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The 2009 Niger Delta Amnesty: Evaluation of a Policy Failure

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Walden University

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Walden University
2021

Abstract

The 2009 Niger Delta Amnesty: Evaluation of a Policy Failure

by

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MA, American Military University, 2009

B.Sc, University of Nigeria, 1992

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Public Policy and Administration

Walden University

November 2021

Abstract

In 2009, the federal government of Nigeria under then-President Musa Yar'adua established the Presidential Amnesty Program (PAP), which became their flagship program in combating militancy and turning repentant ex-militants into positively contributing citizens. This is a multi-dimensional problem that involves governmental ineptitude, exploitation by multinational oil companies, and lack of sustainable developmental measures as primary drivers of instability in the Niger Delta. There are arguments that the 2009 PAP Program brought about little positive change in the region. This program brought about peace initially in the region until early 2016, when there was a brief but very destructive return to militancy. The focus of this qualitative research was the effectiveness (or lack) of the 2009 PAP and whether aspects of implementation led to the return to militancy in 2016. The policy feedback theory served as the theoretical framework, and surveys with open-ended questions from twenty-four respondents were used to collect data. Findings demonstrated that though the policy may have been well-designed, the implementation of the reintegration phase has been poor and riddled with corruption, funding shortfalls, and uncertainty. Fundamental problems that birthed militancy like oil pollution, lack of social infrastructures like roads and hospitals largely remain. The identification of the need for periodic, structured feedback mechanisms (like periodic reviews and engagement with stakeholders) will contribute to positive social change through adjustment of policy implementation with resultant improvement in the social and environmental conditions of the Niger Delta region.

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my father Christian Nwabueze and my late mother, Veronica Mercy for their unwavering believe that I will someday, despite the delay, attain this high academic achievement. They made sure to ask when I was going to embark on that journey of academic actualization. It is also dedicated to my dear wife Chizimako Margaret, for being the anchor of this effort. Just like in life itself, she kept me company with a doctoral work of her own, making sure we matched in steps during the challenging days. Of course, our children Onyinye Stephanie, Kelechi Christian, Chidi Justin and Ikenna Antonio share in this dedication for their understanding, and creation of space when I needed it.

Above all, to the Almighty God be the glory, for life itself, the blessings of good health, and a wonderful loving family!

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To my wonderful wife, I say “thanks” for her backing, urging me on, and reminding me that we started, and will finish this work together. Her own doctoral progress made me withstand the pains, secure in the knowledge that she is a partner in this journey as well. We encouraged and kept each other company. And finished together.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Introduction

Nigeria came into existence in the earlier years of the 20th century. Before this time, there were Northern and Southern Protectorates. In 1914, both protectorates were amalgamated, and Nigeria came into being (Falola & Heaton, 2008). This was under the leadership of Lord Lugard, the first Governor-General of the new nation. Nigeria continued to be ruled by the United Kingdom until 1st of October 1960, when it gained independence. In 1963, Nigeria became a republic.

Many ethnic groups populate Nigeria with the main ones being the Hausa/Fulani, Yoruba, and Igbo who are predominantly in the northern, western, and eastern parts of the country, respectively (Falola & Heaton, 2008). According to the National Population Commission (2018), Nigeria is now estimated to contain about 198 million people. While Nigeria labors to diversify its products, the economy continues to be oil-based. In 1958, oil was discovered in Oloibiri, in the heart of the Niger Delta. This largely benefited the rest of the country while bringing environmental devastation and poverty to the Niger Delta area (Aina, 2003). Ibaba et al. (2012) said lack of government services, centralization of power at the federal level, corruption, and degradation of the environment are significant contributors to the overall problem.

The cumulative effects of oil exploitation in the Niger Delta have generally brought about sustained restiveness mainly for youths who are worst hit, due to a lack of economic options (Fems et al., 2017). Another outcome was that multinational oil companies like Shell, Chevron, Total, and Agip moved their headquarters out of the

region to safeguard the lives of their workers as well as stabilize operations. The Niger Delta region used to be very fertile, sustaining, and profitable in terms of agricultural activities, as well as fishing and oil and gas (Ogege, 2011). Negative impacts of oil exploration include polluted lands and waterways, lack of social infrastructure, inadequate healthcare facilities, lack of jobs, poor educational institutions, and paucity of viable economic options (Anele and Omoro, 2012; Idowu, 2012; Ogbodo, 2010).

Historically, Niger Delta meant the area where the delta of the Niger river was located, and this included current-day states of Delta, Bayelsa, and Rivers. Okolo (2014) said with the establishment of the Oil Mineral Producing Areas Development Commission (OMPADEC) in 1993, the geographic area was expanded to include Akwa-Ibom, Cross River, and Edo states. The present-day Niger Delta region falls outside of six geopolitical zones in Nigeria. With the demise of OMPADEC in 1999 and the creation of the succeeding NDDC in 2000, the Niger Delta region was further re-defined to cover nine states (Abia, Bayelsa, Edo, Rivers, Akwa Ibom, Ondo, Imo, Cross River, and Delta), straddling the South-South and South-East geopolitical zones (Ministry of Niger Delta Affairs, 2016). Since the 1958 discovery of oil in discovered in Oloibiri in the heart of the Niger Delta, there was very little to show as benefits of oil exploration. Ibaba et al. (2012) said ills included lack of government services, centralization of power at the federal level, corruption, and degradation of the environment as reasons for the emergence of the resultant conflict. Agitations and disputes arose, the first of which was in 1966 when Isaac Adaka Boroh declared the short-lived Niger Delta Republic. This

declaration was only 6 years after Nigeria gained independence from Britain. That rebellion was swiftly defeated by the federal government.

These conditions out have resulted in resistance, violence, and employment of arms. The impact of violent actions by militant groups on the nation's resources has been profound. These actions have been cyclical, and the latest round of hostilities pushed the Nigerian economy into recession. According to Osinbajo (as cited in Wakili, 2016), the violence in the Niger Delta coupled with other factors like low oil prices over a long period led Nigeria into recession. Relapses into violence and pipeline vandalizations have an immediate economic impact and ultimately lead to settlement of professed perpetrators.

Chapter 1 includes historical information regarding the territory that later became Nigeria. Factors that made present-day militancy inevitable are addressed. Also in this chapter, the identified problem is stated along with the foundation for the research. Research questions appear in this chapter. The chapter then concludes with discussions on the scope, delimitations, and significance of the research.

Background

The Nigerian civil war lasted from 1967 to 1970, but the Boko Haram Islamic insurgency continues, as well as the present militancy in the Niger Delta.

In 1958, crude oil was discovered in Oloibiri. With this discovery, commercial exploitation by multinational oil companies followed, to the great economic benefit of the Nigerian state. The emphasis on exploitations without environmental stewardship soon

led to agitation and rebellion. In 1966, Isaac Adakah Boroh declared the short-lived Niger Delta Republic.

Edo (2010) said the 1914 amalgamation of northern and southern protectorates into Nigeria was a fundamental cause of militancy. Before this time, the nation called Nigeria was nonexistent. The origins of militancy could be found in the near total neglect of the environment by international oil companies (Ayaji & Adesote, 2013; Tobor, 2016). Federal, state, and local governments are also complicit in this neglect.

Bolarinwa (2017) defined militancy as the adoption of aggressive and combative techniques by people in the pursuit of a goal. By extension, when someone uses aggressive and extreme measures towards attaining some purpose, that person then becomes a militant. Opone (2014) said militants are self-styled but unguided freedom fighters. Bolarinwa (2017) said insurgency involves seizures of part of a territory belonging to a nation-state.

Badmus (2010) said the Niger Delta continues to have acute poverty, environmental pollution, socioeconomic deprivation, and sustained violence and agitation. Ogege (2011) said youth militancy in the Niger Delta has involved practices like hostage takings, kidnappings for ransom, bombing of oil pipelines, oil bunkering, and illegal oil refining. There is another ongoing insurgency in the north-eastern part of the country, but this one is religion-based. Adebayo and Matsilele (2019) said root causes of agitation like environmental degradation, pollution, unemployment, lack of social and physical infrastructure remained, and militants reaped the rewards of violence. Schultze-Kraft (2017) said the Presidential Amnesty Program (PAP) was a creation of the federal

government that had effectively rewarded violence, decentralized corruption, and shown the way dynamics could change in the future between militant leaders, international oil companies operating in the Niger Delta, and the federal government, with the result being violence leading to more payouts.

The government set up the Niger Delta Technical Committee to investigate options for resolution of militancy. The Committee strongly recommended amnesty be initiated shortly to implement a program of disarmament, demobilization, and rehabilitation (DDR) geared towards the solving the problem. The entire Presidential Amnesty Program (PAP) was designed to last from 2009 to 2015, and this timeline was followed by the then new government of Buhari in 2015. In 2009, then President Musa Yar-Adua established the Niger Delta Amnesty Program aimed at bringing lasting solutions to suffering of the Niger Delta people, and this was also known as the PAP. The three main tenets of the program are disarmament, demobilization, and rehabilitation (DDR). The effectiveness of the federal government's management of complex issues in the Niger Delta through the PAP is what I addressed. This helped in showing reasons for the short return of insurgency in the region in 2016. This insurgency was brief as the region had returned to relative peace by 2017 and has remained so.

Problem Statement

This research involved exploring the effectiveness or lack of the PAP of 2009 with particular emphasis on the insurgency in 2016. 2009 PAP implementation has resulted in little change in the region and, most likely, intermittent civil unrest in Nigeria. There is a challenge involving security within the Niger Delta region of Nigeria which

has defied lasting solutions. Militancy and economic sabotage it is caused mainly by poor resource control and heavy environmental pollution (Sampson, 2009; Yahaya-Joe, 2013). Ineptitude of government, greediness of multinational oil companies, and lack of sustainable measures as primary drivers of instability in the Niger Delta.

This divide due to militancy in the Niger Delta was at its peak between 2006 and 2009. A major effort by the federal government in containing the increased insecurity came in the form of the 2009 PAP which had the amnesty for the ex-militants as a key feature but in 2016, there was a return to militancy with devastating impact. This return raised concerns about the effectiveness of the PAP. The most significant impact of militancy and sabotage was the reduction of the country's daily oil production to a 22-year low (Onuoha, 2016). The drastic fall in foreign direct investment (FDI) in the oil sector caused a 70% reduction from \$20 billion to about \$6.2 billion in 2010 (Nwogwugwu et al., 2012). The 2016 resurgence of violent activism had an even more crippling effect on the economy. In November of 2016, the federal government of Nigeria blamed militancy and sabotage of oil infrastructure in the Niger Delta as the singular reason the economy went into and stayed in a recession for the third quarter of 2017) and counting (Osinbajo as cited in Wakili, 2016).

I examined the performance of the PAP in direct relation to the brief but impactful relapse into militancy of 2016. Despite the abundance of research regarding history militancy in the Niger Delta, there was a dearth of research on the 2016 relapse, and that is the void this research filled The Y'aradua-Jonathan federal administration worked hard in crafting the PAP, which remains the primary mechanism used in DDR for more than

30,000 ex-militants who renounced violence, turned in their weapons, and embraced rehabilitation as offered under the PAP (Dada, 2017). However, weapons turned in were largely unserviceable, with quality ones in continued custody of militant leaders (Dada, 2017; Eke, 2015).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research was to evaluate the 2009 PAP's failure in solving the Niger Delta security challenge, and from that, determine if the 2016 return to militancy was linked to the policy's poor implementation.

As the primary economic driver of Nigeria has been oil revenue, any disruption of this fiscal supply line becomes both a grave economic concern and national security issue. Therefore, the resolution of ongoing differences and armed resistance to oil exploitation remains a national priority. Past research has dealt with the underlying causes of militancy in the Niger Delta, but no research has studied the reasons for the relapse into militancy of 2016 and understanding the causes of this relapse is a fundamental purpose of this research.

Research Questions

This study had two research questions, which were:

RQ1: How has the 2009 PAP impacted the Niger Delta problem?

RQ2: What components of the 2009 PAP resulted in the brief return to militancy of 2016?

Theoretical Framework

The Policy Feedback Theory (PFT) was employed to find answers to the research questions, and this theory was illustrated by Skocpol (1992) as of great utility in the study of how policies influence politics and political actors as well as in the restructuring of political processes with the institution of policies through influence on design, resources, and implementation of policies. In its early days, the theory was applied (and continues to be applied) in case studies looking into how policies shape politics and how these policies in turn influence future policies (and politics). In agreement, Anyebe (2018) highlighted that once a public policy is implemented, the interaction of people with the policy will generally first change the immediate policy environment as well as significantly influence the future policy landscape. I found out it was not different in this research.

Nature of the Study

There was and still is a complex socioeconomic and security problem in the Niger Delta region for which the federal government of Nigeria government designed and implemented the PAP in 2009 as the principal mechanism for resolution.

To effectively conduct this research and answer research questions, the qualitative method was employed. The choice of this method was influenced by the design of the research questions themselves, and compatibility with data collection. I used the PFT to address reasons for the relapse into insecurity. Questionnaires were used in the collection of data from the participants.

Operational Definitions

Amnesty: Amnesty is the primary policy of the federal government of Nigeria employed towards having a lasting settlement in the restive Niger Delta region. Dancy (2018) defined amnesty as a legal tool that stops the prosecution of combatants as criminals. In a conflict environment, the foreclosure of the possibility of prosecution granted to certain or all can lead to respites from war and violence. In 2009, the federal government of Nigeria in prioritizing the Niger Delta issue, designed, and adopted amnesty as a tool it is using in bringing lasting solution to the region.

Militants: Bolarinwa (2017) defined militancy as aggressive and combative techniques employed by aggrieved people in the pursuit of their goal. When one undertakes aggressive and extreme steps towards attaining some purpose, that person has becomes a militant. Bolarinwa said insurgency often involves the seizure of a part of territory belonging to a nation-state.

Niger Delta: Nigeria is made up of six geopolitical zones. However, the present-day Niger Delta region falls outside of these six zones. The Niger Delta region is comprised of nine states (Abia, Bayelsa, Edo, Rivers, Akwa Ibom, Ondo, Imo, Cross River, and Delta) bestriding the South-South and South-East geopolitical zones (Ministry of Niger Delta Affairs, 2016). Since the finding of petroleum in 1958 in Oboibiri and the start of exploitation shortly after, the region has known more environmental, financial, and ecological devastation than benefits from oil exploration.

Assumptions

The 2009 PAP was crafted to solve the Niger Delta militancy and long-existing developmental challenges. The research study participants were purposively chosen from a select group of individuals exposed to the policy design of the PAP, its administration or implementation, and major stakeholders as community leaders/rulers. I assumed participants provided adequate coverage and depth based on their already identified unique experiences as developers, administrators, political leaders in regional states, and indigenes.

