

# “The Cultural and Socio-Economic Impacts of Oil Exploration and Exploitation on Communities of Ogoniland in Niger Delta Region South-South Nigeria”.

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## ABSTRACT

This research investigates the cultural and socioeconomic impacts of oil exploration and exploitation on communities in Ogoniland, Niger Delta Region, South-South Nigeria. The research identifies the negative impacts of oil activities on the social structures, economic conditions, and cultural practices of Ogoniland communities. Key findings using a close ended questionnaire method to find out how oil exploration has led to environmental devastation, the displacement of communities, the erosion of traditional livelihoods, increased poverty and inequality, and the neglect of other sectors of the economy. The analysis of data collected from the documents also revealed that oil exploration activities have not fairly distributed income among community members and have contributed to an increase in poverty in the region. The study also analyzes the factors that have contributed to social unrest and conflict in the region, including youth militancy, corruption, and the unresponsiveness of government and oil companies to community demands. The study concludes that there is a need for stronger regulations, community involvement, and sustainable development practices to mitigate these negative impacts and promote a more equitable distribution of the benefits from oil resources.

**Keywords:** Oil Exploration, Social and Cultural Impacts, Ogoniland, Sustainable Development.

## INTRODUCTION

Oil production in Nigeria dates back to 1956 when Shell-BP discovered oil at Oloibiri in the Niger Delta Region after almost 50years of exploration. At the time, Shell-BP was the sole concessionaire because non-British companies were not granted exploration licenses to operate in Nigeria (Azeezat Kazeem, 2020). In spite of the influx of revenues generated by increased foreign investment for several decades, there is today a disproportionately high number of poor people in the Niger Delta Region compared to the very small wealthy elites, a situation that maintains and deepens inequalities (Otekenari David Elisha, 2023). The oil sector is the greatest contributor to the national budget, up to 77 percent of the GDP in 2010 (International Monetary Fund 2011). However, in early 2000, Nigeria ranked as one of the most corrupt countries 144 of 146 countries (Transparency International, 2004) in the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI). The 2021 Corruption Perception Index (CPI) confirmed Nigeria ranked 154 out of 180 countries. Corruption is still a strong impediment to development and social justice (Ebenezer Obadare, 2022). Corruption prevents genuine democratic participation by the nation's people and precludes their access to both natural and financial resources. (Renouard and Lado 2012). In the Niger Delta Region, due to poverty and lack of infrastructural developmental policies from the Nigerian government to develop the Region, prompted the extension of Corporate Social Responsibilities (CSR) from the multinational oil companies to develop the region, and address social crises and achieve sustainable development. CSR initiatives have produced no visible positive outcomes for communities, leading some community leaders to question their authenticity. Evidence suggests that there is a gap between the multinational oil companies' stated CSR objectives and the actual results that are seen in the community (Idemudia and

Osayande 2018). The community leaders viewed the disparity of information from the multinational companies as manipulation (Frynas 2015). What follows is the criticism of the community development initiatives of the companies because the oil producing communities (communities where crude oil is extracted) argue that the multinational oil companies CSR initiatives are not addressing both social and environmental problems they are intended to resolve (Idemudia and Osayande 2018). The activities of the multinational oil companies in the Niger Delta Region have created an ecological disaster. More than 16 multinational oil companies were in operation in the Niger Delta Region between 1960 to 1980 with little or no supervision from the Nigerian government. Corruption and weak government monitoring agencies, created significant environmental, political, and social impacts in the region over 30 years (Otekenari David Elisha, 2023). There were roughly 300 spills per year in the 1970s; in one year alone about 700,000 barrels were spilled (Ordinioha, B., & Brisibe, S. 2013). Ogoniland (one of the largest oil producing communities) itself suffered 111 spills between 1985 to 1994. Shell alone accounted for 1.6 million gallons of spilled oil, 37 percent of the company's spills worldwide (Ordinioha, B., & Brisibe, S. 2013). The contamination of oil in mangroves and wetlands as well as on land means that oil has penetrated the soils down to several meters and has contaminated groundwater over large areas. This has resulted in the contamination of water wells, a particularly serious concern from a human health perspective (UNEP 2013). Once the oil has contaminated wetlands such as marshes and mangroves, it is often very difficult to remove without causing further damage to the environment. These spills have necessitated the complete relocation of some communities, loss of ancestral homes, pollution of freshwater, loss of forest and agricultural land, destruction of fishing grounds, and reduction of fish production, which is the major source of income for the Niger Delta people. All these impacts constitute massive unquantifiable losses to farmers, fishers, and hunters (UNEP 2013; Amnesty International 2017). Niger Delta is made up of a network of creeks and rivers that flow into the Atlantic Ocean; an oil spill in one locality spills over into other communities (Linden and Palsson 2013).

