

CONTRIBUTION OF NDDC TO THE CREATION OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC INFRASTRUCTURE IN BAYELSA STATE

DUKE EBIKELA

Department of Banking and Finance,
School of Management Sciences,
Federal Polytechnic, Ekowe,
Bayelsa State, Nigeria.

GEORGE YEBIMODEI ESTHER AND ODUBO ANGNIMI

Department of Business Administration and Management,
School of Management Sciences,
Federal Polytechnic, Ekowe,
Bayelsa State, Nigeria.

ABSTRACT

The study looked at contribution of NDDC to the creation of socio-economic infrastructure in Bayelsa State. One hypothesis was used in the study. The study area covers Bayelsa State. The researchers adopted the ex-post facto design in this study. A questionnaire is the standard collection of questions designed to gather relevant data for a study. The questionnaire is the main instrument used for primary data collection, which depends on the responses from the target population. Data analysis was undertaken using qualitative as well as quantitative techniques. It is expected that the major segment of the information to be collected during the survey is qualitative and may not be easily quantified. Descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentage, etc. is to be employed in most of the analysis in summarizing trends, change and comparisons across certain features. Result obtained from the table indicates that the calculated value of 15.364, is greater than the table value of 3.84. This indicates that the Niger Delta Development Commission has contributed significantly to the establishment of socio-economic infrastructure in Bayelsa state. Plenty of roads and other socio-economic infrastructure have been built by the commission in the state since its establishment. It was finally recommended amongst others that the NDDC should strengthen the accountability procedures and ensure prompt payment of contractors as well as check misappropriation and mismanagement of the resources.

Keywords: NDDC, Socio-Economy and Infrastructure

INTRODUCTION

Apart from Middle-East, which has a long historiography of interminable crises, the Niger Delta Region (NDR) is the most studied region of the world. It is not surprising that there is a repertoire of literature covering the various epochs of the region. Part of the literature is written objectively to genuinely address the development challenges of the people while part of the literature was tilted to satisfy some sectional interests especially that of the oil majors. It is not surprising that measures put together as palliatives often pale into insignificance. Could this be the reason for the increase in the misery index, the resurgence of militancy, compounded by frustration, marginalization, alienation and poverty in the region? Some analysts believe that the situation has been taken advantage of by a band of self-serving benefit captors, economic opportunists, political adventurers and conflict entrepreneurs, all feasting on the honey pot of crude oil.

The predominant settlement type in the Niger Delta is small and scattered hamlets. The vast majority of settlements comprise largely of rural communities in dispersed village settlements. In total, there are 13,329 settlements in the Niger Delta Region.

The NDR is characterized by widespread poverty with about 70% of the population live below the poverty line. This might have increased in recent years when so many graduates have been turned out without jobs. The pervasive poverty is due largely to the low level of industrialization. This has been made more difficult by the activities of Trans-national Corporations (TNCs), which have adversely affected the traditional economy of subsistence fishing and farming. In the NDR infant mortality and maternal morbidity are estimated to be 20% which is among the highest in the world. Modern transport infrastructure is inadequate and often hampered by a poor road network and harsh conditions especially in the coastal areas. Whereas there is hardly electricity supply in many riverine areas, telecommunication facilities are in acute short supply. Healthcare is less than desirable while the schools are ill-equipped; hence they serve more as youth restive factories than institutions of learning. Waste management culture is poor and this is exacerbated by the activities of oil companies. These harsh conditions provide a fertile ground for social unrest, conflict and instability.

The exclusion of Niger Delta communities in the control and management of the upstream and downstream operations of the oil industry is disastrous to their very existence as a people. For instance, through the instrumentality of the Petroleum Act 1969 (as amended and other legislations), the local communities whose lands oil is exploited, have been divested of their entitlements to their land and the oil produced from it. Indigenes of the Niger Delta hardly ever benefit from the allocation of Oil Prospecting Licenses (OPL) and are totally excluded from crude oil sales notwithstanding the fact that it is the local communities and the people that directly suffer from oil spillage, gas flaring, acid rain, and other forms of environmental degradation and pollution.

WQRA Gallup Poll conducted on April 28, 2008 by Magali and Tortora (2008). The Poll showed that 61% of Nigerians think the inhabitants of the Niger Delta are suffering and 63%

of the respondents believe the people of the region have a right to protest, however, a vast majority of Nigerians reject pipelines vandalizing, hostage taking and kidnapping of women and children as means of protest. Damnable as it may seem, some sympathizers of the insurgents describe the crisis as part of a global move by an oppressed class to fight for freedom and economic justice.