Scope and Delimitations

Though Nigeria has an estimated population of more than 180 million, there turned out to be a relatively small pool of people with requisite knowledge to participate in research. Questionnaires were used as a medium for collection of responses from a select population of respondents who have direct experience with the PAP framework. The sample population consisted of 24 research participants with in-depth knowledge of PAP design, development, its implementation and informed community leaders or rulers. All participants had firsthand experience implementing the PAP or experienced impacts of its implementation in their capacities as traditional rulers of their communities. All 24 research participants had experience either designing or administering the PAP and were former agitators/militants, Niger Delta Region researchers, or influential traditional rulers.

Limitations

The qualitative methodology was used in this research, and it had some inherent limitations. Researcher subjectivity, methodological rigor, and external validity are associated limitations, but all of which were well-managed. Furthermore, I used emailed questionnaires as there were no face-to-face interviews. The use of this method eliminated the possible benefits of such other data collection methods like interviews where I would have been able to take advantage of things like body language, and interactive questioning. The choice of emailed questionnaire was influenced by a combination of reasons such as distance (I am resident in the United States and participants lived outside the United States), the still-prevailing COVID-19 pandemic, expediency, cost, and flexibility. The potential impact ended up not being a factor as through close management and follow-up, the method turned out to be a great positive.

Another possible limitation was the volume of material. A case study usually involves going through much rich data from a relatively small number of respondents during data collection or interviews (Yin, 1984). I made sure the participants met all the criteria detailed above in terms of exposure and experience which were the basis for the rich data returned.

Respondents might introduce some concerns in terms of objectivity. The identification of possible biases on the part of respondents might be difficult to make but that is where credibility of the selection process comes which should protect the integrity of the participant response, and I am confident this was done here. Respondents were screened carefully to ensure people of apparent integrity (through considered experience

and exposure) were selected and given the opportunity to contribute to the research. It was of critical importance that qualifying criteria of experience and exposure to the design/development of the PAP, its implementation, and being direct witnesses to its impact were followed to determine who was approached and ultimately chosen to participate in the research.

Another form of bias which can happen during face-to-face interviews is when the researcher unwittingly introduces bias when asking questions, but this was not an issue here since survey questions were emailed which provided ample spatial separation. This was a positive outcome of the well-considered research data collection method though it came with the negative of unforeseen delays in response turn-around time.

Significance

Contributions of the Study

Findings will allow federal policymakers, planners, and political leadership to understand how to improve the PAP, making it become more effective and responsive to realities of implementation. This research study concluded by providing suggestions on how policies can be made more effective by showing how and where the current program may have faltered, thereby contributing to better-designed and implemented policies in the future.

Implications for Social Change

Nigeria's political leadership can solve the militancy issue through crafting and implementation of effective policies and measures, including better implementation of the existing PAP. With this, sustainable development will result, clashes and attendant

loss of lives will end, and a stable and peaceful region will return, thereby leading to a better environment and economic growth.

Summary

Chapter 1 included insights into how Nigeria came into existence. The literature review in this chapter involved status of research regarding the problem of militancy in the Niger Delta region. From this review of literature, gaps in research were evident. The identified gap of no study into the causes for the return to militancy in 2016 then formed the basis of this research. In Chapter 1, I addressed how the study's theoretical framework was laid out, as well as scope and delimitations.

In Chapter 2, I define militancy, militants, and terrorism. Historical perspectives are provided regarding the erosion of constitutional derivative benefits of oil exploration to Niger Delta indigenes (which is a major cause of militancy in the region).

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

The PAP is an acknowledged policy of the federal government of Nigeria to positively intervene and solve security/militancy problems in the Niger Delta region. This literature review starts with background information regarding the PAP and performance of the program. I reveal gaps in research.

There was an abundance of research mostly addressing poor governance, contentious resource control, pollution, and poor infrastructure. Okpara (2012) said one of the identified causes of restiveness in the region was the high unemployment rate. Lynne and Bolanle (2016) in agreement pointed how the high unemployment rate affected not only the Niger Delta but also the rest of the country. It could be argued that militancy was a major symptom and not the problem itself in the region.

In this chapter, literature search strategies for library databases and search engines as well as search terms are discussed. The study's theoretical background, literature review, and conclusions are discussed.

Literature Search Strategy

The literature review is the primary tool used by researchers to investigate research in an area of interest. Primarily, literature from the past researchers, Ministry of the Niger Delta, materials from the PAP were huge contributors in the literature search.

The following key words were employed: *Niger Delta, Niger Delta Amnesty Program, Niger Delta Development Commission, Ministry of the Niger Delta, Niger Delta militancy, Niger Delta pollution, Niger Delta resource control, Presidential*

Amnesty Programme. Most sources were published between 2017 and 2021. Due to the nature of the research, pertinent historical resources were used as well.

Theoretical Foundation

The Policy Feedback Theory (PFT) was the choice theory used in this study. Skocpol (1992) explained that PFT can be used in the restructuring of political processes with the institution of policies through influence on design, resources, and implementation of policies. In its early days, the theory was applied (and continues to be applied) in case studies looking into how policies shape politics and how these policies in turn influence future policies (and politics).

Sabbagh (2018) applied PFT to study food assistance program distribution mechanisms in the Great Lakes region of Illinois. Sabbagh executed a case study of the effectiveness of distribution mechanisms employed in the food assistance program of the federal government. Leveraging interviews, Sabbagh conducted an in-depth analysis of the distribution methods used which ultimately revealed that the mechanisms inadvertently impacted distribution negatively, resulting in the recipients' ability to stay outside of hunger circles. The social change summary of the study was the use of the study findings by the policy makers to tweak the food assistance program for better effectiveness.

Given the background of the PFT, it made perfect sense to use the theory to carry out a policy analysis of the PAP as implemented by the federal government of Nigeria in the Niger Delta. The underlying, longstanding fissures in the government-people relationship resulted in people profoundly distrusting the government, its policy

implementation, and their ultimate intentions, which eventually led to youths taking to more violent measures to achieve positive changes in their wellbeing and that of their region (Anosike, 2014).

The application of this framework to the Niger Delta problem, aided the understanding of what has been going on in the region by looking at the initial policy, the subsequent policy and what happened in the flux of the middle. Although this theory was tilted mainly towards politics, there was a large utility in the enactment of policies, and the resultant positive outcomes from equitable resource control, careful environmental management, and stable society. Equally important was the real instance in the Niger Delta of that view by Schattschneider (1935) that new policies usually bring about new politics.

Despite the features of the theory, it was however modified to include intentional or deliberate feedback that was be either time-based or event-driven, whichever comes first. In-depth examination of the PFT has all these interwoven, inter-dependent relationships on the push-pull, see-saw of policy impact and feedback, but this feedback mechanism as contained in the current form of the PFT was at best mid-to-long-term. It was then subjective as to how the term should be defined. For this study, based on the outcome of data analysis, recommendations were advocated appropriately, with a view towards improvements for the continued success of the program implementation. It was against this background that this study was carried out.

Background View of the Niger Delta

The River Niger, from which the country got its name (the Niger Area – Nigeria) empties into the Atlantic Ocean in the Bight of Bonny in a delta hence the Niger Delta (region). The beginnings of interest in the hitherto unknown river lay in the quest to better understand the West African hinterland and expand British influence, trade, and religion there. Expeditions were formed and deployed many of whom did not make it back to Britain. This was the situation until 1805 when Mungo Park, an English physician, embarked on his second attempt charged with tracing the river which came to be named Niger from its source to its mouth in the delta of present-day Nigeria (Buckley, 1994).

Politically, the next logical development was the consolidation of presence by the British both commercially and religiously through the expansion of trade and missionaries, as was the normal two-pronged method then. Then the Northern and Southern Protectorates came into being forming the eventual basis for the country “Nigeria” when they amalgamated in 1914 (Falola & Heaton, 2008). Nigeria, at amalgamation had Lord Frederick Lugard as the first Governor-General. Nigeria eventually gained independence from United Kingdom in 1960. Nigeria is a multi-ethnic country, with more than 250 ethnic groups and languages spoken but the Hausa/Fulani, the Yoruba, and the Igbo, who are predominantly in the northern, western and eastern parts of the country respectively being the power houses (Falola & Heaton, 2008). With a population estimated at more than 198 million (National Population Commission, 2018), after years of military rule, Nigeria is now democracy since 1999.

The geography of the Niger Delta region is an extremely challenging one due to the mouth of the River Niger which empties into the Atlantic in a delta with predominant mangrove swamps, creeks, and attendant flooding. It was important here to distinguish between the political Niger Delta which currently includes nine oil-producing states of Abia, Bayelsa, Edo, Rivers, Akwa Ibom, Ondo, Imo, Cross River, and Delta (Ministry of the Niger Delta, 2016; Ogundiya, 2011). The part of the delta talked about in this paragraph covers only the states of Bayelsa, Delta and Rivers which have the most challenging terrain as described and an area of about 20,000 square kilometers. The indigenes of the old Niger Delta area are the Isoko, Urhobo, Ukwuani, Ijo, Itsekiri and the Aboh people (Ogundiya, 2011). It was in these states also that the abject marine and land pollution, crippling lack of physical infrastructure as well as chronic vandalism was most felt (Obafemi Awolowo University Press, 2002).

Revenue Allocation Percentages Rollercoaster

With the discovery of black gold in Oloibiri in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria in the late 1950s, tremendous wealth has been generated for Nigeria. With this generation comes immense challenge with equitable distribution of the wealth. From a largely agrarian economy, the mainstay of Nigeria's economy very quickly and significantly shifted to petro-dependency. The dependence has stayed that way till date. The accompaniment of the discovery and shift was (and still is) the agitation for better allocation, and then the quick descent into persistent violence. Consequently, conflict has been ever present (to varying degrees) in the Niger Delta for the past six decades.

To fulfill their responsibilities, governments have clear cut tools they usually rely on. One of such tools was the generation of revenue and the allocation of such revenue. The 2006 *Niger Delta Human Development Report* by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) recognizes the first effort at arriving at allocation as the Phillipson Fiscal Commission of 1946 which linked allocation to associated derivation percentage (how much was contributed to the common purse by the component regions). The underlying push here was that the more a region contributed, the more it got back in allocation. From 1946 to 1969, the operating formula for sharing resources was 50% going back to the region of revenue source, 30% going into a central pool for distribution to all regions, and then remaining 20% was for federal government. The collection of revenue was by the regions on their produce which were mostly agricultural (groundnuts and cotton for the Northern region, cocoa for Western region and palm produce for the Eastern region), and from these, the federal government would get 50%. This type of fiscal revenue generation, and allocation was on the principle of Derivation and Even Development (Agbaeze et al.; 2015). Mining and mineral resources fell under control, but the sister was very much under-developed at this time.

With the outbreak of civil war between the break-away Republic of Biafra, and the Federal government, immense fiscal pressure was placed on the federal finances which needed money to prosecute the war. General Gowon, the then Head of State (1966 – 1975) used unorthodox methods of Decrees to effect wild fluctuations in revenue appropriation and allocation, ranging from 50% to 20% at various points (Agbaeze et al., 2015). It was pertinent to note that it was in this period that the very brief Niger Delta

Republic was declared by Adaka Boroh in 1966. One major and telling action from this era was the Decree No. 51 of 1969 by Gowon which placed control of all petroleum (shore) resources on the Federal Government (UNDP, 2006).

The succeeding Mohammed-Obasanjo regime (1975-1979) would raise the ante by having all off-shore derived revenue go to the Federation Account and the on-shore percentage go up to 80% (UNDP, 2006). Things would get terribly worse for the oil-producing states under the civilian administration of President Shehu Shagari when derivation went to zero (100% to the Federation Account). The derivation percentage though still abysmally low, got marginally better at 1.3% from 1982-1992, then to 3% (1992-1999), and to the current 13% (UNDP, 2006).

Agitations in the Niger Delta

The history of conflict in the Niger Delta stretches back to the early days of colonial incursion into the hinterland of Nigeria. These inroads were commercially and religiously motivated initially, with the earliest instances being in late 19th century. In the years 1894-1895, King William Koko of Nembe opposed the Royal Niger Company's efforts to exclude the Nembe's from the lucrative palm oil business (Agwu, 2011; UNDP, 2006). By no means was this the only resistance. King Jaja of Opobo was sacked to the West Indies, then King Nana from Itsekiri and Oba Overanmi had a go and six years after independence, Major Adaka Boroh would capitalize on the Biafra-Nigeria civil war to declare the Niger Delta Republic which was swiftly put down by Federal forces (Ezeocha, 2016; UNDP, 2006).

In between these years, a lot happened. The establishment of the Southern and Northern Protectorates happened, with eventually amalgamation taking place in 1914 (Falola & Heaton, 2008). The lumping together of different peoples and regions into one political entity has variously been blamed variously for the ills that Nigeria has experienced in its history (Ezeocha, 2016; UNDP, 2006). Resource generation and the quest to best distribute the resource led to several committees, and policy decisions. Derivation became a huge principle in the sense that sharing of national funds was initially based on the relative contributions of the federating regions to the federal purse. This meant that the regions with more natural resources, essentially the Western and Eastern regions with cocoa and palm oil were largely richer than the Northern region. Fiscal federalism became an operating term. Starting with the Phillipson Fiscal Commission (1946), to the Willink Commission Report of 1958, derivation was the key principle which at the time guaranteed 50% revenue to the regions where the wealth came from (Agbaese et al., 2015; Ezeocha, 2016; UNDP, 2006). The Federal government then took 20% and the final 30% went into a common fiscal pot for further distribution to all regions.

Soon after independence, the pre-independence objections of the Niger Delta people came to the fore again, and this time, it marked the first violent vent to the frustrations of the Niger Delta people. In 1966, Major Isaac Adaka Boroh, reading the heated socio-cultural thermometer, sought to hit the rod while it was hot, declared the ill-fated the Niger Delta Republic (Ezeocha, 2016). It was worthwhile to note that the dovetailing of the quickly snuffed-out republic into the civil war years marked the start of

the erosion of the 50% derivation, and after many iterations, derivation now stands at 13%. The success, or otherwise, of these percentages can be easily validated as has been documented by scholars who have shown that the discovery of oil, its exploration, and accrual of monumental income to the nation has done close to zero in lifting the region out of poverty, physical under-development, unemployment, environmental pollution, environmental degradation, and injustice (Akinola, 2011; Ezeocha, 2016; Opone, 2014).

With the derivation funds almost zeroed out in the years 1979 to 1984, agitations started to increase again. There was a groundswell of peaceful resistance culminating in the Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP) taking leadership role publicizing the abject conditions of the Niger Delta people which would eventually lead to the trumped-up charge of murder against the MOSOP leadership resulting in their execution by the military junta of General Sani Abacha (Ezeocha, 2016; UNDP, 2006). The instant backlash on Nigeria for the judicial murder of the MOSOP was international sanctions on the one hand, and a steeling of resolve by the Niger Delta people to continue the push by whatever means possible. More than anything, these killings brought unprecedented international attention to the struggle, and the current phase was launched. In December of 1998, the Ijaw youths met under the umbrella of the Ijaw Youths Council (IYC), and proclaimed the Kaiama Declaration, fundamentally setting the stage for events in later years.

