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Accounting for Peace and Economic Development in Nigeria, the Niger-Delta Case

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Abstract

The objective of this study was to investigate the impact of cost of peace keeping in the Niger-Delta region on the economic development of Nigeria. To achieve this purpose, a hypothesis was raised and a review of extant literature was made. In order to generate the necessary data for this study, the secondary method of data collection was employed and a longitudinal

survey designed for a period of ten (10) years, i.e 1999-2008, was adopted. The data for the study were generated from the Central Bank of Nigeria statistical bulletin of 2009. The result of our analysis shown that cost of peace keeping in the Niger-Delta region of Nigeria, has a negative significant impact on the economic development of Nigeria. It was therefore recommended that to eliminate cost of peace enthronement in the Niger-Delta region and consequently improve the economic development of Nigeria, the Federal Government and her parastatals as well as the multinational oil companies should pay special attention to the Niger-Delta question by making provision for higher level of infrastructure (electricity, good roads, efficient communication systems, portable water, employment opportunities, scholarship awards), to the people.

Key words: Accounting for peace, cost of peace keeping, Economic Development, Insecurity, militancy.

Introduction

The exploitation and production of oil in the Niger-Delta have crated some of the largest fortunes for the multinational companies and have helped to achieve impressive economic growth and development of the Nigeria state, but little or no attention has been directed by both the multinational companies and the Nigeria governments to the effects of such oil activities on the welfare of oil producing communities (Ikein, 1990). Oil has not as expected brought prosperity, better living conditions and governmental attention and development, rather it has become a curse and impoverishes the inhabitants of the Niger-Delta region. However a fight for their rights against the multinational companies and the Federal Government has resulted in large-scale violence, crisis, social tension, hostage taking, man slaughter, kidnapping and other social vices of the region. The aftermath of these vices, is the high degree of insecurity in the region, which has led to the withdrawal of major oil producing companies from the region. The low level of oil production as a result of insecurity of lives and property in the region has a strong negative impact on the Nigerian economy (Ikelegbe, 2008). In their effort to bring the situation under control, the multinational companies, governments and other stakeholders have been clamouring for peace in the Niger-Delta region to boost economic development.

The term peace is relative and the conditions for peace differ from one society or nation to another. However Ibeanue (2005) asserted that peace is a

process involving activities that are linked to increasing development and reducing conflict. It is described as justice and development, respect and tolerance between people, wholeness and making whole, and the absence of war. Despite its relative nature, peace has a common denominator, i.e. the harmonious or friendly pursuit of individual and collective interest defined by rules of conduct or standard of behaviour. Thus, in this context, peace is described as a condition in which people live in agreement with accepted standards of conduct or rules of behaviour that promote public good and the happiness of every one.

Various strategies are being devised by the multinational companies and the government for the enthronement of peace in the Niger-Delta region of Nigeria. Multinational companies are spending so much money to hire security agents to protect their facilities and personnel from militant attacks. The government on the other hand is spending huge amount of money to maintain peace-keeping forces in the region. In 2009, the Federal Government of Nigeria under the administration of President Umaru Musa Yar, Adua, granted amnesty to militants and these former militants are currently on the payroll of the government thereby reducing government current revenue. Akeem and Erhun (2010) posited that the recurrent expenditure of the Federal Government increases on a basis at an average of 12.69 due to security measures taken by governments to ensuring peace in the Niger-Delta region. It is upon this premise that this paper tends to investigate the impact of cost of peace-keeping in Niger-Delta region and the economic development of Nigeria. To achieve the above objective, it is hypothesized that-

Ho: *Cost of Peace Keeping in Niger-Delta region has no negative significant impact on economic development of Nigeria.*

Literature review

Conceptual issues

The problems in the Niger-Delta region of Nigeria (the oil producing region of the country) are increasing everyday in leaps and bounds. From mere demands for reparation and agitations against unfair treatment in terms of their ecology in the 1960s-1980s to confrontations, riots, demonstrations, kidnapping of oil workers, holding of hostages, pipeline and flow stations

vandalization, to uncontrollable youth restiveness and killings in recent times. Mr. Ron Van Don Berg, the former managing director of Shell Petroleum Development Company of Nigeria, in his message contained in the Company's Annual Report of 1998 as cited by Wodu and Nwaeke (2005), stated that "there was increased unrest amongst communities in the Niger-Delta region during the year. The rise in the number of community incidents and disturbances is of great concern, particularly the increase in violence and hostage-taking. A major cause of the underlying discontent is the community sense of grievance that a fair share of oil revenues has not been returned in the form of development projects in the oil producing areas". The level of insecurity in the Niger-Delta region is assuming a tremendous dimension.