Therefore, this study would look into the conditions of the Niger Delta Region and the extent to which NDDC has worked positively to improve the socio-economic infrastructure of the area.

Statement of the Problem

Indeed, the problem of the people of Bayelsa state is multifarious. But for the purpose of this study, the following problems are identified. Since 1956 when oil was first discovered in commercial quantities at Oloibiri in old Rivers state, presently Bayelsa State and subsequent commencement of full exploration activities in the area, the inhabitants have not benefited much from the revenue generated from the sale of oil and therefore have nothing tangible to show for it, unlike the North and South-West which produced cocoa and cotton as major export earnings before the era of crude oil. They enjoy good road networks, good schools, free education and other infrastructural development. The situation is no longer the same as it were before. There is a need to understudy progress made so far by NDDC to see if the socio-infrastructure aspect of Niger Delta Development strategy is achieved.

Literature Review

Partnership for Sustainable Development

Partnership for sustainable development failed woefully. But even at this monumental failure, NDDC continues with this ritual and rendezvous. The proposed PSD PROTOCOL was rejected by the Governors of the nine States and even the 185 LGAs are yet to fully buy into it in spite of several attempts at constructive engagement and consultation workshops.

It may be right to observe that the NDDC produced the Niger Delta Regional Development Master Plan, but the claim has been that the modest inputs of stakeholders in the process were not factored into the finished product. While it is difficult for me to disown the Master Plan, I can say without any qualm of conscience that the Master Plan process from conception, crafting to finishing did not include the people, hence it is neither acceptable to the people nor can it be implemented. Whereas one consultant said the Plan stands on one leg, another said it was totally removed from the socio-cultural milieu of the people. The Commission is believed to have spent several billions of Naira in the crafting process.

There is the fear that if the NDDC limits its role to that of infrastructural development, it might as well be merged with the Ministry of Niger Delta. But it does appear that the Amnesty Program has brought about peace in the Niger Delta and this account for the increase in the production of crude oil.

Objectives of the Study

The main aim of this study is to examine the role of NDDC in the development of Bayelsa State. The objective of the study is to examine the contributions of NDDC to the creation of socio-economic infrastructure in Bayelsa state.

Significance of the Study

The result of this research shall enable us expose the problems faced by the oil bearing communities in Bayelsa State. Hence, the study shall be of great importance to government at both federal, state and local levels in policy formulation and implementation leading ultimately to achieving development goals in the region. Also, the study gives a possible solution to the prevailing situation as regards to development in the Niger Delta Region.

Hypothesis

The study used an alternating hypothesis which is stated below:

- NDDC has not contributed significantly to the creation of socio-economic infrastructure in Bayelsa State.

Research Design

According to Ndiyo (2005), research design is the plan, structure and strategy of investigations to obtain answers to research questions and to control variances. The research design adopted for this study is ex-post facto design since the aim of the study is to determine the impact of an independent variable (NDDC) on several dependent variables (access to basic education, access to potable water, access to healthcare facilities, employment creation, manpower development etc.) in Bayelsa State.

Area of the Study

Niger Delta Region is made up of Nine States, out of the Thirty-six (36) states (excluding Abuja - federal capital territory of Nigeria) that make up Nigeria. The research study covers only one of the states which is Bayelsa State.

Population of the Study

The target population for this study is Yenagoa Local Government, Bayelsa state. It includes men, women and youths within the age bracket 20 and above, whom the researchers believe can give a valid opinion of the impact of NDDC on their community.

Sample for the Study

In determining the sampling technique to use for this study, we take into consideration the fact that the technical nature of the investigation requires the responses of the people with good and related knowledge of the subject matter. To achieve this, simple random sampling method is used for the study. The local government was stratified into four, according to the four areas. The stratification is to ensure diversification of opinion. Households were

stratified according to size and a sample of 45 households per stratum (per area) was randomly selected. In all, a total of 170 households were selected from the four areas.

Research Questionnaire

A questionnaire is the standard collection of questions designed to gather relevant data for a study. The questionnaire is the main instrument used for primary data collection, which depends on the responses from the target population. The questionnaires were distributed to persons with good and related knowledge of the subject matter from the community.

Instrument for Data Collection

To collect the primary data, a carefully structured questionnaire was designed and administered to persons with good and related knowledge of the subject matter. The questionnaire was divided into two sections; section A describes the bio data of respondents of host community. Section B is designed in such a way for a respondent to give his/her own personal view of the subject matter by ticking either Yes, No or data that suits his/her knowledge of the subject matter .

