC and EFCC sometimes overlap indicating that there should be a clear emphasis on the responsibility of these agencies.

## 8.7: How CSOs can Resist Corruption and Prepare for the Unforeseen Future:

It is important for CSOs to understand that the task at hand which is to bring improvements to the Niger delta is enormous. This is one-way CSOs will remain focused in the execution of this task. As recounted by respondent three, it is important to always have a witness when dealing with MNOCs. In his example, he stated attending meetings as a team not an individual to avoid corrupt practices or indictments. CSOs are also encouraged to report exactly what they find on site when they serve as independent monitors refusing bribes because the problems in the region require urgent attention. The corrupt practices of some CSOs are making the government assume all CSOs are corrupt. Therefore, CSOs who are not involved in corrupt practices, should report CSOs that are involved in corruption to the appropriate body like the EFCC.

Sustainability is the way to prepare for the unforeseen future in the region. It is a term that is currently being used globally and has made significant impacts. It is solely about the protection of the environment, the use of energy, water and other natural resources efficiently by minimizing waste then re-using or recovering it through recycling, composting or energy recovery, and finally sustainably disposing of what is left. It should also help with limiting pollution to levels that do not damage natural systems, value and protect the diversity of nature (Agyeman & Angus, 2003). Furthermore, the authors suggested that sustainability is expected to value and protect diversity and local distinctiveness and strengthen local community and cultural identity, protect human health and amenity through safe, clean, pleasant environments, emphasize health service prevention action as well as cure and ensure access to good food, water, housing and fuel at reasonable cost.

Reducing carbon footprints and improving the environment which are aspects of sustainability are becoming general topics of discussion amongst CSOs in the Niger delta especially those with international affiliations. This is the path CSOs should take to bring about communities that are environmentally clean or sustainable as they struggle through the other requests of the people in the region. During the fieldwork, I came across a CSO that are already training members of crude oil host communities on how to tell the federal government and MNOCs to 'leave the oil in the soil', crude oil should not be drilled to protect the environment. Campaigns and enlightenment programs like this are important in the Niger delta because of the massive devastation to the environment. Local community dwellers should be taught to protect their environment. It is either there are no exploitation activities, or they are carried out in ways that are environmentally friendly.

This is what CSOs in the Niger delta should aim at attaining, communities that will be habitable for the occupants by reducing crude oil exploitation activities or operating in ways that conform with local and global environmental standards. This is an enormous task because most developed countries are yet to attain sustainable communities because it has been a paradox (Maragia, 2005). But then again, it is work in progress which corruption can hinder. To achieve a cleaner Niger delta, CSOs should endeavour to stay away from corruption within or outside their organisations.

The new global reality to the crude oil and gas industry globally is that newer forms of energy generations are springing up regularly with claims signifying that they are cleaner and as such more environmentally friendly than crude oil. There is no doubt that more of these forms of cleaner energy generation will emerge especially because a display of smaller energy footprints is also a sign that a country is responsible and have environmental rules/principles that are worthy of emulation. Especially in developed countries where they are focused with reducing carbon footprints, encouraging cleaner air space and meeting global carbon accounting standards (Abrahams et.al, 2017).

Apart from countries, companies are also showcasing their environmental efforts giving people that care about the environment the reasons to do business with organisations that are termed 'environmentally friendly'. Attitudes like these are mainly in the West but is gradually filtering into developing countries like Nigeria because of the companies that have branches in the Nigeria and as such, adhering to these global environmental standards make organisations appear as compliant and competent. But then again, these come with an advantage of more people doing business with an organisation that is perceived to be environmentally friendly.

There are also warnings that are backed by scientific principles while others are speculations that, crude oil will reach its peak someday and societies will be reduced to what it used to be before the possibilities we see today as a result of crude oil and energy generation (Urry, 2013). The theory of peak oil was initially built around the work of Hubbert M. King predicting that oil will peak in America between 1966 and 1972 (Fusco, 2006). There are arguments for and against that his findings on oil peaking at the predicted period. Nevertheless, Blankart (2017), argues that the theory of peak oil failed but maintained that it remains relevant. The of the relevance of this theory is that the dates might not be accurate, but crude oil will peak sooner or later.

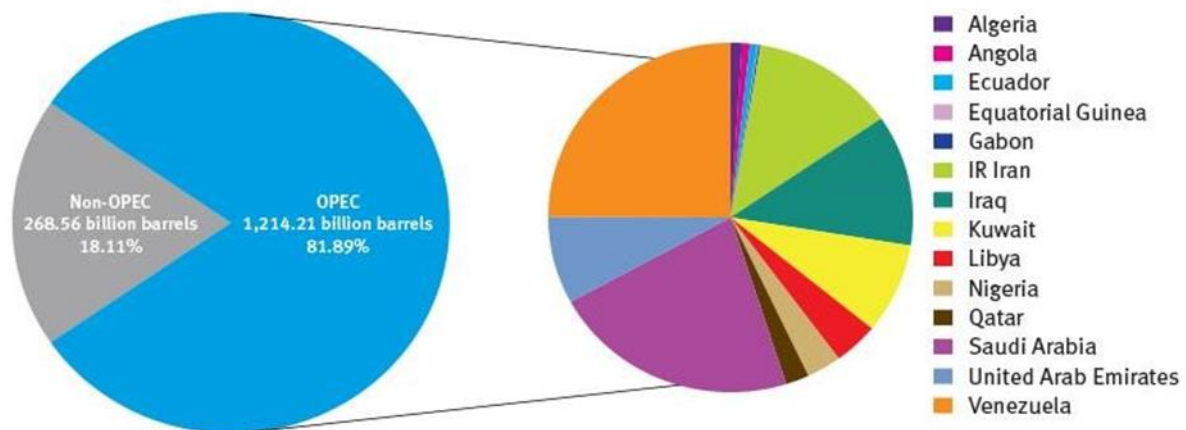
Based on the above, urgent steps should be taken on the subjects around crude oil exploitation in the Niger delta because the region is environmentally devastated. Civil society organisations should insist on environmentally friendly options with the multinational oil companies operating in the region. Then again, the discussions on diversifying the Nigerian economy away from crude oil should be taken seriously because the dependence on revenue from crude oil is gradually coming to an end. The reasons for which crude oil will become less desirable is unimportant, what the region should be interested in is knowing that there will come a time when crude oil will be less valuable and replaced by renewable energy sources, what will become of the Niger delta in that time going by this transition? When this happens, the proceeds and profits from crude oil will reduce which means that it is time for the people in the region to start preparing for a new future.

It is a preparation that will require the cleaning up and aligning the region for new opportunities. If the UNEP report on the clean-up of Ogoni land as stated in chapter two is anything to go by then, it will take a minimum of 20years after a thorough clean-up before the region can be declared clean. Twenty years is a long time therefore; CSOs that are interested in advocating for a cleaner Niger delta should intensify their campaigns. This could take different directions. For instance, it could be geared towards encouraging alternative sources of revenue generation for Nigeria.