### **Problem Statement**

Niger Delta particularly, Ogoniland has been grossly affected by decades of oil exploration, resulting in a massive socio-cultural and environmental imbalance. Oil, even though it has been a major source of revenue to Nigeria has caused widespread contamination, devastation of ecosystems and threat to the lives of people. The water sources, farmlands, and fishing grounds have been polluted by oil spills, putting the livelihoods of the communities who rely on farming and fishing at risk. Socially and culturally, the removal of communities to carry out oil activities has led to the loss of ancestral territory, social cohesion and erosion of ancient cultural activities. Economic disparities have increased with only a few elite enjoying oil resources at the expense of majority of the Ogoni people who live in poverty and exclusion. Mistrust and unrest have also been caused by allegations of human rights abuses and community neglect by multinational oil companies. Overall, the effects are extensive and intertwined, and governmental action and corporate responsibility are needed to recover environmental integrity and foster social justice.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Social Impacts of Oil Exploration and Oil Exploitation**

According to (Chindi 2011; Watts 2011), the operations of the multinational oil companies that were present in the Niger Delta Region have had various negative effects on the environment, the ecosystem, politics, economy and social life of the inhabitants of the region. As (Fuentes et al., 2020) mentions, some of the changes that may affect most of the indigenous individuals residing in the communities can be changes in their lifestyle, culture, economy, family, and psychology. The operations of the multinational oil companies have had immense impacts on the cultures of the inhabitants of these societies. Akhionbare and Osuji (2013) state that the operations of the oil companies have ruined historical places of worship and erosion of traditional values. They also reasoned that the influx of oil workers into the societies have affected the norms and values of the people, and has promoted sexual pervasiveness, enhanced need to promote promiscuity in the societies (Akhionbare and Osuji 2013). According to Ochogba et al, (2017), the aspects of culture, including primary mode of dress, greetings, food, dancing, festivals, masquerade, music, wrestling, sacred lands, age groups fishing competition, and crop farming are slowly disappearing in some of the Niger Delta communities (Ochogba et al 2017, 49). The growth in the

demand of sex work in the region was also reported by Okpako (2014) to be attributed to the presence of oil and gas workers who are residing in the communities. Akhionbare et al, (2013) and Fryan (2015) note the presence of oil and gas companies as one of the causes of local conflicts. They blame the existing inter and intra community war on the ways that government and oil companies are not responsive to the needs of the local inhabitants of the oil producing state. The majority of the local demands were initially tabled to the government and multination companies dealing with oil in a peaceful manner through community representatives but always ended up in violent demonstrations when they were not heeded. Watts (2011) explains that oil was first discovered in Oloibiri in Nigeria but it had since been abandoned with no running water, no electricity, no roads, and no primary school but with highly polluted environment (Watts 2011). According to Watts (2011), the Decree of Nigerian Government of the 1978 Land Use Act took away the land rights of the communities and claim of oil royalties paid by the multinational companies operating in their area. The government without proper compensation gave most of the community farmlands to the multinational oil companies. Watts (2011), further elaborates that the traditional monarchies within majority of the communities in the Niger Delta Region have become hotly contested posts since the benefits the monarchies enjoy as a result of the oil companies fail to reflect the interests of their respective communities.