Aghedo and Osumah (2015) aptly captured Niger Delta militancy as being one of the most serious threats to the unity of the Nigerian state since the return to civilian democratic governance after a 16-year stretch of military rule. The military response by

the federal government to the earlier quests in the Niger Delta area for more resource control transparency, especially the killing of Ken Saro Wiwa was given as a most influential reason for the metamorphosis of the various agitating groups, from being mainly a nuisance to militancy in the mid-2000s (Aghedo & Osumah, 2015). Onuoha (2016) pointed to the crippling effect of the first wave of militancy in contemporary times (2006-2009) when mass disruptions of activities of the oil companies, kidnapping of their workers, sabotaging of oil stations, and open engagement of military were rife. After a seeming lull in militancy due to the adoption and implementation of the PAP by the Yar-Adua-Jonathan administration, there was another round of heightened militancy which started in 2015, and into 2016 when a re-packaged militant group called the Niger Delta Avengers (NDA) led massive attacks against major oil infrastructure across the Niger Delta region. These 2015-2016 attacks by NDA, in addition to the sustained low oil prices, has been credited for driving Nigeria into the 2016 recession, which it recently came out of (Onuoha, 2016).

Presidential Amnesty Program

In the effort to address the increasingly violent quest for a more equitable resource control, environmental degradation, very poor infrastructure, and the more recent proliferation of small arms and weapons in the Niger Delta region, the Yar-adua federal administration adopted an Amnesty policy in 2009 as the response mechanism address the situation. A very lucid picture of the Niger Delta condition was found in the UNDP Report (2006) in which the global body clearly stated the while the region's huge resources of oil and gas support international energy needs, the truth of their condition

was that of monumental summary administrative neglect, very low employment rate, little to decaying social infrastructure, environmental devastation, chronic poverty, and unending conflict. The UNDP Report was a clear indictment of the government on Niger Delta issues, and a validation of the claims of the indigenes to a large extent.

President Yar-Adua in 2009 hinged the PAP on Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR). It was also meant to unconditionally pardon all those militants and their leaders who turn in their weapons and renounce violence. In return, the program will provide higher institutional education (local and overseas), vocational training, and monthly payments to the approximately 30,000 people who embraced the program (Onuoha, 2016). In addition, some of the ex-militant leaders were rewarded with lucrative contracts to protect oil pipelines, and with the pacification, oil production quickly bounced back from the lows of about 700,000 bpd 2009 to about 2.4 million bpd by 2011 (Ikelegbe & Umukoro, 2016).

It was of importance to note that the 2009 PAP, which was the fulcrum of this research, was not the only amnesty program to have been initiated in Nigeria with emphasis on the Niger Delta. In the study *Politics of Amnesty and Conflict Management in Nigeria's Niger Delta*, Osah (2016), chronicles the various times amnesty has been used as a conflict management tool by the Nigerian Federal government in the resolution of aspects of Niger Delta conflict. With the military demolition of the first secessionist move of the Niger Delta Volunteer Force (NDVF) of Isaac Adaka Boro in 1966, the Force and its leader were pardoned by then military Head of State, General Yakubu Gowon. Again in 1970, at the end of the Nigeria-Biafra civil war, Gowon proclaimed

amnesty and implemented the reintegrating policy of Reconstruction, Rehabilitation, and Reconciliation (3Rs). In the heated years of the early 2000s, President Obasanjo adopted amnesty as a pacification tool to end the violence in the Niger Delta. The effort of Obasanjo was deemed a failure due to a general deficit of sincerity which was evidenced in the lack of a comprehensive plan to resolve the fundamental, underlying reason that gave birth to the violence (Osah, 2016). The 2004 Amnesty of Obasanjo was primarily targeted at Asari-Dokubo and Ateke Tom - two of the then major militant leaders – and was largely a cash-for-arms deal which the government ineffectively used in mopping up arms from the two players. None of the measures were deemed to be serious, or effective due to shallow intents.

The current PAP which President Yar'Adua initiated was designed to be fundamentally different both in reach, and end state. The three pillars of the Yar'Adua Amnesty are Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR). The militants and their controllers were encouraged and expected to turn in their weapons, renounce violence and in return receive amnesty irrespective of what they had earlier done (Egwemi, 2010; Osah, 2016). In June of 2009, the PAP was announced by President Yar'Adua with the time frame within which the renouncement of violence and turning over of weapons were supposed to happen being 06 August to 04 October 2009 (Ako & Omiunu, 2013; Osah, 2016). The earlier efforts to resolve the militancy problem in the Niger Delta all summarily failed for lack of a comprehensive plan (among others) to address the underlying reasons for the agitations (Eke, 2015). In the Ya'Adua amnesty, a comprehensive plan was drawn to see to a concerted push to develop the region. It can

fairly be said that the disarmament and demobilization phases of the program ran concurrently and ended in October 2009 with the elapse of the time frame for renouncement of violence and turning in of weapons. The last pillar – rehabilitation – was where such establishments and efforts like the Presidential Amnesty Program, the Niger Delta Development Commission, and the Ministry of the Niger Delta, and their mandates reside. This latest effort at amnesty seemed well-intentioned and was greeted with enthusiasm because it looked like at last, a serious drive was directed towards addressing the root causes of instability in the Niger Delta region, as well as all the negative findings of the 2006 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Report on the Niger Delta Human Development.

A quick look at the key components of the 2009 Amnesty Program shows that in addition to the pardon (amnesty), the government was to fund the rehabilitation, education, training or retraining of the ex-militants both in Nigeria and overseas, if needed. Further, a monthly allowance of 65,000 Naira (about USD 180/month) was paid to all the ex-militants numbering about 30,000 (Ako & Omiunu, 2013; Oluwaniyi, 2011). The handling of the fund disbursement, training and retaining piece fell under the PAP. In addition to the monthly payments, vocational training was offered to the ex-militants to ensure they have reasonable and employable skill sets for the labor market. The relative peace that returned to the Niger Delta region following the 2009 PAP implementation was disturbed in 2016. That year President Buhari had slashed the PAP budget by 70% in addition to the termination of the very lucrative pipeline protection contracts hitherto handled by the ex-militant leaders like Asari Dokubo, Victor Ben, Tompolo, Ateke Tom

and General Boyloaf. These actions coupled with low oil prices precipitated the economy plunging into recession (Ezeocha, 2016; Onuoha, 2016).

Niger Delta Development Commission

The NDDC is one of the critical elements of Niger Delta development. In previous chapters, the background and history of the socio-economic and environmental retrogression of the Niger Delta area were examined. The huge, drastic, and generally downward fluctuations of the revenue allocation from oil proceeds back to the Niger Delta region, from 1958 to date, has been held largely responsible for the initially benign, but suddenly violent agitations for tangible redress (Ajayi & Adesote, 2013; Fems et al., 2017; Ibaba et al, 2012; Obafemi Awolowo University Press, 2002; Tobor, 2016).

In recognizing the genuine need to address the situation in the Niger Delta, in the year 2000, the NDDC Act established the NDDC, with the primary mandate of formulating policies and guidelines, planning and implementation, tackling environmental problems, and doing such other things that will contribute to the sustainable development of the Niger Delta Region (Ebeku, 2004; NNDC, 2015). The NDDC is the fifth version of intervention efforts geared towards the development of the Niger Delta region. The immediate one before NDDC was the defunct Oil Mineral Producing Areas Development Commission (OMPADEC) set up in 1992 (3% derivation funding), and which, unfortunately did not fulfill its mandate of carrying out identical mandate as the NDDC (Ebeku, 2004). Others were the Niger Delta Development Board (NDDDB) which was established in 1961, partly a fallout of the Willink's Commission of 1958 (Okolo, 2014). Okolo further listed the River Basin Development Authorities (9 of

them with 1.5% derivation funding) of 1979 as successors of the NDDB, all of which incidentally died natural deaths through politicization and starvation of funds. Okolo finds that the NDDC has largely failed to live up to its mandate due to embarkation on non-sustainable projects and programs. Though the NDDC governing board leadership is mainly drawn from the 9 states making up the Niger Delta region, with a few others representing some Federal ministries (Finance, Environment), a major criticism of the Commission was that the people have no direct input into who represents them at the governing board (Okolo, 2014). The chairmanship is rotational amongst the composing states and appointed by the federal government. All members of the board are appointees of the Federal government but confirmed by the Senate. The argument here was that since they are not direct representatives of the people, it remains to be seen how much of the needs of the people will be attended to.

Let us take a deeper dive into the NDDC since it is the most current body charged with the development of the Niger Delta region by the federal government. Ebeku (2020) details the outcome of an assessment in to the performance of the NDDC from 2001 to 2020 and in the assessment, it was crystal clear the NDDC Act primarily laid to rest OMPADEC (1992 and 1998 versions) and its ashes, NDDC acknowledged the very reasons for the failure of OMPADEC as corruption, ill-conceived projects, disconnect with the people, lack of monitoring and evaluation, heavy political interference, lack of funds, lack of transparency and accountability as well as incompetence of contractors amongst others. It was instructional that despite being purportedly formed to right the failings of OMPADEC, Ebeku's assessment submits the same exact mistakes and failures

of OMPADEC have largely led to the current failure of the NDDC. A major reason advanced in addition to all the others earlier was the lack of consultation of the indigenes as to what their project priorities are leading to useless projects being foisted on the people of the region.

Isidiho and Sabran (2015) in their research into the challenges of the NDDC projects stated that the NDDC was set up to act as the driver in getting the region out of the political, socio-economic, and environmental setbacks that it was facing. They saw the NDDC as primarily an interventionist body set up by the federal government and one that has had cash to spend. The research traced the establishment of NDDC to the failures past commissions but at the same time highlighted the continued poverty, oil spillages, poor education, corruption, militancy, and environmental pollution as clear indications that progress remains elusive.

Ministry of Niger Delta Affairs

Like in most government policies and measures, establishment of bodies, parastatals, agencies, and ministries are deliberate actions. We have traced the coming into existence of Nigeria, the discovery of oil in Oloibiri in the mid-50s, the gaining of independence in 1960 and all the way to the establishment of the Presidential Amnesty Program in 2009. These steps are linked in a long continuum of governmental actions and reactions. Tracing the major developments, Egwemi (2010) pointed out the pre-independence tactics of the British colonial masters of using divide and rule methods and eventual forceful subjugation (including exiling of the traditional kings from their kingdoms) of the people in maintaining control. This same sense of minority deprivation

was what the Willink Commission of 1957 found in its Report of 1958, calling for a coordinated effort in the development of the visibly backward region. With independence came the regional form of government with the Hausa, Yoruba, and the Ibo the dominant ethnic groups in their respective regions of North, West, and East, with all else as political minorities.

The first predecessor of the Ministry of the Niger Delta was the defunct Niger Delta Development Board (NDDDB) which was a direct response to the Willink Report of 1958 which advocated for a unified effort towards addressing the developmental problems of the Niger Delta (Enemugwem, 2009; Ezeocha, 2016). Insincerity, poor funding, and lack of political will were blamed for the non-performance of the Board. The Nigeria-Biafra civil war (1967-1970) further killed any chance of success the board might have had.

In 2008, the Ministry of the Niger Delta Affairs (MNDA) was created to emphatically rescue the stunted infrastructural, environmental, youth empowerment and development in the Niger Delta region. The challenges span militancy, insecurity, environmental pollution and degradation, flooding, added to the perennial problem of late release of funds (MNDA, 2016). Again, the failures of all earlier interventions were recognized, and to address the shortcomings, the MNDA was created and charged with coordinating the efforts of such other bodies like the NDDC and the PAP (MDNA, 2016). The NDDC is effectively a parastatal under the MNDA. It is to formulate and coordinate policies that will bring development and security to the region. The Ministry gives the need to correct the perceived lack of inclusion, abject poverty, high

unemployment, and environmental pollution in the region as one of the key reasons for their establishment (MNDA, 2018). An interesting find by the Niger Delta Budget Monitoring Group (NDBMG) in its Report of 2014 was that the issue of funding was seemingly resolved. However, the ills of all previous efforts like corruption, absence of quality leadership, lack of political will and incompetence still bedevil the performance of the Ministry.

Understanding Terrorism and Militancy

Terrorism as a phenomenon has a very long history from ancient times. In general terms, terrorism was evident even in biblical times going by some occurrences as has been recorded (Bongar et al., 2007). In more recent times, like in the 60s, 70s, and 80s, terrorists then were more on the lines of fighting for some political cause (Palestine, Northern Island, South Africa, etc.). Over the years, a shift happened. Nacos (2016) referenced an interview where Comey – former FBI Director – acknowledged the shift in methodology. This change was now more on religious lines, and the threats have mushroomed. It is noted that despite the lengthy history of terrorism, it has managed to be a hugely contentious topic to define, not just for the governments, but for academics and philosophers as well.

It was almost impossible to point at one definition, and as a result, there are several definitions as there are governments, Departments, Agencies, and Organizations. According to Terrorism Research (n.d.), terrorism could be viewed as both a strategy and a tactic and has been subjectively seen as both crime and holy obligation deployed to counter oppression and sacrilege. Like earlier mentioned, it depends on who's viewpoint

counts. The maneuverability, adaptability, and the relatively cheap cost has made terrorism a preferred option for those who deem themselves weaker in a conventional conflict. One of the influential views on terrorism was that of the United States Department of Defense (n.d.) which described terrorism as deliberate or threatened employment of unauthorized violence to induce fear and in the process bring governments and peoples to act in manners that are politically, ideologically, and religiously amenable to their course. The active presence of fear, intimidation, and violence all or individually conjure fear in their witnesses.

Shifting focus to what was the most challenging hindrance to a definition of terrorism (militancy), it was the highly subjective nature of terrorism. It depends on whose lens you are looking from. What does this mean? What it meant was that the definition of terrorism depends on who was involved, whom you ask, and whose perspective was at stake. The old idiom that “one man’s meat is another man’s poison”, which in other words, means that “one man’s terrorist is another man’s freedom fighter” then comes alive. This same adage was why Reuters hinged their reluctance in using the word “terrorism” on, even in the face of 9/11 (Nacos, 2016). The decision to tag someone as terrorist was kind of political. The phrase by Thielmann (2016) that “where you stand depends on where you sit” then comes alive. Do not take this to the extreme, and I am not advocating for unending permissiveness. But let us remember the Irish Republican Army, the African National Conference, the various freedom or independence fighters, even the current PLO – all these were named terrorist organizations (to include Mandela who was on the terrorist list too). Tying this to the discussion, Laipson (2016) cited the very recent

difficulties of achieving a ceasefire in Syria between the US and Russia, chiefly due to the lack of consensus on which of opposing groups constitute “terrorist” organizations.