On civil society activism in the Niger delta, one of the CSO is already advocating for a Niger delta that is free off oil, where oil will remain in the land and will not be drilled again. They are holding community meetings and telling the people the importance of a region that will be free from crude oil exploitation activities. They have done these sensitisation campaigns by stating examples of communities that were once booming but are now economically unviable. There are speculations that the oil reserves in the Niger delta is 37,453 million barrels as at 2017 based on OPEC reports (“OPEC share of world crude oil reserves,” 2017). This is displayed on Table 8.3 below, Nigeria has the 8<sup>th</sup> highest crude oil reserves in the world based on the table below.

Fig. 8.3: World crude oil reserve 2017

OPEC share of world crude oil reserves, 2017



OPEC proven crude oil reserves , at end 2017 (billion barrels, OPEC share)

Venezuela	302,81	24,9%	Kuwait	101,50	8,4%	Qatar	25,24	2,1%	Gabon	2,00	0,2%
Saudi Arabia	266,26	21,9%	UAE	97,80	8,1%	Algeria	12,20	1,0%	Equat. Guinea	1,10	0,1%
IR Iran	155,60	12,8%	Libya	48,36	4,0%	Angola	8,38	0,7%			
Iraq	147,22	12,1%	Nigeria	37,45	3,1%	Ecuador	8,27	0,7%			

Source: OPEC Annual Statistical Bulletin 2018.

Source: ("World crude oil reserve", 2017)

Although, the Nigerian Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (NEITI) oversees corrupt practices in the extractive industry which includes crude oil and gas, corruption has eaten deep into the fabric of the Nigerian nation. It is a global standard for extractive industries to oversee financial relationships in forms such as payment of taxes, loans etc. between companies and the government. The NEITI was formed in 2004 and the act enacted to enforce it was passed in 2007, on the 28 of May. Globally, Nigeria was the first country with a national EITI to support the implementation with a legislation ("Brief History of NEITI"). It was inaugurated by President Olusegun Obasanjo and he was applauded globally for signing up with the global EITI, they work together with civil society in the country. They are to hold the government accountable on how they relate with extractive industries in the country.

NEITI carryout audit reports and ensure that the country manages its resources in ways that it is beneficial to the country and the people. Since its inauguration, seven audit reports have been handed to the government in the crude oil and gas sector since its inception, it has all not been implemented. The government has a role to play because if they refuse to implement the reforms and recommendations of these reports then it is useless. The media, legislature and

the different aspects of the country and the people have the power to make the government to adhere to recommendations and ensure implementation.

### Conclusion:

CSOs are an integral part of society and they are shaping the Niger delta by acting as the voices of the people against the federal government and MNOCs. As they go about their acts of activism, CSOs are faced with enormous challenges. In the Niger delta, corruption appears to be the most significant of these challenges because of its impact on the Nigerian economy. The effect of corruption on the economic and social development of a state can be enormous and subject to a lot of conditions such as jurisdictional, institutional, economic, and societal (Dimant & Tosato, 2017). Corruption in CSOs can be practiced through bribery from MNOCs, the federal government and diverting monies set aside to fund projects.

Notwithstanding the impact of corruption, CSOs are expected to remain focused in preparing the Niger delta for an unforeseen future which might be without crude oil. The questions that should readily come to mind for CSOs are: what happens if the environmental problems in the region remain unresolved before oil peaks? What happens if the developmental state of the region remains as bad as it is now or even deteriorates before oil peaks? What will the fate of the people in the region? To answer these questions, CSOs in the Niger delta struggle should shun corruption and engage with the federal government and MNOCs in resolving the problems of the region.

CSOs should think about the future of the region along the lines of Oloibiri and Warri which were once vibrant crude oil host communities and are now left without infrastructural development or alternative sources of livelihoods. They should direct their acts of activism towards encouraging the government to initiate plans on diversifying the economy. CSOs should also engage more with community members to achieve these aims. Finally, although the fight against environmental degradation, under-development, and resource control have been taken over by CSOs in the region, the government has a role to play. The government should implement and enforce environmental rules because if MNOCs obey the rules in the West because these countries are stringent with the enforcements.

### Chapter Nine: Conclusion and Recommendations:

### 9.1: Introduction:

The Niger delta is blessed with enormous mineral resources and crude oil is the natural resource of interest in this research. It is a globally important product that has been the main stay of the Nigerian economy for over six decades. Crude oil remains the highest form of foreign exchange earnings for Nigeria since the late 1970s (Alley, 2018). Nevertheless, unmonitored crude oil exploitation activities and the failure to utilise the huge proceeds from its exports is responsible for the uprising by CSOs in the Niger Delta. The civil society struggle in the region is mainly against the federal government of Nigeria and MNOCs.

Nevertheless, CSOs experience some bottlenecks as they go about their acts of activism, but corruption impacts them the most because of the role it plays in the Nigerian economy. The corruption in Nigeria has been described as having historical and structural foundations embedded in colonialism in this research. In this chapter, I will be summarising how the research makes contributions to the literature on the Niger delta from the data collected from CSOs, community dwellers and the anti-corruption agencies in Nigeria. It will take account of the role of corruption on CSOs and make recommendations on how they can resist corruption and fight to resolve the problems in the region. Furthermore, the chapter will make recommendations to CSOs on how to bring corruption to the barest minimum and encourage an active civil society in the region. Finally, I will be making recommendations on the perceived gaps in the fight against corruption in Nigeria and will suggest possible areas for future research.

### 9.2: The Problems Caused by the Oil and Gas Industry in the Niger Delta and Civil Society Responses:

The analysis of data collected from the fieldwork in the six communities show that environmental degradation is the major problem caused by crude oil exploitation in the Niger delta. It is in the form of crude oil spills, gas flaring, crude oil refinery waste water and local refining from the background of the study in chapter four. Environmental degradation is a significant problem because of the failure in the implementation of environmental laws and guidelines by the federal government. Examples of the problems that have arisen from the degradation of the environment are mass unemployment, loss of livelihood, poverty, social

problems (crude oil theft, local crude oil refining, prostitution, cultism and kidnapping) and health hazards (including cancers, respiratory problems, skin rashes, kidney failures and eye problems).

The major environmental problems in the communities I visited were crude oil spills and gas flaring. They are responsible for the loss of the fishing and farming livelihoods of the people in the region. Fishing and farming activities still take place in these communities but, they are on a smaller scale. Environmental degradation has also been blamed for the poor quality of the harvests compared to what it used to be before crude oil exploitation activities. The pale leaves, scanty farms and oil polluted rivers show the impact of environmental degradation on crude oil host communities. During the fieldwork as discussed in chapter five, local community dwellers blamed the loss of livelihood on environmental degradation which they say is the cause of poverty in the region. According to the literature on the crimes of the powerful, corporations like the MNOCs in the Niger delta are not often held accountable for the harms they cause. The federal government which is saddled with the responsibility of monitoring the oil industry has failed to do so effectively. The result of this failure is that MNOCs exploit crude oil in the region with a high level of carelessness that cannot be practiced in the countries where they have originated.