### **Strategies for Mitigating the Negative Effects of Oil Exploration and Exploitation**

The increase of Africa as a major oil producer in the world market is both an opportunity and a deep-rooted challenge especially in areas where governance, transparency and environmental management are poor. As much as oil discoveries in West Africa can lead to economic growth, it has been limited by poor governance of resources, corruption and mismanagement of the revenue. In Nigeria, as is the case, the oil wealth worth trillions of naira have been concentrated in the hands of the small elite, where the gas flaring, pollution and the revenue lost is draining the nation back. There are also similar issues in Angola, Libya, and Egypt where the reliance on oil has undermined the economic diversification and subjected the countries to fluctuations in global prices, conflict and poverty. In order to reduce the impact of these negative effects, scholars emphasize some important strategies. Okumagba (2019) recommend better management of pipelines in the Niger Delta such as burying pipeline to minimize sabotage, leakages, and environmental degradation. They state that the oil companies should not simply rest on the verbal promises, but they should prove that they are truly subject to the environmental rules. Linden and Palson, (2013) stresses on the importance of immediate cleanup of oil polluted areas, particularly in Ogoniland where legacy pollution has continued to wipe out agriculture, fisheries, mangrove forests and human lives. Integrated cleanup and long-term ecological rehabilitation is needed to restore the livelihoods of the locals. Prpich et al. (2018) emphasize the significance of inclusive stakeholder engagement as the approach of decreasing the tension and enhancing environmental performance. Inter-company, inter-governmental, and inter-community communication are critical especially in areas where local governance is weak. They also point to the fact that environmental remediation is expensive, between \$500 million and 1 billion, which means that proactive environmental planning and investment are necessary (Ezeh et al., 2024). Overall, to reduce the adverse effects of oil exploration, stricter guidelines, openness in the management of the revenues, investment in local capacity, and corporate responsibility are needed. Sustainable development should focus on protecting the environment, diversifying the economy, and engaging the community in meaningful development activities to make sure that the oil money does not lead to conflict, poverty, and environmental degradation.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This paper used a systematic research approach to examine the social and cultural effects of oil exploration and exploitation in Ogoniland. A survey research design was adopted, using a questionnaire to obtain quantitative data from respondents. This design is appropriate in collecting perceptions, experiences and community level impacts in a systematic and measurable manner. The study was conducted in Ogoniland, an oil-rich but environmentally degraded region in Rivers State, Nigeria. It has four Local Government Areas, including Tai, Eleme, Gokana and Khana with an approximate population of over one million residents. The residents are mostly farmers and fishers that have been devastated by the decades of oil mining. Both secondary and primary data was utilized. The structured, close-ended questionnaires that were used as primary data were administered physically to the respondents, whereas secondary data were obtained through books, journals, reports, and

authoritative digital publications. The questionnaire questions were based on validated measure and were categorized into four sections to encompass the demographic data, social impacts, cultural impacts and community perceptions. The population was targeted as men of the Ogoni communities with a minimum lifespan of five years. The calculation of the sample size was done using the formula suggested by Fischer, which gave a sample size of 96 but when non-response was adjusted the final sample size was 106. The sampling method adopted was multi-stage. To begin with, two LGAs were randomly picked- Tai and Gokana. Second, the households in each LGA were selected by systematic sampling, which guaranteed a broad representativeness. The process of data collection took two weeks and was supported by trained research assistants. The questionnaire was checked to be clear and pilot-tested to revise ambiguous questions to make them valid. The reliability was enhanced by the well-constructed Likert-scale items and inclusion criteria, which guaranteed the respondents having sufficient lived experience. Descriptive statistics, such as frequency tables and line charts, were applied to analyze the data and have provided a clear understanding of what the community is going through and the level of social and cultural effects.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 4.1: Socio-demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

SN	Variables	Frequency (n=106)	Percentage (%)
1	Age		
	15-24	15	14.2
	25-34	37	34.9
	35-44	31	29.3
	45 and above	23	21.6
2	Marital status		
	Single	29	27.4
	Married	71	66.9
	Divorced	6	5.7
3	No of children		
	0-3	41	38.7
	4-7	40	37.7
	7 and above	25	23.6
4	Highest level of education		
	No former education	17	16.0
	Primary school	29	27.4
	Secondary school	33	31.1

	Tertiary institution and above	27	25.5
5	Average monthly income		
	<n30,000	12	11.3
	N30,000-n59,999	26	24.5
	N60,000-n89,999	48	45.3
	>n89,999	20	18.9