According to Thomas (2008), insecurity could be seen as the presence of and or apprehension of those tendencies which could undermine internal cohesion and corporate existence of the nation and its ability to maintain its vital institutions for the promotion of its core values and socio-political objectives, as well as meet the legitimate aspirations of the people. It also implies the presence or apprehension of danger to life and property, and the presence of non-conducive atmosphere for the people to pursue their legitimate interests within the society. Insecurity therefore, embodies the presence, or the apprehension of threat to, and or direct violation of security.

Threat is conceptualized as representing anything that can undermine the security of the nation or the peaceful coexistence of the people (Imobighe, 1990). The sources of security threats in Nigeria include-militancy, military experiences, ethnic/religious pluralism, unemployment, poverty and failure of governance, socio-economic inequalities and demographic factors, small arms and ammunition trafficking, migration and indigence question in Nigeria (Arase and Iwuofor, 2007; Ikonne, Williams and Nwagbara, 2005; Basse, 2004).

The Niger-Delta region is today enmeshed in violent conflicts over oil. There are not just pervasive conflicts, violence and insecurity, but a breakdown of social and political order and an increasing ungovernability in the region (Lubeck, Watts and Lipschutz, 2007). The creeks, riverine and coastal areas are becoming ungovernable. There is heightening insurgency, insurrection and criminality. The crisis cut oil output by about 40% between 2003 and 2004 and about 33% in early 2006. In April 2004, Shell Petroleum Development Company (SPDC) cuts production by about 370,000 bpd in the

Western Delta. Since 2006 SPDC has cut down production capacity to about 2mbpd, (Thomas, 2008). The crisis in the region has brought into sharp focus the nature of relations of the Nigerian state with oil, the MNOCs and the host communities, as well as the nature of MNOC relations and contributions to the host communities.

The nature and character of the Nigeria state has underpinned the nature of relations with oil and the MNOCs. First, being a neo-colonial capitalist peripheral economy, the state is controlled by a dependent comprador ruling class, which is accumulative, parasitic, violent exploitative, clientelist, corrupt, profligate and unproductive. The Nigerian ruling class has depended on oil since the late 1960s for accumulation. The mentality, outlook, methods, orientations and activities of the ruling class has determined the predatory relations to oil and the crass and amoral plunder that has occurred.

Second, Nigeria is regarded as a rentier state. One major fall out of state rentierism has been that the nation has earned and earns huge oil revenues without production, control and responsibility. Since there has been no relationship between revenues and expenditure on one hand and citizen based taxes, the state has not been liable or responsible to the citizen and has been absolved from accountability, checks and resistance from the citizenry. Oil has created a large system of patronage, clientelism, and corruption. The consequence has been enormous oil based leakages and frittering, which with over N400 billion earned, has kept the nation tottering as one of the most endowed, most corrupt and poorest countries in the world.

Peace-keeping in Niger-Delta region

According to Ibeanu (2005), peace is a process involving activities that are linked to increasing development and reducing conflict. It is described as justice and development, respect and tolerance between people, harmony with the ecosystem, tranquility or inner peace, wholeness and making whole, and absence of war.

A review of literature indicated the following reasons for the enthronement of peace in Niger-Delta region of Nigeria.