Lately, there is a third party that should also be held liable for the degradation of the environment in the region, they are the local community dwellers involved in crude oil refining. Crude oil theft and local refining also contribute greatly to the environmental problems in the Niger delta. Local refiners claim that crude oil theft and refining are ways of displaying the ownership of the oil wealth from the region as discussed in chapter three. Although, I did not see local refining plants during the fieldwork because they are mainly in the mangroves, these activities take place in most communities in the region including some of the six I visited.

Can education reduce the impact of environmental degradation on the Niger delta people? According to Kofi Annan as stated in chapter six, 'education is a human right with the immense power to transform'. Education has impacted the people in the region positively because these communities now have indigenes that are, teachers, public servants working for the government, doctors or lawyers thus reducing the burden of employment on the MNOCs. Notwithstanding, MNOCs are still unable to meet the demand of employment on them from these communities because the number of unemployed persons is more than the available vacancies. The problem of unemployment in the region is further compounded by some already

employed people (including those employed by the government and private organisations) seeking to change jobs and wanting employment in MNOCs. Their other jobs could be available but might not be in the Niger delta thereby putting extra pressure on the availability of jobs in the region.

The increasing quest for an oil company job is driven by the high remuneration compared to that of the government or privately-owned organisations. MNOCs are mainly interested in employing petroleum, mechanical or marine engineering graduates leading many of the young people in these communities to studying these courses in the universities. The increasing number of people studying the required courses also puts a strain on the MNOCs. They are unable to fill the employment gap because the opportunities in these companies are relatively few compared to the number of applicants.

The literature on the loss of livelihood leading to the joblessness in the region as discussed in chapter four suggests that there is a high level of unemployment in the region. Nevertheless, during the fieldwork, I discovered that this is relative because some members of the crude oil host communities were happy with the employment plans put in place by the MNOCs in their communities because they or members of their families are gainfully employed. The people that complained about unemployment were mostly those who have remained jobless. Regardless of these different sentiments, joblessness remains a major problem and the leading cause of poverty in the Niger delta.

Gas flaring in three out of the six communities is responsible for excessive heat and enormous health problems because of the closeness of flare points to residential properties. I have discussed in detail some of these problems in chapter five. But, I am particularly concerned about the problems of skin rashes and eye problems that has been linked to gas flaring, there were more of these problems than are described in the literature on the Niger delta. Whilst, in the communities where there were crude oil spills, the accompanying health problems were cancers and kidney failures. These are resulting in public health crisis in the region and the lack of awareness on the relationship between unmonitored crude oil exploitation and the wellbeing of the inhabitants make it difficult to understand the gravity of these problems.

The ability to analyse the relationship between crude oil spills and kidney failures and cancers in chapter five was possible because of an interaction with a medical doctor during the fieldwork. These health problems usually result from the consumption of sea foods from polluted rivers that have heavy metals deposited in them. These health problems in the region

are widespread however, many people in the region are unaware of the relationship between crude oil related environmental pollution and the wellbeing of the people in these communities. During the fieldwork, some respondents blamed illnesses on crude oil exploitation but do not understand the kinds of illnesses that could arise from these activities. Reflecting on this problem, sensitization is important, it could reduce the number of sick people in the region. The examples of the precautions that could be taken is telling residents to avoid drying foods such as cassava using flare fires and encouraging them to reduce the consumption of sea foods from polluted rivers.

The other problems usually associated with crude oil exploitation in the region are under-development and resource control. These problems have arisen because of the failure of the federal government and MNOCs to bring about improvements in the lives of the people despite the huge revenue generated from crude oil. The major cause of this failure is corruption. The parastatals of the federal government monitoring crude oil exploitation in the region like NIMASA are unable to enforce environmental laws and guidelines in the country on MNOCs because they are porous. Although the environmental laws in the countries where these MNOCs have their headquarters might not be perfect but they are forced to obey to them.

Crude oil generates huge revenue for the Nigerian economy and profits for MNOCs. As a way of giving back, it is expected that MNOCs provide infrastructural development for the region. Infrastructural developments will encourage entrepreneurial development, skills and abilities. It will enable the people in these communities to become employers of labour rather than depending on MNOCs and the federal government for employment because rural development has been linked to entrepreneurship (Petrin, 1994). The ability of people to meet their needs and those of their dependants will reduce the number of people getting into high levels of social crimes in the Niger delta.

The MNOCs are exonerating themselves from the infrastructural development of the region because they are paying taxes to the federal government. They argue that they do not owe host communities any developmental plans. However, with the global push on organisational CSR, they all now have plans in place. Most of these plans are either ineffective or marred by corruption within the MNOC or through community representation. However, I discovered in these communities that they enjoy 24 hours electricity supply from these MNOCs. Stable electricity supply is a luxury in Nigeria because of the failure of the federal government to

achieve stability in the sector. Apart from electricity, MNOCs have also provided scholarships, healthcare services, gifts and monies to communities in festive seasons as part of CSR.

Crude oil host communities have not benefited adequately in some cases because of the corrupt practices between community representatives and MNOCs. Community representatives and the staff of MNOCs conspire to 'sell' out opportunities to other people which in some cases are non-indigenous or relinquish these chances to family members. These corrupt practices are depriving community members of their rights. Family members and friends of community representatives are satisfied while those that are left out are unimpressed because they are left out of enjoying the privileges in the community.

In the past, community rulers were presumably a part of the problem, but they are getting weary and are now interested in resolving the problems in the region. According to the data collected in chapter five, there are only two major stakeholders in the Nigerian oil industry, the federal government and MNOCs instead of three. The oil industry excludes local community dwellers who ideally should also be stakeholders in the oil industry. Local community dwellers have failed as custodians of their environment and their inheritance because of the lack of recognition from the federal government and MNOCs. Some of the respondents from the CSOs in chapter eight during the fieldwork have suggested that to resolve the problems in the region, crude host communities should be stakeholders in the oil industry. This is because they are the most impacted by crude oil exploitation activities and should contribute in regulating the sector. The failure to make them a part of the industry creates a gap that affects the oil industry in the Niger delta negatively causing more problems.

As the problems in the region discussed in chapter four linger, the people in the Niger delta have responded through the formation of CSOs (NGOs, self-help groups and militant organisations) as described in chapter eight. Although civil society is a Western construct, it is practiced in the Niger delta. I have cited several examples in this research of CSOs in the region in chapters seven and eight. They are not the same as the Western model of CSOs because they are not completely independent of the government but should still be regarded as CSOs. In the Niger delta, they are also a combination of (violent and non-violent) organisations.