More poignantly, Nacos (2016) chronicles the transitional or generational shifts that have occurred inside the U.S. and amongst the International Community which directly supports the above view of relativity in perception, regarding the definition of terrorism. We saw the transitions where the tendency to view terrorism or terrorist acts were outwards looking, where it was political, where different government agencies viewed it differently, and where it was now widely acknowledged that it can certainly happen inside the homeland. This was the reason why the Arab nations resisted the inclusion of liberation movements in the then-proposed common definition of terrorism by the United Nations (Nacos, 2016).

Juxtapose these definitions with that of Ezeocha (2016) who described militants as those who employ intimidation, killings, sabotaging, or the threat of vandalization towards achieving set objectives. By extension, militancy will then be the act of employing same measures for a political end.

Past Research into the Niger Delta PAP

A host of reviews of the historically complex Niger Delta developmental, environmental, and security realities, which have weaved into the current challenges that gave rise to the measures taken by government to cause deliberate, well-thought out and properly implemented developmental program have been done. One of such research was that of Ezeocha (2016) which looked at the impact of the PAP implementation on the Upstream sector of the petroleum industry in Nigeria. One of the findings of this study

was that the PAP had flawed design and very poor implementation with regards to its impact on the region. A major lapse in the implementation as found by Ezeocha was the blanket amnesty offered to all the militants without recourse to varying roles or complexity. Ezeocha posits that pardon should have been delayed until after the court trials of the principal actors in the form of commutations which would have served as deterrents to prospective militants.

Ebeku (2020) in assessing the performance of NDDC from 2001 to 2020 surmised that the NDDC, a cardinal pillar of the Niger Delta restoration was a failure. Ebeku recognizes the challenge of the Niger Delta environment like persistent oil pollution, lack of employment for the indigenes, extremely poor infrastructural base, lack of roads, increasing illiteracy, the same mandate OMPADEC was expected to correct, and which unfortunately transferred to NDDC. OMPADEC failed and Ebeku asserts NDDC has equally failed, pointing out the reasons for this failure as lack of community participation in the identification of projects, corruption, lack of transparency and accountability, among others. In the research, it was determined that the mandate of OMPADEC (1993) which preceded NDDC (2000) were largely the same with a change in name (and acronym) a major difference.

Scholars like Nwaogwugwu et al. (2012) delved into the impact of militancy on the ability of the economy to attract foreign investment – Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). In their research, it was found that drastic reduction by 70% of inflow (\$20b to \$6.2b by 2010) was largely a reaction to the then incessant kidnappings and wanton violence which caused the FDI capital flight out of the country to other more stable

locations like Ghana and Angola. Onuoha (2016) posited oil production went down to a 22-year low as well. Further linkage was made between the violence-induced slump in oil production to the recession of the economy in 2016 (Osinbajo as quoted by Wakili, 2016).

Poor education has long been identified as one of the greatest challenges of the Delta region which in conjunction with poor infrastructure, environmental pollution, and lack of employment have formed the fundamental basis for the violent agitations for better resources control. Odubo (2014) whose research focused on the impact of education on the ex-militants who underwent technical trainings as part of the “reintegration” piece of the DDR under the PAP, concluded that most participants saw the Amnesty as a success because of the education and training they received. As a result, they now have a different perspective of life and even when not directly employed in their line of trade, still have faith the government will come through with the promise of jobs. After turning in their weapons and embracing peace, under the Amnesty, they went to a radicalization camp after which they proceeded to be trained in areas of their choice and competence, all sponsored by the federal government under the PAP. Odubo notes that employment for the ex-militants who have completed their trainings needs to drastically improve. From the returned accounts of the ex-militants who underwent the demobilization phase, the vocational trainings were transformational as they are resolved to not go back to violence, which was a major outcome. Odubo related the indirect influence of education on conflict resolution as one of the major benefits of the DDR component of the Amnesty.

The above paragraphs largely show aspects of the myriad problems and research done on the Niger Delta region, and there are still very important current challenges not researched. As properly highlighted in the Problem Statement section, the PAP has not gone hitch-free, it has its fair share of criticisms and apparent shortfalls. The lack of understanding of the major reasons why the country fell into a brief insurgency with the attendant economic recession happens to be one the experiences needing a deeper study and understanding. The economic foundation of Nigeria being in the oil sector which was solidly linked to the Niger Delta region has long been established (Osinbajo as quoted by Wakili, 2016). The understanding of this need which has not received any academic attention yet was a major reason why this doctoral research became necessary in the first place. It was then logical to question the effectiveness of past and present government efforts in the shape of Amnesty to finding lasting solutions to the Niger Delta challenges.

Schultze-Kraft (2017) in researching organized crime and the underlying reasons for their persistence in the polity of the Niger Delta region discovered the uncanny association between the regional political elites, discovered that the use of political settlement involving monetary pacification and inducement was rampant. It was uncovered that employment of the monetary patronage oiled the cogs of a mutually beneficial and self-sustaining corruption in the region. The symbiotic relationship between the Niger Delta regional violence actors the state political leadership was a mutually profitable relationship as the major actors have become big-time government security contractors who are now guardians of same oil-pipelines they once blew up while the government usually will count on the tacit approval and support of the

repentant warlords like Ateke Tom, General Boyloaf, and Asari Dokubo to mention just a few.

Another area that has received research attention in the Niger Delta area was the problem small arms proliferation and the impact the PAP has had on the problem. The research shined light on the region falling prey to the ravaging general small arms proliferation problem. Agbiboa (2013) directly connects the prevalence of small arms and the resultant militancy to the failure of the social contract between the people of the Niger Delta and the government as the later has allowed the region to wallow in abject poverty, disease, pollution, and general lack of physical infrastructure. Cases of wanton dereliction of duty governing responsibility abound in the region and the case was made that the security incidents are in response to the abandonment of the people by both their state and central governments.

Summary

Relative to the age of the Nigerian nation, the history of agitation over resource control in the Niger Delta predates the country (as seen from the Willink Commission of 1958). The fact that this imbalance still exists today was a testament to the enduring nature of the fundamental causes, and the continued failure to find lasting, and effective remedies. Series of steps have been taken by the Federal Governments over time to bring solution to the problem, and most of these measures have largely been defunct. The failure of past policies was the main reason why the current Amnesty effort exists.

As has been experienced, and accepted, public policies are never perfect. With the abundance of research into the causes, socio-economic impacts, and correction

missteps, there was however a dearth of research into the lack of evolution in the current PAP. The identified gap from the literature review was what this research seeks to fill. From the literatures reviewed, it became evident that while policies were designed and adopted, the motives behind the design, the sincerity of application of the earlier policies opens the door for questions. In this Chapter, the Literature search strategy was outlined which was followed by numerous derivation-linked allocation percentages towards addressing the Niger Delta shortfalls. The 2009 Amnesty was examined as a policy tool of choice was part of a larger, chain-linked triad of applications (Niger Delta Development Commission-Ministry of the Niger Delta Affairs-Presidential Amnesty Program) as the fulcrum of government efforts for a Niger Delta solution.

Chapter 3 dealt with the research methodology, research design, size, and sampling population. It focused on the type of instrumentation used in the study, the study's reliability, validity, and the study limitations. Ethical concerns and standards were maintained throughout the study. A strong case was made for the selection of methodology here as well as the upfront disclosure of the country of birth to mitigate potential bias which might affect validity of data collection and their interpretation. Ethical concerns and standards are maintained throughout the study.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Introduction

The purpose of this research was to investigate the complicity of the PAP in 2016 return to militancy in the Niger Delta. The introduction of the PAP in June 2009 brought increased hope among people that the problem could be addressed. Despite the adoption of the program as a policy tool by the federal government of Nigeria towards curtailing and addressing the complaints of the Niger Delta people, there continues to be neglect, environmental pollution, poor education, poor infrastructure, crime, and militancy. Many researchers have studied various aspects of the Niger Delta problem but did not study why the Niger Delta PAP seems to have failed to solve the issue of militancy.

Most existing research regarding the history of the Niger Delta problem involves roles of multinational oil companies as well as the state of the Niger Delta. The findings of this study will provide insights regarding policy improvement options for the government that should bring lasting resolutions and sustainable development to the Niger Delta.

Chapter 3 addresses the research design and associated rationale. My role as the researcher was also addressed. With most research comes inherent biases, and I explain steps taken to mitigate, neutralize, and control these biases.

This is followed by identification of the respondent population, selection criteria, and handling of trustworthiness, including ethical considerations.

Research Design and Rationale

The research method used was a qualitative case study design. This best suit the research approach. In its quest to address the challenges of militancy its Niger Delta region, the Federal Government of Nigeria chose an amnesty program. I investigate reasons for relapse into militancy and by extension the effectiveness of the PAP during 2016. The PAP continues to be the primary tool adopted by the federal government of Nigeria to solve militancy issues in the Niger Delta. Recommendations of this study included options for positive policy changes, which will lead to social change.

I used the qualitative method because it was most suitable for answering the research questions due to the inherent means I used for data collection. The research questions and the means for data collection drove the choice of qualitative research design, and as Qazi (2011) clearly showed, qualitative research is fully interpretative, with my aim to comprehend the “why” behind the case of study.

Yin (2008) said the research design is a plan which guides the researcher to collect and interpret data and answer research questions that must be in alignment with the purpose of the study. The methodology should aid, and not hinder the researcher.

A case study was not the only design that can be applied to the research topic. However, it was the design of choice due to its strength and applicability compared to others. Range (2019) said a case study is a methodology that can be applied in a defined system through time, using many data points from that environment. For this study, I looked at a 10-year period between 2009 and 2019 as the program performance period under study. Various sources of information like direct quotes, reports, documents,

vignettes, and analysis surveys were used primarily. This research concluded with suggestions that can lead to social change through possible modifications in policies and act as guide towards future better policy designs.

Respondents to the survey were selected from a group with in-depth knowledge of PAP design, development, its implementation and informed community leaders or rulers, with 23 of the 24 respondents coming from the Niger Delta Region. This selection greatly enhanced the quality and fidelity of response received.

The use of other phenomenological, ethnographic, and grounded theory will not be ideal given the research topic. Churchill (2018) explains phenomenological research as that research which has us wearing the research respondent's shoes, adopting his perspectives and placing ourselves as researchers into the respondent's experiences. Though being under qualitative method, the approach raises the question of maintaining objectivity and validity while intuitively placing the research respondent's reflections. Phenomenological approach was best employed in the field of psychology. As Adams and van Manen (2017) fully explained, for phenomenological tool to be effective, the researcher must have an internalized sensitivity and attitude not commonly duplicated in a step-by-step procedural program. This view further solidifies phenomenology as a better tool in the field of philosophy, human science, and wider humanities. Ethnographic research technique as described by Rockwell and Anderson-Levitt (2002), generally uses extensive fieldwork, conducted in an area, often with good local knowledge of the area to improve meaning of observed socio-cultural events. This

provides natural predisposition to anthropological studies explaining why it was not adopted for this research.

The main thrust of this research was to study the performance of the 2009 PAP in solving the Niger Delta security challenge and from that determine if the 2016 return to militancy was linked to the PAP performance and finally see what changes can be suggested towards a more effective amnesty mechanism. The achievements of the PAP seem not to match the hype and hope at the inception of the policy. The return in 2016 of militancy was a major reason for Nigeria slipping into recession (Bolarinwa, 2017; Osinbajo as quoted by Wakili, 2016), which further worsened the funds dedicated to the Niger Delta project.

Qualitative method was employed in this research due to the nature of the research questions. Denzin and Lincoln (2013, p. 4) described the qualitative type of research as “a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world”. According to Ravitch and Carl (2016), qualitative research encompasses the methodological steps for understanding the ways people see, approach, view, and experience the world as well as understanding their experiences in addition to specific phenomena in it. This view was shared also by Qazi (2011) who posited that qualitative research was a good interpretative tool employed by a researcher towards understanding and interpreting the actions of a group of people in their act through their experiences. For this study, such experiences of the PAP by the participants are captured using the questionnaires. The use of qualitative methodology synchs with the view of many

researchers who stated that the methodology employed by the researcher should be the one which furthers most the exploration and answering of the research questions (McGuirk & O'Neill, 2016; Yin, 2008).

I was therefore able to employ the qualitative method in the investigation of the performance of PAP in the curbing and or stopping of militancy, and the overall improvement of the already discussed adverse conditions of the Niger Delta region. And those are the focus of the study. The qualitative method will as well enable me to describe and interpret eventual research findings. To this end, the beauty of the method was that it will elicit the participants, who were individuals in the design or implementation of the PAP, to share their assessment of the program they have already been intimately involved with.

Part of understanding the effectiveness of PAP will come from the answers to research questions. This study will address the identified gap and provide clarity as to the performance of the PAP in addressing the Niger Delta developmental issues. From the findings, suggestions will be proffered towards fine-tuning the program and making it more effective.

The PFT was used in this research to examine the performance of the PAP. The PFT was properly situated in the policy process and focuses on solving problems as well as studying existing policies (Mettler & Sorelle, 2014).

Research Questions

This study had two research questions, which were:

RQ1: How has the 2009 PAP impacted the Niger Delta problem?

RQ2: What components of the 2009 PAP resulted in the brief return to militancy of 2016?

Role of the Researcher

The researcher in any academic work is the most central figure and the criticality cannot be overstated (Baxter, 2008; McGuirk & O'Neill, 2016; Patton, 2002). In this position, there are certain key observances that must be maintained, and it was in this light that Marshall and Rossman (2011) pointed out that the researcher assumes knowledge was not an objective truth and as such the researcher must remain neutral and let the research drive findings. In observing this norm, the researcher avoids inadvertently fowling the data with his unmitigated bias in the analysis of the raw data, which must be processed to get the resident information. Given the obligation to follow the research process, a qualitative research can be done in a variety of ways, and this provides a huge incentive for the researcher to be integral to the product.

As explained, the role of the researcher goes beyond gaining planning experience, boundary setting, collection, and analysis of data, to include the interpretation from a point of view that was not mainly that of the researcher (McGuirk & O'Neill, 2016; Yin, 2008). It was further explained that in qualitative research, the researcher usually acts as the medium through which data was transmitted, that was through a human medium, who must disclose any indicators of self like assumptions, biases, and pertinent experiences (Simon, 2011; Xu & Storr, 2012). I was mindful of the above as well as finding out what my biases are, acknowledging them and keeping them in check. It was pertinent to state again here that I was born and raised in Nigeria until my emigration at the age of 24

years. It was possible that some bias could creep in, but with the identification of this possibility (inadvertent introduction of bias), the self-awareness of the vulnerability was increased, and was guarded against. For transparency's sake, my background information and source of possible bias was pre-disclosed to respondents right from the recruitment stage. My last name "Eze" automatically pre-disclosed my background which then became the first topic discussed during my recruitment drives. Questions like 'which state are you from?' were the common icebreakers after which I deftly steered us back to the recruitment and the research. Johnson and Christenson (2004) equally viewed the researcher as one who gets to the bottom of the work, and understands the social interactions, language, and behaviors of the research participants.