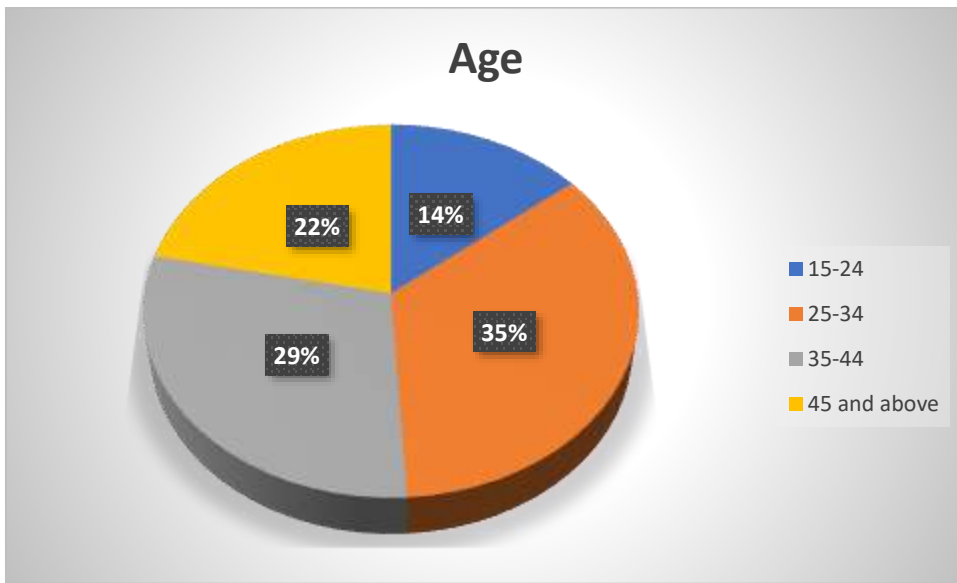


Figure 1.1: Age

From the chart above, majority of respondents (74.1%) were between the ages of 25 and 44, indicating a relatively young population. Only 14.2% of respondents were under 25, and 21.6% were 45 or older.

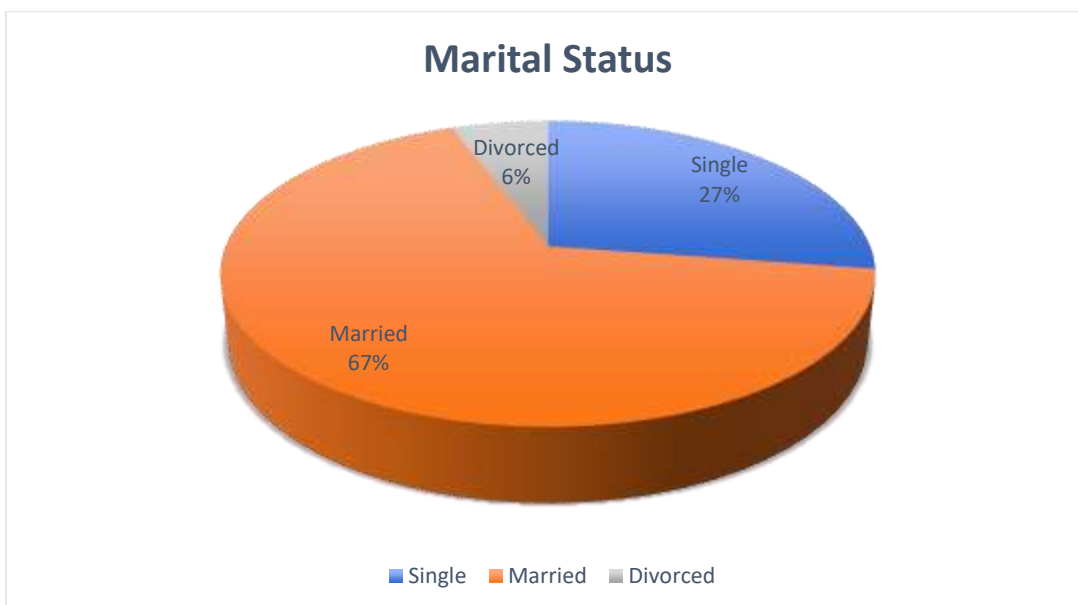


Figure 1.2: Marital Status

The majority of respondents (66.9%) were married, followed by single (27.4%) and divorced (5.7%). This suggests that the majority of respondents have established family structures and are likely to be heads of households.