The 25 selected CSOs are responding to these problems through the various forms of advocacy discussed in chapter eight. Their activities take different forms, there is a CSO in the region for almost every problem. Advocacies by CSOs in the Niger delta include the fight against gas flaring, reporting environmental pollution, leave the oil in the soil, ensuring basic right and

sustaining livelihood. The advocacy that suggests that we leave the oil in the soil, if adopted can completely resolve environmental problems in the Niger delta because there will be no crude oil exploitation activities taking place. It will boost economic diversification, encourage creativity, reduce the health and social problems in the region. Other ways CSOs have responded include asking for accountability on crude oil funds, environmental activism, standing against gas flaring and asking for women's right in sharing monies from compensations. Women should not be exempted in compensation sharing because they are the bread winners in some families.

The federal government has taken steps to respond to CSOs in the resolution of the problems in the region. Examples of some of these steps discussed in chapter three are the formation of a military Joint Task Force (JTF) to fight crude oil theft and local refining, creation of parastatals to resolve developmental problems and the introduction of the amnesty programme. These steps have failed to yield the desired results. For examples, the JTF's way of resolving local refining by destroying illegal petroleum products is causing further degradation to the environment. The Niger delta people have responded by asking the federal government to legalise local refining. The federal government has promised to improve the operations of these local refiners by providing modular refineries. A promise they are yet to fulfil. Parastatals like the NDDDB, NDDC, Niger delta ministry etc. have also failed to meet the expectations of the people in the Niger delta because they have been marred by corruption.

### 9.3: The Impact of Corruption on the Activities of CSOs:

This study fills a knowledge gap on the role of corruption on civil society activism in the Niger delta. It discusses how the practice of corruption shaped and encouraged by colonialism impacts the crude oil industry in the region and CSOs. The idea of researching the origin of corruption was flagged up during the interviews conducted with CSOs on the impact of corruption on their acts of activism. The research adds to existing knowledge first by stating that corruption impacts civil society activism in the Niger delta, describes the relationship between corruption and colonialism and analyses the role of corruption on the forms of activism in the region such as militancy. It describes the ignorance of the Niger delta people on the role environmental degradation could play on the health of local community dwellers. The failure to understand this relationship is responsible for the poor data collected on crude oil related

health problems in the region. It also describes the uniqueness in the classification of CSOs in the region in this study.

In this research, CSOs are the coming together of NGOS, self-help groups and militant organisations because of their overlapping roles in the region. My analysis of CSOs in the region builds on previous literature by Ikelegbe Austin (2001), Omotola Shola (2009) and Ibeanu Okechukwu (2006) where CSOs are described as civil organisations fighting for the rights of the people. This study focuses on how corruption impacts crude oil related civil society activism in the Niger delta. On corruption and NGOs, Smith (2010) wrote a book on 'A Culture of Corruption Everyday Deception and Popular Discontent in Nigeria'. His study was on the corruption in NGOs in Nigeria. Corruption is prevalent in Nigeria which Smith has also highlighted in his work and my research agrees with him on the corruption in NGOs. However, this work is focused on CSOs in the oil rich Niger delta region of Nigeria.

The corruption in CSOs is manifested in the relationship between CSOs and MNOCs, the federal government, local community members, the sources of funding (local or international donor organisations) and project execution. The dogma on corruption in the region with respect to CSOs have always been that these organisations are corrupt and do not have an intention to carry out acts of activism for the common good of everyone. Irrespective of the perception of corruption in Nigeria and CSOs, they remain the main group that can hold the government and MNOCs accountable on improving environmental standards and resolving the other problems around crude oil in the region.

An example of how corruption is displayed in the relationship between CSOs and MNOCs is in instances where CSOs serve as independent monitors for MNOCs and crude oil host communities. Some CSOs have been accused of collecting bribes from MNOCs to report findings in favour of these oil companies. This is an allegation which they have all denied but were quick to point out CSOs they know that have been involved in such activities. Corruption can also happen in the relationship between CSOs and crude oil host communities. CSOs are practicing corruption when they share in the compensation of communities they represent as discussed in chapter eight. This is because, one of the important characteristics of CSOs is that they should not be profit seeking. Corruption can also occur in the relationship between donors organisations and CSOs.

The funding for CSOs are either from the governments of various Western countries, individual donors and organisational donors like the Catholic church. For countries funding CSOs, it is

because MNOCs pay taxes to them and they feel obliged to give back to the Niger delta. Whilst organisations like the Catholic church react to the problems in the region because of the need to serve social justice globally. Donors carry out projects that they reckon will benefit the people in the region through CSOs. However, some CSOs receive funding and either execute low quality projects or syphon such monies for personal use. It is the lack of transparency by the CSOs that resulted in donor organisations passing donations through the federal government to CSOs. According to the reports from the anti-corruption agencies EFCC and ICPC, most of the complaints of corruption and CSOs are usually reported by donor organisations.

These corrupt practices by CSOs is the reason prominent Nigerians have warned foreign donors against a relationship with CSOs in Nigeria without an involvement of the government. Examples of such warnings is by the former finance minister of Nigeria, Ngozi Okojo-Iwela who in an article titled ‘corrupt people use NGOs as a front’ on the 17th of October 2017, advised international donor organisations against fake CSOs in Nigeria (Awojulugbe, 2017). It is also because of corrupt practices that the NGO bill which was never passed into motion was sponsored by the late Hon Jubril as discussed in chapter seven.

Although there are indictments of corrupt practices on some of these CSOs, I realised during the fieldwork that many of them are passionate about the acts of activism they have chosen. It is these CSOs that have argued that some international donors are also corrupt. They have drawn this conclusion because donor organisations are interested in employing expatriates to supervise projects even when the required skills or personnel can be found in the Niger delta. Donor organisations make sure that these staff are comfortable, and they fund their luxurious lifestyles with part of the resources allocated for the project they are sponsoring in the region. The kind of comfort provided include bullet proof cars, drivers, domestic staff (cleaners, cooks and laundry staff), military for protection and the provision of 24-hour electricity. These are luxuries that will ordinarily not be provided for a local staff or the members of a CSO. The cost of these forms of comfort are taken directly from the allocated funds which means that the projects are often left uncompleted. CSOs suggest that the employment of these expatriate staff is a repeat of colonialism in the region because the colonial masters enjoyed similar benefits during colonialism.

CSOs have also stated that foreign donors sometimes carryout projects that are useful for are only for a short period of time. They lack continuity plans and are only interested in claiming

their support for the region with these projects. Continuity plans in this case might involve the maintenance of machinery and funds set aside for the replacement of certain parts of a machine to enable it to function effectively over a long-term. This is because the budget might have been exhausted from paying expatriate staff, projects that are supposed to last for many years will be useful only for a short period. This defeats the aim of the project and makes investments in the region not worth the while.