In maintaining objectivity, another major role of the researcher was to ensure quality, trustworthiness and credibility are maintained. Ravitch and Carl (2016) describe credibility as the ability of the researcher to absorb all the inherent complexities of a research and make sense of it. This was related to research design and the researcher's tools and data. In a lay man's understanding, I will add that credibility was dependent on following the rigors of research steps, not making anything up and even when deducing or arriving at conclusions, present the findings as they are. Shenton (2004) when linking credibility to trustworthiness agrees with the above assertion. I began by adhering to the quality and trustworthiness of the research by administering the Informed Consent, which in accepting, the respondents indicated their freedom in choosing.

A good researcher will see to the creation of a safe environment for the respondents to participate freely in the research. Yin (2008) alluded to this when pointing

out that efforts should be made to locate and use participants who are committed to providing relevant feedback which will help in answering the research questions. The discharging of this responsibility was one I honored by carefully screening potential participants and administering questionnaires in a permissive environment with the medium for delivery being email. As such, the participants were drawn from the pool of those who were intimately involved either in the crafting of the policy or its implementation. To this pool will also be those who were political leaders in some of the states of the Niger Delta region, former militants (now conveniently called “ex-agitators”), Niger Delta Region researchers (and academics), and influential traditional rulers. The participation of the traditional rulers who culturally are very influential was one that was a pleasant surprise as they represented and spoke for the people under their rulership.

The group was not exhaustive and even at that, care will be taken verify and validate the depth of involvement but those listed above as belonging to the pool are purposefully chosen because of their unique positions and relevance towards answering the research questions which was the primary aim and goal of a researcher. Furthermore, the years for involvement as far as selection for the purposes of this research was concerned will be an eight-year (8 years) period from 2009 to 2017.

A much less talked-about attribute of the researcher was ability to discuss the working relationship either already in existence or developed by the researcher. I started off approaching about five friends who were highly placed in the administration of the policy, top industry captains and a former diplomat believing they would be my first

respondants. That marked the beginning of recruitment and it snow-balled. Informed consent was given and received for all participants. The recruitment effort involved multiple engagement over phone and WhatsApp to explain the confidentiality and potential social benefits of the research outcome to the regions. These engagements were key to and getting them comfortable. Many declined even after the efforts. I have no relationship with any one of the eventual participants.

I abided by the Walden University requirements which included requesting and receiving permission from the Walden University Institutional Review Board (IRB). The permissions were received prior to data collection and geared towards the protection of human rights and ethical protections of all participants when collecting data. An additional step to ensure full disclosure and improve data integrity was the application of Informed Consent Form (ICF), which was provided to the respondents explaining what the research was about and to assure them of the confidentiality of their responses to include their identities. This convincing was harder than I originally thought, and it was somewhat consistent with the general historical antecedents in the country and the region where the public tend to doubt pronouncements and promises due to their peculiar experiences with the failed promises and plans. I received IRB approval 01 Mar 2021 and immediately started recruiting, but it took multiple calls, gentle reminders through emails and WhatsApp to finally get the responses back, with most coming in a deluge the first week of May 2021; a total of nine weeks to get 24 responses.

Concluding, I invested in the maintenance of the incorruptibility of the process by ensuring that objectivity (conformability), internal and external validity (transferability

and dependability respectively), as well as reliability are all visibly present in the research.

Methodology

Sampling Population

Sampling was integral to the overall quality of a research whether quantitative or qualitative. There have been many proposals on how to properly identify a study or sampling population and as Adams (2010) aptly put it, qualitative samplings are by design not “representative” and does not assume normality in distribution, rather they seek data points or informants (participants) that can better provide important, relevant responses which ultimately aids the fundamental thrust I the research, which was answering the research questions. Borrowing from the views of Abrams, purposive sampling (equally known as judgement sampling) was that sampling where the researcher identifies respondents (participants) who can provide the best perspective about the study. As to the sample size, Abrams highlights that when doing a case study, the most important sampling decision was made when the researcher decides on the case (or cases) to study, and the reason was that this choice drove the rest of the effort. Here, the case under study the 2009 Niger Delta Amnesty Program and how its design, and/or implementation may have contributed to the relapse that plunged the region back to insurgency in in 2016. Using the case study approach seems appropriate for this study.

On the issue of determining sampling population, Abrams further stressed that the more important set of considerations was that the sample should generate rich information, of course be relevant to the study questions, be believable, be ethical, and be

feasible. The researcher should then get good information when the sample was within these parameters. To meet this important parameter as laid out by Abrams, the second all-important task of the researcher which was the proper identification of sampling population was fulfilled by respondents being chosen primarily from those who have been involved with the PAP's design, implementation, were former agitators (ex-militants), Niger Delta problem researchers (I recruited senior faculty from universities in the region who have researched and written on the PAP or the wider Niger Delta Region problem set), influential traditional rulers which was hoped to provide the sought after "rich" data for analysis. The traditional rulers, though with no constitutional responsibilities, are recognized by the governments as leaders of great influence, representing the cultural values and interests of their people and communities under their chiefdom. Through this, the provision of depth from experience greatly enhanced the credibility of the information received.

Going further into the question of sampling size determination, Cleary et al. (2014) in studying the relevance of size in qualitative research generally agrees with Abrams (2010) on credibility, purposeful choosing of participants based on anticipated richness of information, and exposure to topic to be more important consideration rather than sheer numbers. This view tallies with others when balancing the size, efforts should be made to not have too few participants (for validity reasons) and not have too many participants to the point it now becomes unmanageable. A small number of participants with adequate depth and breadth (exposure) with a good interviewer was better than a large population with a bad interviewer. Cleary et al. state that from research findings, a

sample size of 20 participants have been seen known to come far less with the question being what happened to the others while a size of 4 well-exposed participants might just be better. Some researchers have even advanced the argument that a sample population of one was also fine if it can be justified as has been seen in unique technology fields (Boddy, 2016). The critical consideration again was the quality of information. From this disclosure, it then shows that the size really matters little, but must be justified.

Sample Size

The determination of an appropriate sample size in a qualitative research was a topic that has been debated by many qualitative scholars. In the above two paragraphs, it was shown that while size was important, other considerations like the generation of rich information (data), relevance of the population to research questions, believability, feasibility, and ability to meet ethical needs are also critical. Still on the issue of sample size, Vasileiou et al. (2018) add another consideration of practicality in the sample size consideration. This means that the real-life conditions will play a part in the sample size determination. Vasileiou et al. (2018) equally stated that sample size in qualitative research was usually small to support the depth of a case-study type research. Purposive sampling would be their choice to provide room for the highly exposed participants to provide the well sought-after rich texture in their feedback. Part of the management of sample size determination was the need to be mindful of saturation point and redundancy, terms which mean the size to nominally cover the topic and point at which no new information was provided (Trotter II, 2016). Vasileiou et al, referenced a study that had a size of 60 participants but reached redundancy by the 12th person. This finding

corresponds to the general assertions of Cleary et al. (2014). This provides further grounding to a researcher on what the critical considerations should be and gives a clear idea of what the population should look like.

I sent out questionnaires via email to 34 persons in my recruitment effort; the participants were chosen from a population of those who have in depth knowledge of the PAP's development or administration. Some of the participants were added using the snow-balling method with nominations or recommendations as participants coming from those first tranche, but still vetted for eligibility. In the end 24 responded, surpassing my participant target of 20. The research questions were such that the participants should feel free to provide genuine responses to posed questions. Sampling in qualitative research has long been in practice and was described by Morse (2004) as the measured choosing of relevant participants to be part of the study in the enhancement of the theoretical and purpose of the work. The basis upon which this purposeful selection of participants was done hinged on the uniqueness of the study, and overall, should enhance the purpose of the research (Cleary et al., 2014).

Given the topic, and the distribution of people with in-depth knowledge of the PAP and its implementation which was critical to the provision of rich responses (Abrams, 2010; Cleary et al., 2014; Morse, 2004), 24 purposefully selected respondents (purposive selection) provided the expected depth and breadth that adequately covered the scope. These 24 participants were drawn from the population who have intimate knowledge of the drafting of the PAP, and the implementation as well as from established researchers and the custodians of traditional representation. This criterion was of

paramount consideration and met the left and right limit lines of reason behind the selection (Abrams, 2010; Cleary et al., 2014). These included the policy makers, implementers, and indigenes of the Niger Delta region. The adoption of these delimiting parameters ensured people with the right depth and experience on the subject were the eventual participants. It was important to say here that the selection was blind to religion as a discriminating criterion, and this was because religion was not a factor in this research. The views advanced in their responses, provided rich variety of perspectives that went a long way to making for a very balanced range of responses thereby satisfying a crucial foundation for an effective case study analysis.

Data Collection Plan

Surveys can be conducted in more than one way, including in-person interviews or self-administered questionnaires. Interview has been described as the most used method for gathering data in qualitative research (Jamshed, 2014). Jamshed points out that every interview was structured in one form or another and this flexibility allows for archiving and recordings to be made as needed. These can be in-depth, lightly structured, and unstructured in nature. According to Jamshed, unstructured interviews are preferred by ethnographers because of their inclination to collect data through observations. Semi-structured interviews can be in-depth with the participant answering pre-set open-ended question which allows for much data.

In any research, a fundamental responsibility of the researcher was to have a research design that was functional, feasible, and effective. I previously mentioned, the trans-continent spatial separation reality of living in the United States but conducting

research in Nigeria necessitated the design used in this study. Given the improving but yet present technological challenges with telephone technology, cost, reliability carrier and time synchronization, the data collection plan consisted of emailing questionnaires to provide the respondent with maximum control over when to respond, and how much to provide but hopefully meeting a reasonable response period.

Triangulation (2014) in investigating the use of triangulation (of course different from the name) in qualitative research touched on the possible strengths and weaknesses of using focus groups (FG) and in-depth individual interviews in qualitative research. Triangulation as a technique will involve two or more researchers involved in same research for it to work and when used, can involve interviews, field notes and observations. Furthermore, and very importantly, the selection of the type of data collection method often depends on the purpose of study, the available resources as well as the practicality, all are views also expressed by Vasileiou et al. (2018).

Instrumentation

In describing interviews as the means for researchers to find out why people behave or act the way they do, Stuckey (2013) states this finding can be done using structured, semi-structured, and narrative interviews, and that interview gives the researcher the flexibility to engage further with follow-on questions as well as enable the participant to give the why or how. Stuckey further mentioned that this ability was a key advantage especially when questions are open-ended. Open-ended questions are as variously noted by researchers, a much-employed technique in qualitative research and this was because it captures the essence of deciding on qualitative methodology by

eliciting relevant, expansive responses to posed questions (Abrams, 2010; Cleary et al., 2014; Stuckey, 2013). This was employed in the research questions inducing the respondents to provide rich data, flowing, unbounded but relevant feedback in their responses.

Another important vehicle for the collection of data in qualitative research was the tool of questionnaires. McGuirk and O'Neill (2016) lucidly point out that questionnaires provide a structured, standardized set of questions to a research population, and used in gathering rich data on what it was the questionnaire wants to know. They did hint questionnaires can also be used in a mixed-method research. Advantages from the use of questionnaires could be cost effectiveness when conducted online due to the minimized stationary use, insight into occurrences and interpretations, flexibility in the affording of time for thoughtful responses, and great reach of the population regardless of distance of separation (McGuirk & O'Neill, 2016). The investment of time and detail (in considering alternative data gathering means, the cultural context among others) at the beginning of the questionnaire design phase generally leads to the emergence of good questionnaires whose characteristics could be the alignment of the questionnaire content to the research objectives and research questions, exhibition of the understanding of the limits to what participants are willing to disclose. Good questionnaires for qualitative research purposes should incorporate open-ended questions as these will provide greater latitude for participants to give in-depth feedback. The provision of room through open-ended questions which usually end with responses that capture the respondents voice and

narrative has been a constant feature of views from all the qualitative research scholars referenced here.

In my data collection, emailed, open-ended questionnaires were used. I relied on questionnaires due to the geographical dispersed locations of the participants, my residence, and the need to respect their time, allowing them to send in their responses in a timely, yet personal timeframe. The use of questionnaire again went a long way in solving the triad challenge of distance, time, and money. In recent years, the use of electronic questionnaires and surveys are on the rise which can be traced to their relative cost effectiveness, ease in the collection of data and no negative impact on data quality. This was important. There was no evidence that online questionnaires have had any negative impact on the quality of received data. The questionnaire was drawn respecting all the best practices like ensuring the questions align with the research questions and purpose of research (McGuirk & O'Neill, 2016), be practical (Vasileiou et al., 2018), and be open-ended to elicit full response from the perspective of the participant (Abrams, 2010; Cleary et al., 2014; Stuckey, 2013). However, one observed challenge was the eventual reluctance of some to follow through with their expressed consent during initial recruitment touchpoint. It was observed that after verbally accepting to participate, and receiving the documents, they changed their minds and subsequently were difficult to reach and distant during call. It has to be noted that as advertised in the Consent Form, the decision to participate or not, ass their prerogative and this was respected, but it happened.

I live in the United States, and in-person interviews was not considered due to the significant expense of travel. This logically brought into view the question of technology and how it can be used to overcome the obstacles. The goal here was to greatly minimize, if not eliminate, cost and burden for the respondents. Skype was considered as an option but was deemed not to provide marginally better utility over the use of emailed questionnaire. Due to the unique internet reality in the country, it was not fair to place the burden of data subscription on the participants. It was true that there was high cell phone usage, but the fidelity of coverage and area covered leaves much to be desired. Unlike here in the States, location of cell phone towers there greatly varies by carriers and locations. Another reason why emailed questionnaire was most effective was that with open-ended questions, the participants had the room to provide in-depth responses, at their time, and in the most cost-effective way. Effectively, the electronic questionnaire (using email) captured all the positives of interviews and the flexibility of response time and cost, a win-win approach. Proper consideration of their time and schedule was done to determine what would be a timely return of the questionnaires. The one thing that was complained about was the scanning of the signed PDF Consent Form but the redundancy of same information as included in the returned questionnaire proved a solution.

Data Analysis Plan

Coding was used to achieve confidentiality through masking of participant names into codes for identification (starting from P01 to P24). In the analysis of data in a qualitative research, coding was essential as it shields the participants from direct identification, provides the process for the recognition of emergent patterns, themes as

well as categories which all are functions performed during content analysis. Then Patton (2002) sees content analysis as simply the reduction of data, the understanding of rich qualitative data and the ability to see meanings in groupings. In addition, tables and spreadsheets were employed to display the information received for easier understanding.

As already discussed, the sample population was 24 purposefully chosen participants from a pool of exposed individuals with the deep exposure to the PAP. The reason for this was to get a feedback of rich responses (Abrams, 2010; Cleary et al., 2014; Morse, 2004) which aided the answering of research questions. The population for sampling came from the indigenes of the Niger Delta region in traditional rulers, researchers, ex-agitators (ex-militants), implementers, and formulators of the PAP (as already stated).