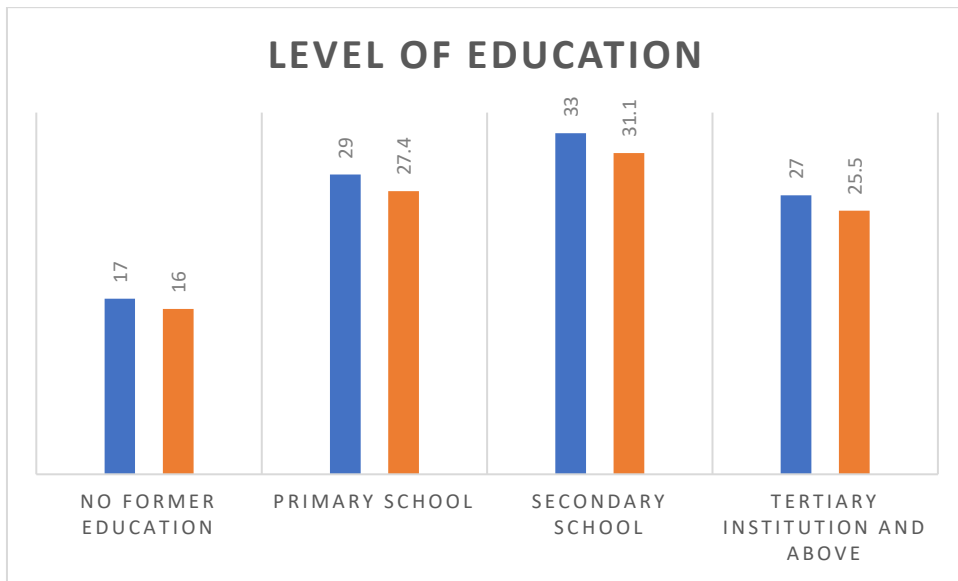


Figure 1.3: Level of Education

The majority of respondents (56.6%) had completed secondary education or higher, demonstrating a relatively high level of education. Only 16% had no formal education, and 27.4% had completed primary school.

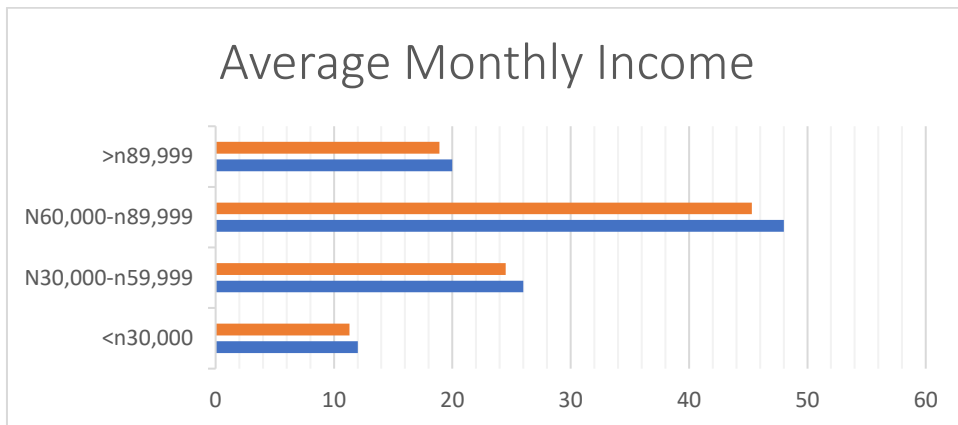


Figure 1.4: Average Monthly Income

The distribution of average monthly income shows that a significant portion of respondents (45.3%) earn between N60,000 and N89,999. However, a considerable number of respondents (36.2%) earn less than N60,000, indicating that a significant portion of the population is still struggling to meet their basic needs.