Method of Data Analysis

Data analysis is undertaken using qualitative as well as quantitative techniques. It is expected that the major segment of the information to be collected during the survey will be qualitative and may not be easily quantified. Descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentage, etc. is employed in most of the analysis in summarizing trends, change and comparisons across certain features. The data collected would be analyzed with relevant statistical tool such as Chi-Square test. Final presentations will take the form of descriptions, tabulations and illustrations.

Decision Rule:

The decision is to reject the alternating hypothesis if the calculated value of the chi square statistic is greater than the table value and vice versa at 5% level of significance.

Data Analysis and Discussion

A summary of the data used for analysis was presented in a tabular form with rows and columns.

Table 1: Questionnaire Distribution

Questionnaire	Numbers
Retrieved	99
Not Retrieved	20
Total	119

Source: Field survey, 2014.

Table 1 shows that 119 questionnaires were distributed to the respondents in the community used in the study. 99 questionnaires representing 83.2% were retrieved while 20 questionnaire representing 16.8% were not retrieved. Therefore, the 99 questionnaires retrieved from the field survey, henceforth would constitute the sample size for the study.

Table 2: Composition of Respondents by Sex

Gender	Response	Percentage
Male	35	35.4
Female	64	64.6
Total	99	100

Source: Field survey, 2014.

Table 2 shows the composition of the respondent by their sexes. From the responses, 35 (35.4 percent) of the respondents are male and 64 (64.6 percent) of the respondents are female.

Table 3: Composition of respondent by occupation

Occupation	Response	Percentage
Farmers	10	10.10101
Civil servants	25	25.25253
Company workers	3	3.030303
Students	10	10.10101
Teachers	5	5.050505
Traders	46	46.46465
Total	99	100

Source: Field survey, 2014.

Table 3, shows the occupation of the respondent, 10 (10.1 percent) of the respondent are farmers, 25 (25.3) of the respondent are civil servant, 3 (3 percent) of the respondents workers in a company, 10 (10.1 percent) of the respondent are student, 5 (5.1 percent) of the respondent are into teaching, the remaining 46 (46.5 percent) of the respondent are traders.

Table 4: Composition of Respondent by age group

Age Bracket	Response	Percentage
20-30	20	20.2
31-40	46	46.5
41-50	28	28.3
51 and above	5	5.1
Total	99	100

Source: Field survey, 2014.

From table 4, we see the age grouping of the respondents, 20 (20.2 percent) of the respondents are within the age bracket 20-30, 46 (46.5 percent) of the respondents are within the age bracket 31-40, 28 or 28.3 percent of the respondents are in the age range of 41-50 and the remaining 5 or 5.1 percent are 51 years old and above. The spread in the age bracket shows that all age group opinion is adequately covered.

Hypothesis

NDDC has not contributed significantly to the creation of socio-economic infrastructure in Bayelsa State.

Using question 1 from the research questionnaire, the frequencies and test statistic is presented below:

Chi-Square Test

Frequencies

Response	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
N o	30	49.5	-19.5
Y e s	69	49.5	19.5
T o t a l	99		

Test Statistics

Chi-Square	15.364
D f	1
Asymp. Sig.	.000

Author's Computation Using SPSS

From the test statistic above, the calculated value of 15.364, is greater than the table value of 3.84, this indicates that the Niger Delta Development Commission has contributed

significantly to the establishment of socio-economic infrastructure in Bayelsa state. Plenty of roads and other socio-economic infrastructure have been built by the commission in the state since its establishment.

Decision: The null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative accepted. That is, Niger Delta Development Commission has contributed significantly to the establishment of socio-economic infrastructure in Bayelsa state.

Summary of findings

The study examined the role of NDDC in the development of Bayelsa state. NDDC is a commission saddled with the responsibility of ensuring the much needed and agitated development in the Niger Delta Region is achieved. Bayelsa state which is one of the Niger Delta states has felt the impact of the establishment of the commission in several ways. Some of these ways include among others: the construction of roads, installation of transformers, provision of social amenities, provision of economic goods, vocational training.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the research has decided to put forward the following recommendations which if followed would at least help solve some of the existing challenges:

1. NDDC should ensure the completion of all existing projects since they are positively impacting on the life of the people. Contractors who abandoned their projects should be forced to get back to site and complete them or face legal actions including black listing them.
2. The Commission should strengthen the accountability procedures and ensure prompt payment of contractors as well as check misappropriation and mismanagement of the resources.

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