The questionnaire to the participants was sent using emails, and I analyzed the data through coding and stratification of information into relationships, themes, and explanations. A major benefit of using questionnaires was the ability to read and re-read the responses for the extraction and organization of information. I was able to display the response groupings using such tools as bar graphs and charts to depict outcome.

Issues of Trustworthiness

In making a qualitative research trustworthy, the researcher must address the topics of confirmability, dependability, transferability, and credibility and in the case of this Case Study, the collection method of written responses by the participants was important in the sense that I was able to read and re-read the signed responses and thereby avoided the risk of misinterpretation of their responses.

Credibility

In carrying out research, Ravitch and Carl (2016) explained credibility as the ability of the researcher to absorb all the inherent complexities of a research and make sense of it, maintaining the truthfulness in the fidelity of the research process, and linkage of the outcome of conclusion to the input of rich data. This explanation was then linked with the rigors of research steps, stating the facts as they come, and the simplicity of going with the responses which invariably will come from the appropriate population size, making sure there was no under or over saturation of participants. It was from this that Shenton (2004) connected credibility to trustworthiness. The observance of the above went a long way to establishing and maintaining trustworthiness. The administration of Informed Consent was integral as well.

Transferability

The case study of a policy in Nigeria as applied to a troubled region in the country. The transferability of methods to other fields was feasible if the new area has similarities to this study like being a policy study, centered on an area in turmoil or applied to a conflict resolution effort. The fidelity of research outcome was ensured through the purposeful recruitment of participants from across a most relevant spectrum of the society meeting the criteria. The tool employed in this study which was PFT holds that current and past policies naturally influence future policies and this guiding assertion directly reinforces my earlier stand that its transferability was possible if applied correctly and that was one of the hoped-for social benefits of this research.

Confirmability

Confirmability is also known as “objectivity” in quantitative research and what it tries to do was to show that both data and interpretation have clear linkage. In this study, I ensured confirmability by insisting on due process of disclosing my potential inherent bias (due to heritage), being aware of and controlling emotions, sticking to the agreed data collection method of questionnaire which reduces the possibility of misinterpretation (and transcription errors), and finally saw to the proper storage of data.

Dependability

Views have been shared on the concept of dependability which Miles et al. (2013) described as hinging on the reduction of bias in the data collection process which has to be rigorous and thorough also. To meet this standard, knowing and controlling my potential bias, I employed emailed questionnaire which the respondents took their time responding to and sending back thereby eliminating corruption in the data collection (to the greatest extent possible). There was no transcription done. The process was such that another researcher, deploying same methods, in another research can get similar results. Dependability in quantitative research was also known as ‘reliability’.

Summary

In Chapter 3, the research methodology, research design, size, and sampling population were discussed. Equally touched on are the type of instrumentation used in the study, the study’s reliability, validity, credibility, transferability, and the study limitations. As a matter of course, ethical adherence and standards were maintained throughout the study. A strong case was made for the selection of methodology as well as

the upfront disclosure of the country of birth to mitigate potential bias which might have affected validity of data collection and their interpretation. My last name itself – Eze – automatically introduced the disclosure process and immediately get that out of the way. Also, the use of emailed questionnaire prevented any bias or influence from creeping in as could be experienced with in-person interviews. Using emails to reach respondents provided ample separation from the researcher, and adequate privacy for the participants. The recruitments and criteria that shaped the sample population was adequately discussed in this chapter and the recruited participants were from this pool. In Chapter 4, the findings of the research are presented.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

The aim of this qualitative research was to study and understand the 2009 Niger PAP's failure in solving Niger Delta security challenges, and from that, determine if the 2016 return to militancy was due to the policy's poor implementation or design. I addressed overall effectiveness of the PAP in terms of solving this long-standing militancy problem. After relative peace experienced in the region since the adoption and implementation of the policy in June 2009, the country at large, and Niger Delta Region in particular returned to militancy in 2016, albeit briefly.

The economics of Nigeria are centered on oil revenue, and as such, any disruptions in the oil industry impact the fiscal supply line that funds most government programs, and this is an immediate national security issue. Resolution of differences impacting oil production are a national priority. As evidenced in the literature review, much research has been done already on reasons or causes of initial violent agitations and militancy, but no research was done to understand reasons for the return of militancy in 2016. I addressed causes of that relapse.

This chapter presents results collected through emailed research questionnaires. My task was to answer the two research questions:

RQ1: How has the 2009 PAP impacted the Niger Delta problem?

RQ2: What components of the 2009 PAP resulted in the brief return to militancy of 2016?

Participant Demographics

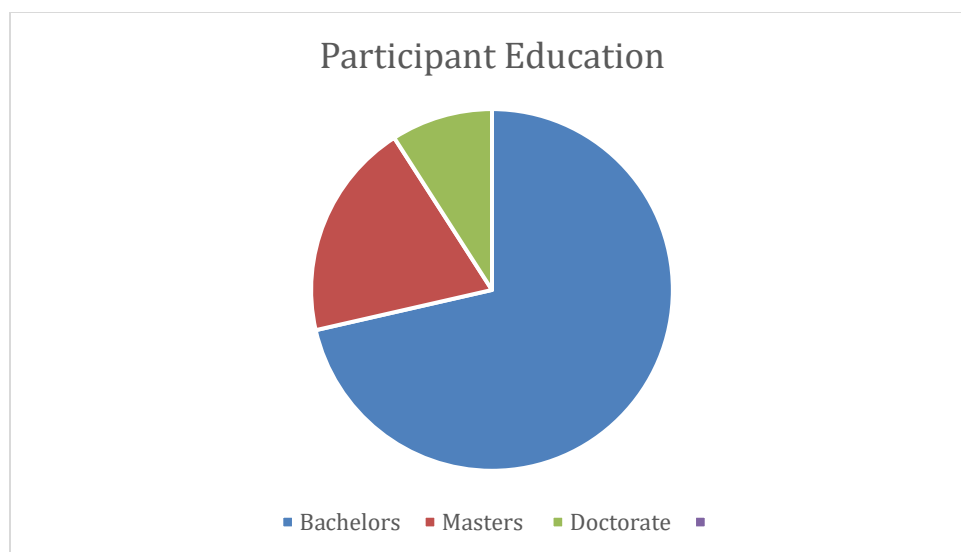
Participants were purposefully recruited and then recruited via the snowball sampling method. The population was made up of 24 research participants with in-depth knowledge of PAP development and its implementation. Participants included researchers, ex-militants, respected regional community leaders, and some prominent traditional rulers, which led to the generation of rich responses. The group consisted of 23 males and one female.

Eleven participants had bachelor's degrees (46.2%), three had master's degrees only (12.6%), and 10 had doctoral degrees (42%). Three participants were particularly involved in the development of the PAP itself. One led a committee at the drafting stage and later administered the program's implementation, one represented a top militant general at the Amnesty negotiation during the initial stages of the policy development, and the third person was critical in getting another prominent militant leader to participate in the PAP.

Table 1

Education Level of Participants

Education Level	Number	Percentage
Bachelors	11	45
Masters	3	13
Doctorate	10	42
Total	24	100

Figure 1*Participant Education*

Two participants were policy administrators, with one a previous administrator. Eight respondents were active, experienced researchers of the Niger Delta Region problem, all lecturing in institutions of higher learning, mostly in the region. There were also 11 Niger Delta activists and community leaders of thought. One participant identified himself as an ex-agitator, and five acknowledged being direct beneficiaries of PAP dividends like education stipends. Two traditional rulers were also participants.

All 24 participants were assigned codes ranging from P1 to P24. All respondents were adults aged 18 and older, who freely consented to participate as evidenced by signed and returned informed consent forms.

Data Collection

In accordance with the data collection plan shared in Chapter 3, and after receiving using IRB approval, I reached out to my contacts using invitation letters which

were informational sheets which required no action as well as informed consent forms which provided study recruits the option to participate or not through signing and returning the form. I sent recruiting forms through email to 35 prospective recruits, with 24 eventually participating. Study participants used email to send their responses.

Data Analysis

I settled on descriptive coding, which for a small, focused study could be done with manual coding. Basic coding was completed manually by reading through responses and marking pages. Basic data were aggregated into similar and related information, and then categorized further into themes. This was done for both research questions. Data were gathered from responses of participants extracted from their returned questionnaires. Questionnaires streamlined the process of data collection for me. Throughout collating and analysis of data, descriptions and responses of participants remained unchanged, thereby maintaining validity.

In the analysis of the received rich data for the two research questions, the primary coding of information led to the categorization of responses under four themes or subgroups – positive impact and negative impact for RQ1 (How has the 2009 Amnesty Program impacted the Niger Delta problem?); causes under RQ2 (What components of the 2009 Amnesty program resulted in the brief return to militancy of 2016?) and a fallout out theme of recommendations for the PAP.

In accordance with the data collection plan shared in the previous chapter (Chapter 3), and utilizing IRB-approved steps, I reached out to my contacts using the Invitation Letter which was an informational sheet with no action required of them, the

Informed Consent Form which provides the study recruits 100% ability to participate or not to participate through signing and returning the form for a yes/consent to participate, and then the actual questionnaire itself. I sent the package of recruiting forms through email to about 35 prospective recruits, with 24 eventually participating.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

In Chapter 3, issues of trustworthiness were examined. Here, I show the evidence of trustworthiness in the research study as it forms the bedrock of any genuine research. I thereby talk about the evidence of trustworthiness as found in my research to cover confirmability, dependability, transferability, and credibility.

Credibility

Just like Ravitch and Carl (2016) explained that credibility was the researcher's ability to make sense of the complexities of the research while maintaining fidelity in the process showing the linkage between outcome and the rich data that led to it – making the research credible. The rigors of data collection were experienced here by me especially when I had to balance sensitivity to possible burning out of contacts with persistence, which indeed happened with a few contacts where the flame of initially enthusiastic verbal acceptance fizzled out. Eventually was able to surpass my target participation goal. The observance of the above went a long way to establish and maintain trustworthiness. The Informed Consent was integral to maintaining credibility.

Transferability

The transferability of methods to other fields was feasible if the new area has similarities to this study like being a policy study, centered on an area in turmoil or

applied to a conflict resolution effort. The fidelity of research outcome was ensured through the purposeful recruitment of participants from across a most relevant spectrum of the society meeting the criteria as well as credibility of participants and process. In this study, there was fidelity to the process, and if duplication was desired, once the enabling environment like similarities in problem was achieved, transferability should be achievable. The clear steps used in this research were evidence of transferability.

Confirmability

By the clear linkage of data to interpretation, I was able to establish confirmability. In this study, I ensured confirmability by insisting on due process of disclosing my potential inherent bias (due to heritage), being aware of and controlling emotions, sticking to the agreed data collection method of questionnaire which reduces the possibility of misinterpretation (and transcription errors), and finally saw to the proper storage of data.

Dependability

By knowing and controlling my potential bias, through the employment of emailed questionnaires, I was able to meet the requirement for dependability. A big help in this was the fact that the participants filled their questionnaires themselves, and through that I eliminated any chances for corruption in data collected (to the greatest extent possible) as there were no transcriptions. As Miles et al. (2013) shared the concept of dependability, this study was based on the reduction of bias in the data collection process which must be rigorous and thorough also. The process was such that another

researcher, deploying same methods will get similar results. Dependability was also known as “reliability” in quantitative research.

Results of the Study

Here, a slight pragmatic step was the separation of the data analysis (above) which talked about the coding applications to the analysis of received qualitative data and the provision or presentation of the data here as received from the purposefully selected participants. After applying initial coding to the responses of the participants, it led to the groupings and identification of themes, and overarching themes positive and negative impacts for each of the two research questions. Overall, the impacts as returned by the participants were end of armed confrontation, training of ex-militants, no feasible end of program, establishment of cash cow, failure of DDR, lack of jobs, lack of accountability, creation of MNDA, establishment of the office of the Special Adviser to the Presidency on Niger Delta Affairs, reintegration of the ex-militants, relative peace and security, economic rebound, relative rebuilding, vendetta, underfunding/defunding of the PAP, disillusionment, poor perception management, alternative sources of income, end to kidnappings, fundamental issues remain, unemployment, creation of dependency, poor implementation, increased insecurity, establishment of warlords, corruption, exit strategy and trust development. These aggregate impacts were repeated to varying degrees by the participants which were then analyzed, and they produced the themes discussed below.

RQ1

In studying the responses, it was evident all 24 participants saw the impact of the 2009 Amnesty Program on the Niger Delta problem in two lights: positive and negative.

As stated above, the overall categorization of their responses gave rise to the two major, over-arching, identifiable themes below under the broad themes of positive and negative impacts for each research question.

Positive Impact

From the appropriate responses listed above and after further analysis, two themes of relative peace, and education emerged.

Relative Peace

All 24 participants unanimously agreed that the PAP brought back relative peace to the Niger Delta region. There were many contributing reasons for the relative peace and security that ensued with the amnesty coming becoming effective in June 2009. The research study participants uniformly saw the resultant improvement in the security situation as the most significant positive impact from the PAP implementation. However, improved security did not happen by itself but had many contributing, equally positive appendages like payment of monthly stipend of 65 thousand naira (65,000 naira/month) to accepting militants who turned in their weapons, demobilized, and brought under the program. Looking at the impact of the PAP in the region, P01 counted the end to armed confrontation, as well as the aggregate effect of people turning away from violence as the positive impacts of the amnesty. As P01 saw it, “the training of ex-combatants in vocational skills, the award of scholarships for tertiary and specialist education, and payment of monthly stipends for enrollees in the program (N65,000) helped to turn many away from violence”. P20 like other respondents pointed to the relative peace as the one

positive for the region from the Policy, an assertion that is shared by P24 who viewed the calmness that returned as the peace dividend from the PAP.

Education and Skills

Fourteen (58%) of 24 participants identified education and skills acquisition by the ex-militants (also called ex-agitators) as major contributors to the resultant relative peace. These trainings and formal education effort (even at the university level) happened at institutions both within Nigeria and outside the country. Through this engagement, people were occupied which directly impacted the number of number available for mischief making. The experience of seeing ex-militants graduate became a huge psychological boost and in due cause became a signature achievement for the PAP. The view of PAP as a success from just the narrow lens of technical skills and educational trainings (opportunities) was mostly because of the education and training they received. P01 credited the PAP with turning many away from militancy and crime through the training of ex-militants in institutions of higher learning as well as in the acquisition of vocational skills. P09 and P22 both were impressed with the resultant huge increase in educational trainings and opportunities. In the same breath, the training and skills acquisition was seen as heavily tainted with the lack of gainful employment for the graduates meaning that unemployment remained high, an impact that floated to the top of the impact list for P08, P18, and P20.