Table 4.2: Social Impacts of Oil Related Activities of Communities of Ogoniland

SN		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	Oil exploration activities have created job opportunities in my community.	23(21.7%)	15(14.2%)	20(18.9%)	30(28.3%)	18(16.9%)

2	Oil spills and pollution have negatively impacted the health of people in my community.	0(0%)	5(4.7%)	20(18.9%)	35(33.0%)	46(43.4%)
3	Income from oil exploration has been fairly distributed among community members.	51(48.1%)	27(25.5%)	19(17.9%)	9(8.5%)	0(0%)
4	Oil exploration activities have led to an increase in poverty in my community.	2(1.9%)	15(14.2%)	7(6.6%)	33(31.1%)	49(46.2%)
5	Displacement of communities due to oil exploration has disrupted social life in Ogoniland	2(1.9%)	13(12.3%)	10(9.4%)	42(39.6%)	39(36.8%)

Table 4.2 show mixed effects of oil exploration in Rogoniland. Though 28.3% of the respondents recognized job creation 63.8% flatly refused implying minimal employment benefits. An overwhelming majority of them mentioned ill-effects, 86.9% citing health hazards due to oil spill, 73.6% citing inequitable income distribution, and 87.3% citing oil activities as a cause of more poverty. Moreover, 86.4% reported community displacement that interrupted social life, putting strong focus on environmental, economic, and social challenges that would lead to the derailment of anticipated benefits of oil exploration in the area.

Table 4.3: Test of Hypothesis for the Social Impacts of Oil Related Activities of Communities of Ogoniland

SN		Chi-square Value	P Value
1	Oil exploration activities have created job opportunities in my community.	22.79	1.70E-39
2	Oil spills and pollution have negatively impacted the health of people in my community.	133.22	2.22E-16
3	The income from oil exploration has been fairly distributed among community members.	140.72	1.23E-16
4	Oil exploration activities have led to an increase in poverty in my community.	104.03	2.22E-16
5	The displacement of communities due to oil exploration has disrupted social life in Ogoniland	92.73	2.22E-16

Table 4.3 shows that all of the p-values are below the value of 0.05, which supports the fact that there is statistically significant association between the opinions that people hold about the social impacts of oil exploration activities and their actual experiences. To put it another way, the statistics indicate that individuals who have been adversely affected by oil exploration tend to disagree with the statements that oil exploration has been positive socially. These results give some support to the argument that oil exploration activity has adversely affected the social aspect of the Ogoniland communities.

Table 4.4: Cultural Impacts of Oil Related Activities of Communities of Ogoniland

SN		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	Oil exploration activities have destroyed traditional fishing and farming practices in Ogoniland	5(4.7%)	10(9.4%)	3(2.8%)	61(57.5%)	27(25.5%)
2	The influx of outsiders due to oil exploration has weakened cultural identity in Ogoniland.	10(9.4%)	23(21.7%)	11(10.4%)	40(37.7%)	22(20.8%)
3	The loss of ancestral lands due to oil exploration has negatively impacted cultural heritage in Ogoniland.	3(2.8%)	5(4.7%)	19(17.9%)	20(18.9%)	59(55.7%)
4	Oil companies have shown respect for the cultural values and traditions of Ogoniland communities.	12(11.3%)	30(28.3%)	31(29.2%)	17(16.0%)	16(15.2%)
5	The economic benefits from oil exploration have helped to preserve traditional cultural practices in Ogoniland.	13(12.3%)	59(55.7)	4(3.7%)	27(25.5%)	3(2.8%)

Table 4.4 indicate that oil exploration in the Ogoniland has had dire effects on cultural heritage and livelihood. Most of the respondents cited that they experienced destruction of traditional fishing and farming (83.0%), weakening of cultural identity by outsiders (71.7%), and loss of ancestral lands to cultural practices (79.2%). Just 31.1% believed that oil companies were honoring local customs and an equivalent proportion felt that economic gains enhanced the preservation of culture. The oil activities in general have substantially compromised traditional activities, social unity, and preservation of the cultural heritage of Ogoniland.