The failure to understand the uniqueness of record keeping and how businesses are done in the region can make donors organisations tag CSOs as corrupt. Most foreign donors fail to understand that throughout the region, even in everyday shopping and business interactions, merchants do not provide receipts as they do in Europe. They use the inability of CSOs in the region to provide receipts as evidence for their purchases as an indication of corruption. They label these CSOs as corrupt even when they are innocent of these accusations. This has resulted in some CSOs standing up against donor organisations causing them to sometimes stop the funding of some projects even when there is physical evidence of these projects on ground. Finally, some CSO have pointed out that when foreign donors make donations towards a project, they often want to retain control and do not accept diverging opinions even when their way will not work in the region. These forms of intimidation from donor organisations are viewed as acts of colonialism causing some CSOs to revolt against such attitudes. When they do, they accuse these strong CSOs that have refused to be pushed around as corrupt.

But does the above analysis on foreign donors and corruption exonerate CSOs in the region from practicing corruption? It does not because there are CSOs in the Niger delta that have been impacted by corruption. Either they are corrupt, or corruption hinders their acts of activism in the region. Nevertheless, during the fieldwork, the respondents were quick to acquit themselves of all forms of corrupt practices. For instance, organisation A was only willing to discuss the corrupt practices of organisation B while stating that they have never practiced any form of corruption. These were the kinds of responses I got from my 25 respondents. But as the interviews progressed, it became evident that some of these CSOs are corrupt and are impacted by corruption. Similarly, there were some CSOs that were not willing to discuss the problems of corruption and civil society activism in the region at all. This is because, they were concerned with how the data provided would be utilised.

The anti-corruption agencies in Nigeria did not provide much data on these practices. They have labelled these data as “classified information” although they categorically stated that there

are corrupt CSOs in the region. So, whilst the CSOs in the region were defending themselves and claiming to be corruption free, the anti-corruption agencies were telling me they have some cases on CSOs and corruption in the region. Some of the cases were filed by international donor organisations, local patrons/donor and others by communities that feel short changed by these CSOs.

But there are some of these CSOs that are not corrupt. They also have the interest of the region at heart and are willing to carry out acts of activism against the different stakeholders to bring improvements to the region. The federal government, MNOCs and crude oil host communities have all at different times hindered civil society activism in the region and encouraged corruption in these CSOs. Although, there are instances where international donors have failed in their responsibility, corruption is the major problem hindering an active CSO in the Niger delta. Consequently, it is the duty of CSOs to bring it to the barest minimum so as to achieve their desired aim in the region.

#### 9.4: The Role of Corruption in the Oil and Gas Industry:

There is a high level of corruption in the Nigerian oil industry and the governors of oil producing states have diverted funds proposed for the development of the region for personal gains and benefits. I have summarised this problem with the neutralisation theory in chapter three. The government have also set-up parastatals to oversee the environment, but poor management have prevented these organisations from carrying out their functions effectively. The federal government exhibited corruption in the enactment of laws such as the land use act of 1979 where all land is vested in the government (thereby limiting compensation claims and the rights of indigenous people).

MNOCs have also been indicted with allegations of paying bribes to the federal government, local community dwellers and independent monitors which are sometimes members of CSOs. The act of bribing the federal government is represented in the literature on the region and is particularly linked to the death of Ken Saro-Wiwa. During the fieldwork, I was told by CSOs that MNOCs give bribes to community members to cover-up oil spills as discussed in chapter seven. Although, chapter four provides a description of the problems that has arisen in the region based on existing literature, chapter five is a validation of the problems that were seen in the six

communities and other problems that were down-played in the literature. In chapter four, environmental degradation in the region is displayed through oil spills, gas flaring, crude oil refinery waste water and local refining. However, during the fieldwork to these communities, environmental degradation primarily manifested itself in gas flaring and oil spills. This is because in these communities, there were no refineries that disposed waste water on sites or local refining points. Nevertheless, the impact from crude oil spills and gas flaring in these communities is enormous.

Crude oil spills in the region is blamed firstly on vandalism which is likely because some crude oil pipelines pass through communities, in front of residential properties making it easy for vandals to destroy pipelines and steal crude oil. Secondly, there is a failure on the part of MNOCs in maintaining and replacing pipelines. When MNOCs fail to carryout repairs on these pipelines, they can burst and cause oil spills in these communities requiring clean-up. Thirdly, the problem of oil spills in communities are sometimes caused by community members liaising with crude oil clean-up contractors to vandalise pipelines. Clean-up contractors contract community members because they will remain jobless when there are no spills sites to clean and, in a bid, to make money from the oil companies, they bribe community members to cause spills through vandalism.

In all three instances, there is a spill that needs cleaning-up but, because the companies attribute all oil spills to vandalism, they always refuse to carry-out clean-up exercises leaving the environment degraded. There were un-cleaned crude oil spill sites in some of the communities I visited. However, whenever MNOCs are overstretched to carryout clean-up exercises, they sometimes cut corners. An example of how oil companies do less than cleaning-up the environment is when they bribe community members. These community members fill spill sites with clean sand at night to help MNOCs reduce cost and appear compliant in front of inspectors which includes independent observers like members of CSOs and government officials. They sometimes offer bribes to these inspectors to enable them alter reports on spill sites. Sometimes, these inspectors accept these bribes and at other times, they refuse them insisting that the companies obey and follow the procedure. Corruption sweeps across all parts of the oil industry (and the stakeholders including MNOCs, the federal government and community members) and sometimes independent observers like CSOs.

### 9.5: The Root Causes of Corruption in the Niger Delta:

Several scholars have argued that colonialism impacts corruption in Africa and this research investigates these arguments in the context of the Niger delta region of Nigeria. I collected oral history data from five older citizens of the region that experienced the colonial era in the region as discussed in chapter six. The oral history component of this research was inspired by the claim of CSOs that corruption in the region was linked to colonialism. The main findings from the fieldwork among these respondents are that, colonialism introduced and strengthened the practice of corruption in the Niger delta when bribery was treated as the traditional gift giving, the abolishment of the African traditional style of punishment (i.e. Shaming and capital punishment) and the introduction of a legal system that encourages bribery, taxation and favouritism (plays out as tribalism or the practice of the same religion).

The introduction of a legal system and the abolishment of the African style of punishment as shaming encouraged human rights which on its own is good. However, corruption has lingered in the region because the style of punishment introduced by the legal system and bribery are unable to deter offenders. The frameworks adopted in resolving the problems around corruption in the region and Nigeria, some of which has worked in other countries have failed. The motive behind gift giving is an important aspect of what it represents, is it an act of kindness or is it in exchange for another favour? The inability to differentiate the true representation of a gift was a major difficulty faced by traditional rulers and community members before and during colonialism. This is because gift giving is a part of the African culture and tradition and gifts are presented to people on different occasions from family members, friends and well-wishers. However, gift giving was a significant vehicle in the colonisation of the people in Nigeria but, it is also a major form of the practice of corruption in the Niger delta showing an interaction between the past and the present.