Negative Impact

The participants responded with rich data which were further analyzed in accordance with the research methodology and the analysis involved coding which ultimately exposed themes discussed below. All 24 participants mentioned and discussed many negative impacts at varying lengths, and some of impacts are lack of plan for ending the PAP, abysmal failure, no change in fundamental causes, skepticism, insincerity, corruption, poor infrastructure, dependency on state, unemployment, free money, laziness, continuing pollution, and vicious cycle of violence are some of the impacts as seen by the participants. Most revealing were the responses from P07 and P10 who absolutely saw nothing positive in any aspect of the PAP, listing some of their observed impacts as insecurity of the creeks, unemployment, creation of dependency on government, entrenchment of warlords, and dependency on warlords among some others. P19 counted policy design failure, inability to follow PAP, and unemployment even for the graduates of the PAP trainings. Collectively, these impacts fall under the overarching umbrella of negative impact.

Static Development

Of the 24 participants, 19 (80%) returned that there has been no change in the fundamental causes of the agitation. This theme covered such issues like continuing oil pollution which has greatly devastated both artisanal in the rivers and creeks (mostly), lack of social infrastructure like good roads, hospitals, schools, and electricity. These deficiencies and experiences were the original causes of the agitation in the 1960's and unfortunately, was still evident during this research study. It will be recalled that the

attempt to remedy the situation caused the MNDA, the NDDC, and the PAP to be created by the federal government, charged with applicable responsibilities towards to the region.

The bitterness felt by participants were palpable and was seen in the response from P06 who saw the relative peace and end to then-rampant kidnappings as the only positive effect of the Amnesty in the region while at the same time stressed that nothing has changed with the status of the underlying problems as the same vulnerabilities remain. This sentiment was shared entirely by P12 who in addition felt perplexed with the non-completion of the landmark East-West Road that was called out specifically in the Niger Delta development master plan.

New Group of Militants

A recurring, worrying negative impact of the PAP was what 15 (out of 24, or 63%) participants described as the development of new group of militants. In this group belong all the ex-militants who prefer to collect the monthly stipends while doing nothing else productive either for themselves or for the society outside of being idle collectors. P03 saw the lack of exit strategy from the PAP which has inadvertently created a lazy, dependent group of youths from the ex-militants.

The contributing factors for the emergence of this group included laziness amongst the recipients of the monthly largesse, mismatch of the acquired skills and education to existing job opportunities that led to sustained high unemployment, the debilitating sense of entitlement (to a “perpetual” pay out), and the indigenes who felt that there was no incentive to be law-abiding since the government paid the trouble-making ex-militants to remain calm. The feeling here was what had been seen repeatedly

every time the government mentioned that the PAP will one day be wrapped up, the empowered warlord and their camp members immediately threaten destruction if their stipends are cut with the government giving in each time. That, is, the ticking time-bomb the Participants felt was created by the government, even if unintentionally. P01 described this group as those who see the program as a permanent cash cow to be milked, an assertion shared by P19 and P24 who viewed the ex-militant leaders as conflict entrepreneurs who foment trouble on hand, then turn around to profit from the resolution of same problem.

RQ2

The research study participants in answering RQ2 presented reasons for the relapse in 2016 and they range from vendetta, defunding, anti-corruption drive, disillusionment, unending PAP, poor implementation, re-integration failure, underlying problems still exist, unemployment, insincerity of commitment, and poor perception management. Analyzing, coalescing, and coding the data produced two themes of political vendetta and poor implementation.

Political Vendetta

RQ2 elicited a round of direct responses to the singular dire experience of the brief relapse in 2016 and 14 of 24 (58%) participants said political vendetta was one major cause of the very violent relapse under study. The vendetta as gathered from the data was both direct and guised. The current President of Nigeria had his 2015 election campaign manifesto centered on fighting endemic corruption, and ending the monthly stipends paid under the PAP and swiftly bringing the PAP to an end. He was elected in

2015 and immediately set upon his campaign promises and he kicked off the twin efforts of arresting a very popular (ex) militant leader – Tompolo – who was accused of corruption in the maritime security contract he had with the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA). Incidentally, Tompolo was widely believed to have made heavy financial contributions to the campaign of the then-incumbent and for this, the new President ordered his arrest. Tompolo immediately went into hiding and unleashed destruction in his wake on prime oil facilities, which in turn was devastating to the Nigerian economy. The guise of an anti-corruption crusade was seen to be a selective application as well which acted a catalyst to the descent into chaos of militancy.

P01 narrated the political climate then as one where an enthusiastic, newly elected president Buhari ordered the arrest and charge of an (ex) militant leader as part of his anti-corruption drive, a vendetta push against perceived sponsors of the opponent during the election of 2015, and an attempt to actualize his election campaign promise of ending the stipend payment, a feature of the reintegration le of the DDR. P01 characterized it as a militancy different from the previous ones and therefore not return or relapse perse.

P02 noted the presidential order to arrest a certain militant leader (ex) who was compensated with a huge oil pipeline infrastructure security contract on corruption charges as well as the attempt to cut 70% of the PAP funding as a huge tipping factor.

Poor Policy Implementation

The theme of poor policy implementation took into recognition and covered defunding, anti-corruption drive, disillusionment, unending PAP, poor implementation,

re-integration failure, underfunding, still existent underlying problems, unemployment, insincerity of commitment, and poor perception management. All 24 participants unanimously saw poor implementation as the greatest reason for the relapse being studied. Poor implementation of the PAP, failure to hold NDDC accountable which continued to enable the developmental status-que to remain with poor road infrastructure, poor electrification, lack of hospitals, and ever-present pollution of the rivers and creeks all led to the worst of frustrations forcing the violent experience that put the federal government on notice. The general lack of employment opportunities, and for the re-trained graduates under the PAP came under review here and was given as a reason for the return. It has long been argued that there is no known, workable exit strategy for the PAP and what exists kept being poorly implemented by the government and the constant threat to cut off funding, the lack of developmental progress in both physical and human aspects all converged in the crucible of violent frustration that was witnessed. The direct result is that the “re-integration” phase of the DDR continued to be seen as a big failure.

For P08, the abject failure of the R in DDR, fear of ending the funding for Amnesty, lack of clear exit strategy from the Program, and the lack of inclusion for the law-abiding segment of the youth and society were the reasons why the region relapsed into violence in 2016. P09 counted underfunding as a single word answer to the cause it. P10 provided a short answer to reason for the fall back into militancy as the then-imminent stoppage of the Amnesty funding. P12 saw the failure to address the developmental clamoring of the region, a fundamental catalyst to militancy, as the reason

for the relapse. P13 agreed with many others (earlier) in blaming the threat to end the program and poor implementation as the reasons.

Summary

There were two research questions the answering of which were at the bottom of this research study. Twenty-four purposefully selected respondents (P01 to P24) participated in the study and provided the proper depth that adequately spanned the scope. These 24 participants had close knowledge of the drafting of the PAP, its implementation, established researchers, custodians of traditional leadership, and indigenes of the Niger Delta region.

Basic coding was applied to the very rich data that were received from research study participants. From the returned data, recurring impacts as returned by the participants were end of armed confrontation, training of ex-militants, no feasible end of program, establishment of cash cow, failure of DDR, lack of jobs, lack of accountability, creation of MNDA, establishment of the office of the Special Adviser to the Presidency on Niger Delta Affairs, reintegration of the ex-militants, relative peace and security, economic rebound, relative rebuilding, vendetta, underfunding/defunding of the PAP, disillusionment, poor perception management, alternative sources of income, end to kidnappings, fundamental issues remain, unemployment, creation of dependency, poor implementation, increased insecurity, establishment of warlords, corruption, exit strategy and trust development.

Coding achieved the fundamental goal of crystallizing the answers to the research questions and bringing the center, the various, distinct impacts of the PAP on the Niger

Delta Region which were in the main categorized into positive and negative impacts. It was worrying to see some of the impact to be of a clearly, but slowly evolving nature that looks to being primed for the immediate aftermath environment of a possibly contentious end to the PAP. Violence increasingly looked like a primary path for the stipend recipients should proper sensitization not be carried out by the government prior to ending the PAP.

The single-minded, ill-advised pursuit of a vendetta against a popular but perceived antagonist were equally fingered as the match that lit the primed tinder aided by the evident lack of progress in general development, increase in employment, job opportunities, and the perceived corruption in the PAP.

In Chapter 5, further analysis of the themes provided an in-depth descriptive analysis that tied their responses to the sections of the literature review as well as other documents thereby providing triangulation and validation of the data. Finally, I presented the areas for potential future research and recommendations that can help with policy design and improve feedback mechanism in line with the Policy Feedback Theory.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative research was to evaluate the 2009 PAP's effectiveness in solving Niger Delta security challenges, and from that, determine if the 2016 return to militancy was linked to the policy's poor implementation. Findings from research may provide insight regarding overall effectiveness of the PAP in terms of solving developmental and militancy problems in the Niger Delta region. In 2016, after a period of relative normalcy, militancy returned briefly to the Niger Delta, throwing the country into financial depression subsequently (Bolarinwa, 2017; Osinbajo as cited in Wakili, 2016). After an extensive literature review, it was evident no scholarly research was done to address reasons why militancy returned in 2016. To address this topic, two research questions were asked:

RQ1: How has the 2009 PAP impacted the Niger Delta problem?

RQ2: What components of the 2009 PAP resulted in the brief return to militancy of 2016?

Interpretation of the Findings

To answer the research questions, a qualitative case study methodology was employed. The case study methodology best suited this research. Research questions were designed to address 24 purposefully recruited participants that met the PAP knowledge criteria as earlier stated.

RQ1

Several major themes developed in terms of how the PAP affected the Niger Delta Region. These themes were both positive and negative. The positive impact was expected returns from investments into the region using the instrumentality of the PAP, while the negative impact involves shortfalls or unplanned consequences of the same policy implementation.

Positive Impact

There are many contributing reasons for relative peace and security that ensued after the amnesty became effective in June 2009. Participants unanimously saw the resultant improvement in the security situation as the most significant positive impact due to PAP implementation. Improved security led to monthly stipend payments of 65 thousand naira a month to militants who turned in their weapons, demobilized, and joined the program.

Other positive contributing factors were training of ex-militants in skills acquisition and formal education at the university level in institutions both within Nigeria and outside the country, the creation of the Ministry of Niger Delta Affairs, creation of the office of the Special Adviser to the President on Niger Delta Affairs. Only 8% of participants (two persons out of 24) saw the new Special Adviser and the then-newly created Ministry of Niger Delta Affairs as positive, with 88% of respondents (21 persons out of 24) viewing the attendant education and skills acquisition as benefit to the region. Training and skills acquisition led to a lack of gainful employment for graduates,

meaning that unemployment remains high. Most participants saw the Amnesty as a success because of the education and training they received.

There were a lot of militant groups in the Niger Delta, each group with its own general commanding loyal foot soldiers. After the sustained public campaign to change their minds, most groups led by generals gave up their arms and joined the program. The first phase was disarmament. After they were demobilized and sent to deradicalization training after which they chose which aspect of training they wanted to participate in, technical skills like underwater welding existed both within and outside the country. All enrollees started getting stipends every month, and this was the core of the argument that payments provided a means of sustenance for ex-militants who could now sustain themselves from stipends instead of proceeds from arms. This led to relative peace, accompanied by drastic decreases in abductions of expatriate oil industry workers, and resulted in sharp increases to oil production.

Two participants only saw the creation of ministries, commissions, and the existence of an advisor to the President on Niger Delta Affairs as positives. Coming to what the PAP has been able to accomplish, they were all rated close to zero mainly because the development of the region which was their major charge has seen very little shift, if any.

During the height of the militant attacks in the years before 2009, the federal government set up the Niger Delta Technical Committee to investigate options for resolution, and the committee's report was submitted in 2008. The recommendation was for amnesty for repentant (ex)militants to be established and offered but built on DDR.

DDR was synchronous with the approach the United Nations advocated as a process for conflict resolutions. This phase was planned to expire by 2015 but continues.

The entire amnesty was designed to last from 2009 to 2015 and this timeline was almost torpedoed by the then-new government of Buhari in 2015 (Wilade, 2017). The Ministry of the Niger Delta Affairs (MNDA) was created to be a coordinating ministry for the functions of the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) and the PAP (which was the same thing as the Niger Delta Amnesty Program) and be the powerful body towards bringing lasting solution to the well-known developmental sufferings of the Niger Delta people. The amnesty was also supposed to usher in accelerated environmental redemptions and dramatic infrastructural development of the region. These positives as highlighted by participants were consistent with the findings of other scholars (Akinola, 2011; Ezeocha, 2016; Opone, 2014) who researched aspects of the Niger Delta problem.

Negative Impact

Outside of the two primary positives as given by the respondents above, and there were a host of negative impacts (another overarching theme) on the region as well noted by the respondents. This finding was consistent with the findings of Ezeocha (2016) and Opone (2014), and it was hoped the steps taken by the government would lift the region out of poverty, physical under-development, unemployment, environmental pollution, environmental degradation, and injustice but these have not happened.

Every one of the participants were unanimous (100%) in saying nothing has changed when it comes infrastructural development of the region. Triangulating to the

literature review, remember it was the environmental devastation of the region by oil pollution, the existing abject poverty, very poor social infrastructure like lack of roads, electricity, hospitals, schools, and the inability to farm due to pollution that gave birth to militancy in the first place. Tobor (2014) validated this in a separate study. It was in recognition of this genuinely distressful situation that the federal government in the year 2000, passed the NDDC Act establishing the NDDC, with the primary mandate to formulate policies and guidelines, plan and implement, tackle environmental problems, and doing such other things that will contribute to the sustainable development of the Niger Delta Region (Ebeku, 2004; NNDC, 2015). The mere existence of NDDC, which was the fifth version of such intervention effort geared towards the development of the Niger Delta region was a testament to failed policies of earlier times. The participants also agree that if these fundamental issues were not addressed, militancy cannot be said to be a thing of the past and as such, with all current measures like dressings on an open wound.

Another emergent theme in answering RQ1 was that the PAP inadvertently created a core group of lazy youths in the region, which does not bode well for the region in the near term. The identification of this so-called lazy group was new. The inability of the government to come out with a plan to properly end the stipend (and by extension the R phase) has made a lot of the youth who are under the program to be solely reliant on the monthly allowance and not seek other ways to be productive. This blame does not reside with the government only but indicates the incapability of the youths to properly utilize opportunities. Regardless of where the blames lie, the reality was that these lazy

youths wait for the hand-outs from the government. This reality also went to the core of the dilemma the government continues to face – how to end the stipends and close-out this aspect of the reintegration phase without pushing the youths back to militancy. The participants who by all ramifications were well informed on the Niger Delta problem, and were mostly from the region itself (92%), had no iota of doubt that the over-extended end to the program will surely, at some point come, but the major question remains what will happen to the region's security with this ready group who may surely feel aggrieved?

This quagmire tied into the literature review information on the original design of the PAP which had an expiration year of 2015, which incidentally was an election year in which the current president was elected, and he campaigned on ending the amnesty program. Since his tenure, he has been unable to find a feasible end to the phase. Not a few of the participants lamented the death of the architect of the PAP in the person late President Musa Yar'dua, believing that his passing greatly impacted the sincerity of policy implementation, creating opportunities exploited to largely derail the program.