Table 4.5: Test of Hypothesis for the Cultural Impacts of Oil Related Activities of Communities of Ogoniland

SN		Chi Square Value	P value
1	Oil exploration activities have destroyed traditional fishing and farming practices in Ogoniland	227.59	1.98E-39
2	The influx of outsiders due to oil exploration has weakened cultural identity in Ogoniland.	81.64	2.22E-16
3	The loss of ancestral lands due to oil exploration has negatively impacted cultural heritage in Ogoniland.	163.82	2.22E-16
4	Oil companies have shown respect for the cultural values and traditions of Ogoniland communities.	33	2.20E-04
5	The economic benefits from oil exploration have helped to preserve traditional cultural practices in Ogoniland.	192.23	2.22E-16

Table 4.5 indicates that all the p-values fall below the 0.05 mark except the one that indicates that oil companies have respected the cultural values and traditions of communities in Ogoniland (p-value = 0.220). This indicates that the opinions of people regarding the cultural effects of oil exploration activities have statistically significant relationship with their actual experience with the exception of the respect that the oil company shows towards cultural values. These findings give some evidence to prove the argument that the oil exploration activities have been detrimental to the cultural aspect of the Ogoniland communities.

Table 4.6: Strategies for Mitigating the Negative Impacts of Oil Related Activities of Communities of Ogoniland

SN		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	Increased government regulation of oil companies	0(0%)	1(0.9%)	1(0.9%)	15(14.3%)	89(83.9%)
2	Stronger enforcement of environmental laws	0(0%)	7(6.6%)	19(17.9%)	53(50.0%)	27(25.5%)
3	Community-based monitoring of oil activities	0(0%)	1(0.9%)	30(28.3%)	38(35.9%)	37(34.9%)
4	Diversification of the economy to reduce reliance on oil	18(16.9%)	9(8.5%)	26(24.5%)	39(36.9%)	14(13.2%)
5	Increased investment in education and healthcare in Ogoniland	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	79(74.5%)	27(25.5%)
6	Promotion of sustainable development initiative	0(0%)	0(0%)	5(4.7%)	63(59.5%)	38(35.8%)
7	Fair compensation for communities affected by oil spills and pollution	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	59(55.7%)	47(44.3%)
8	Establishment of community development funds	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	99(93.4%)	7(6.6%)

Table 4.6 indicates that, there exists high level of community support of measures to reduce the impacts of oil exploration in Ogoniland. There is a great unanimity of 100% among the respondents to have more government regulation, investment in education and healthcare, fair pay, and community development funds. Majority favors the enforcement of the environmental laws (83.9%), community based monitoring (64.2%), and economic diversification (55.7%). All in all, the findings show the evident need to implement tighter control, social investment, and local empowerment to resolve the environmental, economic, and social issues that occur because of oil operations.

Table 4.7: Test of Hypothesis for the Strategies for Mitigating the Negative Impacts of Oil Related Activities of Communities of Ogoniland

SN		Chi Square Value	P Value
1	Increased government regulation of oil companies	317.88	2.22E-16
2	Stronger enforcement of environmental laws	169.76	2.22E-16

3	Community-based monitoring of oil activities	103.89	2.22E-16
4	Diversification of the economy to reduce reliance on oil	106.89	2.22E-16
5	Increased investment in education and healthcare in Ogoniland	317.88	2.22E-16
6	Promotion of sustainable development initiatives	163.89	2.22E-16
7	Fair compensation for communities affected by oil spills and pollution	139.76	2.22E-16
8	Establishment of community development funds	317.88	2.22E-16

The p-values of all the statements are below 0.05, which proves that the relation between the opinion of respondents and the development of the proposed strategies is significant. It implies that the respondent does not perceive the strategies at random but rather his/her perceptions are based on what he/she believes. Chi-square values of most of the statements are quite big which indicates high levels of support to the strategies proposed. This means that the respondents feel such strategies work well in eliminating adverse effects of oil exploration. According to the chi-square analysis, the data is very positive in favor of the adoption of different strategies in order to reduce the adverse effects of oil exploration in Ogoniland.

## DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This study has shown the complex social, economic and cultural effects of oil exploration in Ogoniland. Speaking of employment, 28.3% of the respondents admitted that the oil industry created jobs, but the majority (63.8%), disagreed with this claim on the grounds of low and imbalanced employment returns of the oil industry, which are also in agreement with previous research (Ezugwu et al., 2022). The effects of oil spills on health are serious, as 86.9% showed adverse effects, which is confirmed by other studies on the illness caused by pollution in the Niger Delta (Linden and Palsson, 2013). The economic inequality is also noticeable as the 73.6 percent reported unfair distribution of oil income, and 87.3 percent associated the oil activities to rising poverty due to the resource curse phenomenon (Auty, 1993; Obi, 2012). Community displacement resulted in social disruption as reported by 86.4% of the respondents highlighting the social cost of oil exploration (Frynas, 2005). Cultural influences are not less important. Most of them (83.0) affirmed that traditional fishing and farming have been destroyed whereas 71.7% realized erosion of cultural identity through outsider influx. Displacement of ancestral lands had a negative impact on cultural heritage (79.2%), and only 31.1% of respondents believed that oil companies respected the inhabitants, which signified cultural insensitivity and loss of social bond (Sam et al., 2024; Frynas, 2005). In terms of mitigation, the majority of respondents (100%), were in favor of stricter government regulation, environmental law compliance, education and healthcare investments, fair compensation, and community development funds, which is an indication of high demand to be held accountable and socially invest (Ezugwu et al., 2022; Sam et al., 2024). Although 64.2% were in favor of community based monitoring, 35.8% exhibited less confidence demonstrating that there was a need to build capacity. The backing of diversification of the economy (55.7) is an indication of the realization of the dangers of dependence on oil (Auty, 1993). All in all, the results prove the necessity of sustainable, socially equal, and environmentally friendly methods. Community empowerment, equitable pay, and culture conservation are consistent with the best practices in the management of resources in the world and indicate the need to incorporate the local voices in the development plans (Idemudia & Osayande, 2018; Obi, 2012).

## CONCLUSION

The citizens of the oil producing regions are no longer able to withstand the contemptible social and cultural infrastructural barrenness, poverty, ecological disasters and other loss that they have been experiencing even though they have been of help in the advancement of Nigeria. Their reactions to the seemingly unprotected

position by the successive Nigerian governments to shield the land and the people against the dangers of the hydrocarbon activities, which include pollution, oil spillages, incessant gas flaring, violation of human rights, and consequent economic deprivation and impoverishment, is the clamour to have a control over the resources. The residents of the Ogoniland region have a solid belief that they can only fulfill their needs of development through having their oil resources reclaimed back to them through ownership, control, and management. Oil exploration has been the preserve of the few who have enjoyed the fruits of the game, as most communities have suffered poverty, inequality, health issues and social upheaval. These results indicate that policy and strategy is required to curb the adverse social effects of oil extraction and enhance sustainable development in the Ogoniland area. The studies also propose that oil exploration has resulted into demolition of traditional means of livelihood, loss of cultural identity, and loss of ancestral territories. These effects have had a significant influence on the life of the residents in Ogoniland and led to the current social and environmental problems that the region is confronting. Finally, it mentions that there is a variety of measures in order to alleviate these adverse effects, such as more regulation by the government, improved application of environmental laws, community based monitoring, economic diversification, investment in education and health, sustainable development, equitable pay and community development funds. Through these measures a fairer and more equal future of Ogoniland can be produced.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this research, the following recommendations are offered to address the negative impacts of oil exploration and exploitation in Ogoniland:

1. **Diversify the Economy:** The government should promote economic diversification to reduce the region's dependence on oil and create alternative livelihood opportunities for local communities.
2. **Support Community-Based Initiatives:** The government should support community-based initiatives that aim to address the negative impacts of oil exploration and promote sustainable development.
3. **Adopt Sustainable Practices:** Oil companies should adopt sustainable practices that minimize their environmental footprint and contribute to the well-being of local communities.
4. **Provide Fair Compensation:** Oil companies should provide fair compensation to communities affected by oil spills and pollution, including remediation costs and lost livelihoods.
5. **Invest in Community Development:** Oil companies should invest in community development projects that benefit local communities, such as education, healthcare, and infrastructure.
6. **Communities should be empowered to participate in decision-making processes related to oil exploration and development.**
7. **Community-Based Initiatives:** Communities should be encouraged to develop and implement their own community-based initiatives to address the negative impacts of oil exploration.
8. **Financial Support:** International financial institutions should provide support for sustainable development initiatives in Ogoniland, including investments in renewable energy, education, and healthcare.

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