Before colonialism, traditional rulers allowed the colonial masters into their communities because they were presented with gifts that the locals did not have in their communities. It was also the main reason most of their requests were granted by the community leaders. But this was not the usual tradition of gift giving that was practiced in the region, it was bribery because the more gifts the colonial masters gave to the traditional rulers, the more requests they made from them. Gift giving was a major push to the African slave trade. The undertone of bribery in gift giving is a practice that has lingered from the colonial times to the present. It is the

reason lecturers ask for bribes (sorting) in the universities to enable them award unmerited grades to students, it is a common demand made prior to the issuance of government contracts and when contractors oblige by spending a huge part of their contract funds in greasing palms, they end up with uncompleted or delivering low quality projects.

The problems around corruption are further compounded by the abolishment of the African penal tradition which included shaming, banishment of offenders and their families, and sometimes death. Colonial masters abolished these practices and replaced them with a new penal system legitimated through Christianity. It has made significant changes to some barbaric aspects of the African tradition like the abolishment of the killing of twins. However, the culture of punishment had its own traditional normative orientation like the shaming system. It was a major deterrent from corruption because punishment was passed onto many generations after the individual that committed the offence. The family name is an important part of the African culture because people are interested in tracing history and generational problems.

Examples of how the shaming system worked was, before marriages are contracted, the history of the families of the bride and the groom will be traced to see if there were incidences of bad behaviour or corrupt practices. A wrongdoing even by a forefather could lead to the cancellation of the marriage plans. These shaming and banishment systems were a deterrent against corrupt practices in those days especially in the closely knitted communities. However, in recent times, the banishment and shaming system has been replaced with the celebration of wealth and they are sometimes ill-gotten wealth especially by politicians.

The colonial masters introduced the Nigerian legal system that is practiced in the region as a replacement to the African style of punishment discussed above. It is a replica of the British judicial system, the rule of law. It introduced a criminal justice system that appears porous and can sometimes be manipulated especially by the rich and influential people in the region. Bribery can turn the system of justice in the favour of those that have given bribes.

Also, the colonial masters introduced a tax collection system that was initially targeted at generating funds, but it was also a way the colonial masters extorted monies and food items from locals. Taxation compounded the problems around bribery as warrant chiefs reduced the taxes of those that bribed them. The warrant chiefs were mainly locals, but they carried out the directives of the colonial masters with a lot of enthusiasm such that they were willing to put aside family and friends to please the colonial masters. It was taxation that introduced favouritism leading to the favoured individuals carrying out all forms of corruption in the name

of the 'Whiteman'. Favouritism in recent times is practiced with people aligning with others because they share similar tribe or region. Tribalism is a major boost to corruption in the region and people are willing to support corrupt politician because they are of the same tribe or they practice the same religion.

Colonialism has long been over but CSOs still see that international donors treat them like colonies in the ways they instruct that funds are utilised. The research also affirms that corruption became prominent during colonialism because of the introduction of weaker punishments, and the introduction of a porous legal system that is still encouraging the practice of corruption. Also, the failure of international donors to treat former colonies like independent nations has encouraged the growth of corruption. Finally, there is a modern form of colonialism practiced by foreign donors. Foreign donors also practice corruption subtly, in ways such as funding a luxurious lifestyle for expatriate staff resulting in uncompleted projects.

#### 9.6: How CSOs can Resist Corruption, Recommendations and Future Research:

The all-encompassing description of CSOs in this research is important because of the roles these different organisations play and the enormous task they have at hand to bring improvements to the Niger delta. There are many encumbrances to civil society activism in the region, but the research identifies corruption as the biggest obstacle because of its impact on the Nigerian economy. The finding suggests that, for CSOs to win the fight against environmental degradation and under-development, they must be transparent to provide protection for the citizenry. In Nigeria, the fight against corruption must be resolved collectively because if corruption is reduced to the barest minimum in the country, CSOs will also be less corrupt. The high corruption ranking of the country impacts civil society activism because, CSOs cannot be independent of the state like their Western counterparts. Foreign donors have insisted on CSOs partnering with the government because they are more comfortable with passing donations through them, they can be held accountable.

Notwithstanding the above, I recommend that CSOs in the Niger delta should be organised in ways that they align with Western/global practices, they should be independent of the government. If CSOs can fight corruption within and outside their organisations by bringing it to the barest minimum, they will soon gain the trust of the international community which could

lead to independent CSOs in the region. An example of how CSOs can resist corruption is by ensuring that they are technically and physically equipped to carry out projects that they have been commissioned to execute. CSOs should be transparent by providing access to the information on donations and expenditure using modern technology, it should be displayed on their websites. Also, CSOs should be provide information on their partnership with other CSOs, the federal government, MNOCs and even crude oil host communities to avoid corruption. CSOs should serve as watchdogs for one another because during the fieldwork, they were quick to discuss the corrupt practices of other CSOs. Watching over each other could reduce the corrupt practices of CSOs.

I recommend that CSOs should be cautious in dealing with MNOCs and the federal government however, it is important to maintain a good working relationship because of the task of bringing improvements to the region. In chapter eight, some CSOs have stated that it is difficult to have a transparent relationship with MNOCs because of the partnership they have formed with the federal government. A CSO cited the example of AGIP that have not been held accountable by the federal government despite allegations of pollution that have lasted many years in Ahoda West LGA in Rivers state. Nevertheless, strong CSOs cannot be swindled either by MNOCs or the federal government. I suggest that these strong CSOs should partner with weaker CSOs otherwise, MNOCs will continue with an attitude of 'business as usual' because CSOs are avoiding working with them. CSOs should also engage crude oil host communities by carrying out seminars and sensitization programmes because it should be a collective effort.

The fight against corruption in Nigeria is headed by the EFCC and ICPC. Some Nigerians have opposed these organisations because they are managed by the federal government and could be have biases. However, the federal government have claimed not to have powers over these anti-corruption agencies. These claims by the federal government appear to be untrue because the presidency oversees the appointment of the heads of these organisations. An example of the overriding power the federal government has over the EFCC in Nigeria was in the appointment of the present acting chairman Mr. Ibrahim Magu in March 2017. He has remained in that capacity until now despite the objection of the national assembly because of his relationship with the president (Okakwu, 2017). Based on the above, I recommend that for the fight against corruption in Nigeria to succeed, it should be independent of the government and having CSOs at the forefront. The national assembly should also enact laws that will enable anti-corruption agencies to be completely independent of the federal government. These laws

should also be enforced because the problems around corruption in Nigeria lingers around enforcement.