'Training with no jobs' was how 88% of respondents themed an impact of the PAP in the region. As can be seen from the earlier discussed over-arching theme of positive impact, the offered skills-acquisition training and availability of funded, formal education opportunities counted as a huge positive. But there it ended as identical percentage of participants decried the failure of reintegration as there were massive disconnect between the acquired education, skills, and actual available job description, meaning that ex-militants would finish either of the training track but remain unemployed, forcing continued dependence on the monthly allowance from the program.

This caused P07 to rate the entire PAP at 10% success rate. This phenomenon makes the participants add the group of disgruntled, trained, but unemployed ex-militants to the restive group that could cause trouble for the region and the government down the line. In a recent single-scope, targeted research at what the militants say on the outcomes of the PAP in the oil rich Niger Delta, Ebiede (2020) found that though vocational education was given to ex-militants, it had been inadequate, does not fully prepare them for work in the private sector, with no good correlation between skill and available jobs.

Another theme that emerged from the answers provided was that of corruption. 80% of participants returned this. Under this theme are a bunch of inter-connected impacts as were seen from these interpretation or results. This percentage of respondents reveal the existence of wide-ranging corruption in the system and they fingered the almost cyclic sacking of PAP administrators every two to three years for same exact reasons of alleged corruption (misappropriation of amnesty funds) which has made the citizenry see that office as a massive cash cow that was being unscrupulously milked by every administrator that took over with no visible penalty or prosecution of the relieved ones. This making away with funds has a major downrange, real-life effect as some of the institutions have been owed for trainings provided, leaving the recipients stranded. The same corruption tagged on the NDDC who's chairmanship was seen as compensation for political loyalty so they could recoup what they spent in support of their political master. I know it was slightly outside the scope of this research, but it was neatly, and firmly linked with the impact of the PAP in the region, and the NDDC was a major part of the overall effort to deliver positive change for the region.

The other corruption in the system was that of name substitution by the militant lords (generals). During the demobilization of the very many militant groups which came after disarmament, each militant leader coordinated the provision of names from his camp to be included in the amnesty master list and they continue to wield influence for instance on who received benefits like educational and skills training. It was also revealed the stipends were paid to them for further disbursement to their camp members thus unfortunately ensuring they remain influential and relevant in the scheme of things. So here, the corruption was injected as they do not always give the entire 65,000 naira to the guys on the books. Also, with financial inducement, they have been known to change the names of recipients with those of paying ones or family members especially for the slots to be sponsored overseas for training.

Linked to this was another emergent, negative sense of entitlement amongst the Niger Delta youth who do not want an end to the monthly stipends just for being an ex-agitator. This a very disturbing situation due to its linkage to the sense of alienation on the path of the law-abiding citizens who feel left out of the federal largesse and who eventually succumb to temptation to be included in a list and through that start getting paid. The participants saw this phenomenon as a part reason for the occasional violent incidents in the region, and in their words, these measures are then conflict manage, creating conflict entrepreneurs but not peace building for sure.

RQ2

The second research question dealt with work, understanding what led to return to militancy in the region in 2016. Unlike the responses to RQ1, there was no segregation of

reasons into positives or negatives. The relevance of the answers to RQ1 also applied to the overall study but the interpretation below was strictly related to RQ2.

A very interesting response from P01 to the reasons for the relapse saw the 2016 return as ‘different’ and not strictly a relapse or return. P01 saw the reason as more political than anything given that the then-newly elected President Buhari ran his campaign on anti-corruption, security promises. P01 stated that a major ex-militant – Government Tompolo – had a pipeline security contract (given to him as sort of appeasement) and had also entered another maritime security contract with Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Administration (NIMASA), which Ezeocha (2016) corroborated. It was generally believed that Tompolo was a major supporter of then-incumbent President Goodluck Jonathan and Buhari went after Tompolo on charges of corruption once he assumed office. That this hot pursuit triggered Tompolo’s immediate response by plunging the region into militancy was a view shared by 40% of respondents. According to this group of respondents, the reason for the relapse into militancy lay outside of the policy itself but came from a political dimension. When looked at from the lens of the PFT, that was an immediate feedback to the President on his line of action. It was an undesired feedback but one, nonetheless.

The second major theme under RQ2 was poor policy plan and implementation. It sounds double-barreled but in proper alignment. Twenty-two of 24 respondents (92%) mentioned that though the policy was originally designed to end in 2015, there were no clear plan on how to wean people off the stipends, find employment for the training graduates of program, and compounded by the blind promise to end the program which

was acted on by slashing funding by 70% for 2016. This finding was consistent with those from Ezeocha (2016) and Onuoha (2016). It was just too much happening all at the same time and unfortunately became the perfect mixture that exploded. After the highly effective, surgical, destruction of targeted oil installations, the oil output dropped sharply and forced the country into depression. Then the funding was restored. Arguments can be made that funding had not always matched expectations, but it continued to be provided till date anyway, and how to end it was a great dilemma for the government. It was abundantly clear now that the threat to impose an abrupt end to the stipend, or the PAP without a clear, properly disseminated exit plan will always be ill-conceived.

In addition, 82% of participants highlighted the continued frustration from the lack of positive change in the infrastructural development, the fundamental reasons that gave rise to the agitation remaining forced the hands of the militants to violence. This lack of improvement in infrastructure in the Niger Delta featured prominently in RQ1 where all participants agreed the region remains the same, or even got worse in this regard. They point to the state of the East-West Road, the lack of electricity, unending environmental pollution, and lack of improved employment as those same factors that gave rise to militancy. These were planned for as part of the overall effort under the PAP, and when examined from the policy lens, what was seen was failure to deliver, meaning a failed or poor policy implementation. To change the infrastructure narrative through concrete, physical action were the reasons for the creation of NDDC, and the MNDA as the coordinating body, and the sorry situation in the region was a huge indictment of the entire effort and the reintegration of the region to the rest of the country.

Limitations of the Study

A possible limitation was the composition of the 24 research study participants. Geographically speaking, they were mostly (22) from the South-South and South-East geopolitical zones of the country. The remaining two were from South-West and North-East. A criticism would be that some regions were over-represented in the study, but a counter to that was that the study was never designed to be carried out along ethnic, religious, or gender lines. In my recruitment, meeting the criteria for participation was the driving influence. It can even be argued that the unintended concentration of respondents from the Niger Delta region added a great deal of authenticity, credibility, and validity to the study as the feedback came from a most relevant experience. As is consistent with qualitative research studies, the possible presence of subjectivity cannot be discounted and as such, though the responses were rich it was hoped they were truthful. The mitigation here was the large sample population.

Delimitations

The purpose of this case study research was to evaluate the 2009 PAP's failure in solving the Niger Delta security challenge and from that, determine if the 2016 return to militancy was linked to the policy's poor implementation. The goal was for the finding to shed light on the wider concern of overall effectiveness of the PAP in solving the militancy problem in the Niger Delta region. The delimitations were that only participants with the necessary depth of experience either designing, administering the PAP, were former agitators/militants, Niger Delta Region researchers, influential traditional rulers, and this exposure provided maximum contribution to the research.

Recommendations for Further Research

From the literature reviewed on the long-standing Niger Delta problem, pollution and developmental issues were the root causes of militancy. The Niger Delta Amnesty was an acknowledged policy of the federal government of Nigeria in its efforts to positively intervene and solve the security/militancy problem set in the Niger Delta region. From the same literature review, it was abundantly clear that so much research was already done on the state of the Niger Delta and the closely related history of militancy. However, no research specifically looked at the cause of the return to militancy in 2016. The reality of this was that the PAP became effective in June 2009 after which relative calm and security returned to the region until the brief but intense relapse in 2016. The gap in research spurred this study and what it sought to close.

The PAP was the focus case under study, from a PFT lens. Dissecting the rehabilitation package, in addition to the presidential pardon of the ex-militants, the government was to affect the education, training or retraining of the ex-militants both in Nigeria and overseas, and their rehabilitation aided with jobs. The payment of a monthly allowance of 65,000 Naira (about USD 180/month) to the ex-agitators was started (Ako & Omiunu, 2013; Oluwaniyi, 2011), and this aspect fell under the PAP.

However, a critical component of the holistic approach includes the Niger Delta Development Commission (NNDC) which with its establishment in 2000 through the NNDC Act was charged with formulating policies and guidelines, planning and implementation, tackling environmental problems, and doing such other things that will contribute to the sustainable development of the Niger Delta Region (Ebeku, 2004;

NNDC, 2015). The other was the Ministry of the Niger Delta Affairs created in 2008, tasked with salvaging the comatose state of infrastructure, environment, youth empowerment and development in the Niger Delta region. The MNDA is the coordinator of the efforts of such other bodies like the NDDC and the PAP (MDNA, 2016).

Having laid out the structure of the concerted effort, and with the research done on the NDDC itself, it will be relevant to delve into how the MNDA is doing on its coordinating functions. The NDDC is under the MNDA but due to several reasons, and influences, the NDDC is a humongous body now that may not be effectively discharging its duties. This will be an important area for research as it could expose a weak link in the chain of responsibilities and have a positive social impact. A practical step that can happen now will be the constitution of a panel of inquiry that will review the performance of the NDDC and have locals testify. This will serve as an actionable feedback to the government as the final report will have recommendations.

This assertion of ineffectiveness was unanimously agreed to by all the respondents who lamented the continued wallowing of the region in same conditions that gave rise to militancy. There was no greater report card than this. This expose came with a warning from all participants that unless the fundamental reasons are addressed, the hope of lasting peace and security in the Niger Delta region will continue to be elusive. It was feared this will inevitably return the region and the country to militancy. A further study will be appropriate here and corroborated Ezeocha's (2016) recommendation for a thorough study of how the Niger Delta amnesty policy has impacted the region's sociocultural and sociopolitical scene. RQ1 of this study addressed an aspect of

Ezeocha's recommendation as it looked at the impact of the amnesty on the region but does not, however concentrate on the "sociocultural and sociopolitical landscape".

Positive Implications for Social Change

The positive social change contribution of this research was huge and will depend to a large extent on the openness of government to consider suggestions and incorporate research into its process for review and improvement of policies. Extensive account of results of the study and interpretation were given in both Chapter 4 and 5, but here the social change implications were given.

Though majority of respondents viewed the impact of the policy on the region largely split on positive, and negative, they also did a profound job of providing insight into what can be done to improve the situation. On the background of the theoretical framework, the citizenry provided feedback on the policy to the government in ways the government had difficulties understanding. Therefore, the first social impact will be that the government needed to have a process, a mechanism it will use in collecting feedback. This will lead to a better policy that will better impact the region because it will be forward leaning.

Another major social change impact will be that the government understands from the people directly that there was need to re-evaluate the performance of the PAP, figure out a deliberate set of steps that will eventually allow for the ending of the amnesty policy. Together with this will be the social benefit of the people having a better policy that was more in tune with their aspirations.

The overarching social benefit of the research was the possibility of a better designed, better implemented, better reviewed policy that has a monitoring mechanism in the form of a deliberate, periodic feedback to the government that produces better execution and the meeting of target policy goals for the society. With this, sustainable development will be ushered in, frequent clashes and the attendant loss of lives will be greatly diminished, a stable and peaceful region will return thereby leading to a better environment, and economic growth. These anticipated benefits closely follow what has been prescribed by scholars like Callahan et al. (2012) who studied the various ways positive social changes could be made. Using the policy feedback framework, the performance of the PAP will be enhanced.

Conclusion

The purpose of this research was to evaluate the 2009 Amnesty program's failure in solving the Niger Delta security challenge and from that, determine if the 2016 return to militancy was linked to the policy's poor implementation. The finding shed light on the wider concern of overall effectiveness of the PAP in solving the militancy problem in the Niger Delta region. In 2016, militancy returned briefly to the Niger Delta after the lull of previous years. The study was designed to answer two overarching research questions. The findings of this research added to the understanding of the Niger Delta problem and with the scholarly contribution, the gap identified in the literature review for which closure this research was designed, got accomplished. The extensive literature revealed a lack of research into the causes of the return to militancy in the Niger Delta in 2016. The research findings revealed, for RQ1, a polarity of positive and negative impacts on the

PAP in the Niger Delta while RQ2 identified principal issues that directly returned the region to militancy. In interpreting the result of the research questions, and applying the PFT, the data pointed to a lack of a conscious, deliberate mechanism to periodically review and fine-tune the PAP thereby leaving the often bloody, unintentional, devastating confrontation as the default feedback to the government on the policy.

The use of open-ended questions in emailed questionnaires was the means for data collection and this methodology was adopted because it was the most effective, and efficient option to overcome the challenges of distance, technology, time difference, the need to accommodate the respondents time while getting rich, qualitative data in return, on their time. Total compliance to established guidelines were followed in the recruitment and eventual selection of study participants. With this diligence, authenticity, credibility, and validity were ensured for the collected data.

The overarching findings were that the PAP had the singular impact of ending the raging militancy in the region and ushered in relative peace. A related consensus was the partial success of the education, and training/re-training of ex-militants. This was a partial success because the skills, and education were mostly a mismatch with available jobs leading to the continuation of despair because the graduates are unemployed. On the flip side, a litany of negative impact be-deviled the region with the lack of positive change in the state of infrastructure, continued environmental devastation, poor electricity, and unemployment. The great resentment of the program stems from all these listed problems being there from the beginning.

Finally, identification of the ill-timed, ill-thought, poorly executed attempt to cut the funding for amnesty as well as the vindictive pursuit of an influential ex-militant in the person of Tompolo were canvassed as the reasons for the return to militancy in 2016. As a result of, and through the existence all these issues, the Presidential Amnesty Program was shown to be needing a policy feedback mechanism that will be deliberate and periodic, and that can, if applied correctly, head off militancy before it happens because it would be a tool that can finally deliver the full promises of the PAP to the Niger Delta.

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Appendix A: Survey Questionnaire

DOCTORAL RESEARCH (SURVEY) QUESTIONNAIRE

Having graciously agreed to willingly participate in this doctoral research, I hereby request you respond in detail to the below Research Questions. *Please expand by continuing to write as this is a word document.*

Research Topic: *The 2009 Niger Delta Amnesty: Evaluation of A Policy Analysis.*

Participant Population: The researcher is inviting *about 20 people who have direct experience in the design/development and the administration/implementation of the 2009 Niger Delta Amnesty Program* to be in the study.

Research Purpose: The purpose of this study is to understand the effectiveness (or lack of) of the Amnesty program of 2009 and ascertain if aspects of implementation led to the return to militancy in 2016.

Research Questions:

RQ1 – How has the 2009 Amnesty Program impacted the Niger Delta problem?
Please respond in detail (expand as needed).

RQ2 - What components of the 2009 Amnesty program resulted in the brief return to the militancy of 2016?

Please respond here (expand as needed).

Participant's Name:

Participant's Age:

Participant's Educational Qualification (circle one): BSc MSc Dr.

Other

Participant's State of Origin:

Date of Consent:

Appendix B: Map of Niger Delta Region by NASRD and Tomas Malina