The rise in corrupt practices in Nigeria is an indication of the failure of the judiciary to effectively punish perpetrators in the country. The gravity of the punishment meted out to offenders could deter people from practicing corruption. Some of the punishment styles adopted before colonialism could help resolve the problems around corruption except that it should be modified to conform with present day human right laws. Therefore, I recommend that the national assembly should enact and implement laws that will re-introduce the shaming system/policy practiced before colonialism. The shaming system /policy helped in keeping corruption to the barest minimum before colonialism.

In the pre-colonial times, shaming was accompanied by punishments like banishment or death but in the current system (built around the rule of law) stigmatic shaming is unworkable but re-integrative shaming might be better. Therefore, I am recommending that shaming should also be re-integrative according to study on the theory on crime, shame and re-integration (Braithwaite, 2000). The author suggests re-integrative shaming encourages a practice that allows offenders to be accepted back into the society with examples in countries like Japan (Braithwaite & Braithwaite, 2000). The crime rate in Japan is extremely low compared to Nigeria. The author argues that if shaming Braithwaite, 2000is communicated respectfully, it will impact the crime rate by reducing the number of crimes. But, in societies where shaming is not re-integrative, crime rates will continue to increase because shaming on its own is not enough to deter people from crime.

The fight against corruption will not be effective except it is collective as earlier suggested. Some of the problems of the country is that it celebrates wealth without exploring the source. It also supports corruption especially it involves kinsmen, friends or family member. As a result, people should be sensitized along the lines of questioning the source of wealth before honouring such person with titles or naming streets and projects after them. This sensitization should involve CSOs encouraging community members against stealing from the national coffers. In the examples of James Ibori and Late Alamiesiegha discussed in chapter three, the clansmen of these ex-governors supported their loots because of the tribal relationship they have with them. One way to go with resolving the problems around corruption will be sensitization and an overhaul of the mind-set of the people in the country. Whoever is found

guilty of corruption should be prosecuted and tribal relationships should not stand as an obstruction. The fight against corruption should be done without favouritism.

The Nigerian legal system was founded during colonialism on the British legal system. It has been argued that this system creates an opportunity for corruption to thrive. This is because the time between when a person is charged to court and when a judgement is delivered could be so long that it is an opportunity for bribery to take place. It also provides political immunity for public office holders which I am recommending should be abolished. If public office holders are held accountable while in office, corruption will be reduced. A major limitation of the impunity for public office holders is that because their corrupt practices cannot be prosecuted until they vacate these offices, the evidences that would have been used to prosecute them could be destroyed by the time they are out of office.

Furthermore, I am suggesting that militant organisations should not be excluded in the fight against corruption, they could be legitimate forms of fighting corrupt practices because they make good their promises to the people. Their efforts against the government and MNOCs in the Niger delta is an indication of the kind of roles they can play in the fight against corruption. I want to state here that the study of militancy and their role in fighting corruption is above the scope of this research, but I think that it is an important form of activism in the Niger delta. Therefore, I am suggesting that in future, corruption and civil society activism should be thought about in this line.

The fight against corruption should be taken seriously and authoritatively but not with the double standards presently in the country. By double standards I mean that the administration of President Mohammadu Buhari insists that the fight against corruption is a major part of his agenda but has refused to prosecute members of his cabinet that are reportedly corrupt even with overwhelming evidence (Nnanna, 2017). This in my opinion is nepotism, indicating that the federal government is not sincere. Until the government is willing to prosecute all defaulters irrespective of their party affiliations, the fight against corruption will remain unproductive.

Government, agencies such as NESREA, PPPRA and DPR are expected to keep an eye on happenings in the oil and gas industry. But I think that PPPRA should not be encumbered with this task because they have a mandate to keep the oil flowing. They cannot regulate the industry or critically manage problems of pollution because, they get the credit for keeping the oil flowing instead of protecting the environment. This implies that the PPPRA is a major contributor to the lack of compliance to the environmental standards that they themselves have

constructed. On the other hand, NESREA that should oversee and respond to crude oil spill is inadequately equipped to fulfil their functions. The yearly budget allocation of NESREA is small and the assets at their disposal are few and inadequate for a challenging terrain like the Niger delta.

On the Niger delta, I am recommending that the people of the region should not be excluded from sharing in a natural resource that interferes with their lives. They should be the major stakeholders in the Nigerian oil industry. I think that giving the people in the region an opportunity to make decisions that will affect them with crude oil exploitation is a way of practicing g true federalism. The Niger delta people should be allowed to manage their resources, pay a percentage to the federal account and manage their environment efficiently. As discussed in chapter three, the diversification of the Nigerian economy is an integral part of the preparation for a Niger delta without crude oil. The government is trying to drive the economy towards agriculture, but many people are not interested in subsistent farming or exportation. For economic diversification to come through agriculture, the government and farmers must be willing to go into exportation. It is only a sector that will be interested in exporting that can replace crude oil because it is the largest source of foreign exchange earnings in the country. Finally, I am suggesting that another possible study path will be to discuss how the Niger delta should prepare for peak oil. This should be analysed using former crude oil host communities as like Oloibiri and Warri in the region as case studies.

### Conclusion:

Nigeria is an African power house with an incredible promise and yet unbelievable difficulties mainly because of corruption which is a major hindrance to the economic development of the nation. Corruption is the reason Nigeria is termed the world capital of poverty as millions live in extreme poverty. The corruption in Nigeria is driven by the huge revenue from crude oil. Notwithstanding, the people in the Niger delta only get a small percentage back from the federal government resulting in a crisis. Instead of working to better the lives of the people in the region, crude oil proceeds have been looted and saved in foreign accounts abroad and used in the purchase of properties and shares. For example, in August 2006, the Swiss ambassador to Nigeria announced that US\$700 million looted and deposited in a Swiss Bank by former President Sani Abacha has been returned to Nigeria (Mohammed, 2013).

Whenever there is a deficiency in a sector and it has to do with the lack of funds, the government is quick to attribute such problems to a fall in crude oil prices. The country is highly dependent on crude oil, the national budget and politicians depend on the rise and fall in crude oil prices at the global market. The Niger delta crisis can best be described as a long-drawn-out historical process which reveals important areas in which the colonial administration performed badly (Ako & Okonmah, 2009). The colonial masters also had a failed relationship with communities in the Niger delta because of corruption which has resulted in the failed relationship between the federal government and crude oil host communities (O'Neill, 2007). As a result of these problems, eradicating corruption has become a major part of election manifestos because Nigerians think it will help eliminate most of the sufferings in the country.

CSOs are fighting against the federal government and MNOCs to bring improvement to the Niger delta. Civil society activism in the Niger delta is important now because of the new global realities in the form of seeking cleaner forms of energy generation. It is therefore important for CSOs to fight for the region to be cleaned before it becomes difficult for MNOCs and the federal government to invest in so doing. But, CSOs can sometimes be corrupt. The corruption within and amongst CSOs is hindering active civil society activism. I have recommended that CSOs in the Niger delta must shun corruption to achieve their desired aim in the region. The fight against corruption if effective in Nigeria, it will reduce corrupt practices in civil society activism. To fight corruption in Nigeria, I have recommended that a shaming system that allows inclusion back to the society should be adopted. New laws which will be enforced should be enacted to fight corruption. Based on the impact of militancy on the region, they should not be excluded in the fight against corruption in Nigeria.

## Appendix:

### Appendix 1: Sample of the Interview Guide for Community Members:

1. What is the name of your community?
2. Do you have a multinational oil company in this community and how many are they?
3. Do you have environmental problems and what are they?
4. What are the problems you have experienced with oil exploitation in the region?
5. Are you gainfully employed?
6. Do you have community representatives to the oil company?

7. How has this representation been?
8. Have you gained anything from multinational oil companies?

## Appendix 2: Sample of the Interview Guide for Oral History in the Communities (Bonny & Calabar):

1. How old are you?
2. How long have you lived in this community?
3. Did you see the colonial masters?
4. What was life like during the times of the colonial masters?
5. How did people relate with the colonial masters?
6. Was there favouritism during that time?
7. We were told that they had a different relationship with the leaders and chiefs of the community? can you please tell me what the relationship was like?
8. How did that relationship affect the community?
9. Did they give bribes?
10. Who were the bribes given to?
11. What was the bribe for?
12. Can you compare the relationship the colonial masters had with community members to what obtains now between the government and people in the Niger delta?
13. What do you know about oil and how it was managed during the colonial times?
14. Do you have groups fighting against the oil companies and the government in your community?
15. What are their names?
16. What do they do?

17. Has there been any improvements since they started this fight?
18. Is corruption a problem to them?
19. Do you think this fight will yield results?
20. What do you think they should do to achieve their aims?

### Appendix 3: Sample of the Interview Guide for CSOs:

1. What is the name of your organisation?
2. What does it represent?
3. What is your mission statement?
4. Who are your members?
5. What is the age range of your members?
6. How are members recruited?
7. What are your aims and objectives?
8. What are the major problems in the Niger delta that you are concerned about?
9. How have you channelled your struggle (Violence or non-violence)?
10. How are you funded?
11. What are the major restrictions in your struggle?
12. What are the constraints that hinder you from functioning well?
13. Has corruption played a role in this struggle?
14. How do you intend to achieve your aims even with corrupt practices everywhere?

15. We are told that civil society organisations are corrupt too, do you see corruption in your organisation?
16. What are the notable changes done by the government and multinationals because of your struggle?
17. Do you think civil societies can bring about the desired change?
18. Can you see any change now?
19. In what areas have the change taken place?
20. What other plans do you have if the methods used now does not bring about the desired change.

#### Appendix 4: Sample of the Interview Guide for Community Relations Representatives of MNOCs:

1. What do you do?
2. Where are, your facilities located in the Niger delta?
3. How long have you been in the region?
4. How is your relationship with host communities?
5. Have you encountered any opposition from any of the communities you operate?
6. What was their reason?
7. Are there environmental and social crimes arising because of your operations?
8. What have you done to reduce them?
9. Do you have any Corporate Social Responsibility plans?

What are those plans?

10. Do you have any long-term plans of combating these problems?
11. Do you experience hindrance or problems in your bid to carry out Corporate Social Responsibility?
12. Has corrupt community members or government officials affected your corporate social responsibility plan?
13. How have you stopped them?
14. What long-term plans do you have for these communities?
15. How do you intend to carry them out?
16. Do you think your company would have done things the same way if they were in a more developed country?
17. What has hindered you so far?
18. How do you prevent them?
19. What would you have done differently if you were to start all over again with these communities?

#### Appendix 5: Sample Guide for Government Controlled Anti-Corruption Agencies:

1. What is the name of your organisation?
2. What do you represent?
3. What are the practices that you control?
4. Is corruption a major problem in Nigeria since we are ranked high amongst corrupt countries?
5. How do you fight corruption?
6. What are the target group of people?
7. How are they tried?

8. Have had issues that are related to corrupt practices in the oil industry?
9. How are accused people penalized?
10. Are you influenced by other organisations or the government?
11. How do you as an organisation intend to reduce or permanently eradicate corruption in Nigeria?
12. What are the laws backing this agency?
13. Are they written?
14. How are arrests made?
15. Have you released people based on no evidence?
16. Are there times that 'the authorities' play a role in the arrest of accused people?
17. Are you affiliated to other international organisations?
18. If Nigerians are arrested abroad, what roles do you play?
19. Are there instances when staff in this organisation are accused of being corrupt?
20. What do you do when cases like that arise?

## Appendix 6: Sample of Consent Form:

### Consent Form

#### **Study Title: The Role of Corruption in Civil Society Activism on the Niger Delta Crisis.**

I am asking if you would like to take part in a research project that is aimed at filling a knowledge gap in understanding the roles of corruption in civil society activism in the Niger delta struggle. Before you consent to participating in the study, I ask that you read the participant information sheet and mark each box below with your initials if you agree. If you have any questions or queries before signing the consent form please speak to the principal investigator, Tomonidieokuma Bright.

- |  | Please initial each statement                        |
|--|--|
| 1. I confirm that I have read the participant information sheet and fully understand what is expected of me within this study  | <input type="checkbox"/>                             |
| 2. I confirm that I have had the opportunity to ask any questions and to have them answered.   | <input type="checkbox"/>                             |
| 3. I understand that my interview will be audio recorded and then made into an anonymised written transcript.  | <input type="checkbox"/>                             |
| 4. I understand that audio recordings will be kept until the research project has been examined.   | <input type="checkbox"/>                             |
| 5. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason, without my medical care or legal rights being affected.   | <input type="checkbox"/>                             |
| 6. I understand that once my data have been anonymised and incorporated into themes it might not be possible for it to be withdrawn, though every attempt will be made to extract my data, up to the point of publication.                           | <input type="checkbox"/>                             |
| 7. I understand that the information from my interview will be pooled with other participants' responses, anonymised and may be published  | <input type="checkbox"/>                             |
| 8. I consent to information and quotations from my interview being used in reports and conferences.  |  |
| 9. I understand that any information I give will remain strictly confidential and anonymous unless it is thought that there is a risk of harm to myself or others, in which case I will need to share this information with my research supervisors. | <input type="checkbox"/><br><input type="checkbox"/> |
| 10. I consent to Lancaster University keeping written transcriptions of the interview for 10 years after the study has finished.   | <input type="checkbox"/>                             |
| 11. I consent to take part in the above study.   | <input type="checkbox"/>                             |

Name of Participant \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Researcher \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

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