- (i) **National Loss of Income and Resources:** The lingering Niger Delta crisis is making Nigeria to lose money. The Chairman, Senate Committee on the Niger Delta and Conflict Resolution, claims that Nigeria lost an estimated \$58.3 billion between 1998 and 2007. The

country is still losing more daily. Conflicts consume a large portion of national resources. The government is spending a large amount of money maintaining the peace-keeping forces. To oil companies are spending money to hire security agents. The vigilante groups are spending alot to buy arms. These are resources that can be used to .improve Nigeria, but are now diverted into servicing violence. Nzelu (2002) remarks that the NNPC lost products worth N10.2 billion in 2001 as a result of pipelines vandalization.

- (ii) **Kidnappings and Death:** Another disturbing effect of the crisis is the litany of kidnappings and deaths in the area for example; the 91-year old King Anderson Zidafamo was kidnapped on December 19, 2007 by the militants. He was released ten days later. (*Sunday Punch*, December 30, 2007, p.2). Now the militias routinely kidnap people including small children and demand ransome before their release. Thousands have been killed; have their homes destroyed and suffered different types of violence.
- (iii) **Destruction of National Unity:** Conflicts can and do destroy the foundations of national unity and nation building. The Niger Delta conflict is destroying Nigeria's unity as the communities in the Delta think that they are being destroyed to build up the other parts of Nigeria. Their assumptions challenge the building of the nation. It is necessary to point out that oil is necessary for the survival of the nation. Since this oil is produced from the Niger Delta, it is most important that agitations in the Niger Delta be quickly resolved so that the country is not destroyed.
- (iv) **Individual Peace:** The total peace of the individuals making up the society is the peace of that society. If the peaces of the individuals are disturbed, then the peace of the society is disturbed. Olagunju (2002) aptly puts it this way: The peace of the individual in the society is the foundation for social harmony. It is therefore in the society's interest that disputes be successfully resolved.

Human suffering, destruction of livelihood, constant displacement, fear and acute insecurity disturbs the individual's peace. The present situation is disrupting their economics and multiplying their woes. In order to estimate the cost of peace enthronement, the need for peace accounting becomes a "sine qua non". Peace accounting is the systematic recording and

ascertainment of the cost of peace-keeping. This becomes necessary in order to measure the impact of such cost on the economic development of Nigeria. According to Ikelegbe (2008), the low level of oil production resulting from militancy in the Niger-Delta region of Nigeria has a strong negative impact on the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

Exploitative, clientelist, corrupt, profligate and unproductive the Nigerian ruling class has depended on oil since the late 1960s for accumulation. The mentality, outlook, methods, orientations and activities of the ruling class has determined the predatory relations to oil and the crass and amoral plunder that has occurred.

Second, Nigeria is regarded as a rentier state. One major fall out of state rentierism has been that the nation has earned and earns huge oil revenues without production, control and responsibility. Since there has been no relationship between revenues and expenditure on one hand and citizen based taxes, the state has not been liable or responsible to the citizen and has been absolved from accountability, checks and resistance from the citizenry. Oil has created a large system of patronage, clientelism, and corruption. The consequence has been enormous oil based leakages and frittering, which with over N400 billion earned, has kept the nation tottering as one of the most endowed, most corrupt and poorest countries in the world.

The nature and forms of oil exploitation and the practices and behaviour of the MNOCs are underpinned by the politics of oil, the policies that flow from it and the nature of collaboration, regulation and control that exist between the Nigerian state and oil capital. For example, because of the rentier nature of politics and the character of the ruling class as well as the identity and power struggles over oil, the Nigerian State has remained entirely and largely dependent on the royalties, taxes and profit shares from oil exploitation. It is not seriously involved in the operations of the oil industry. It is not seriously engaged in regulating and controlling the industry. Its concern is in maintaining and protecting the oil flow and its profits. In the same manner, the nature of relations of the Nigerian state with oil, is at the root of the 'problems of the Niger Delta; its marginalization, oppression, inequitable and unjust treatment, repression and violence.

Thus far, an assessment of the legal and regulatory framework for the industry, the compliance by oil operators and the effectiveness of the Nigeria's control and regulation of the industry reveal deep inadequacies and

poor performance. The Nigerian state has been and remains weak in the monitoring and regulation of the operations and practices in the industry and the behaviour, conduct, and practices of the industry operators. Particularly the state has not adequately engaged the industry and its operators in terms of oversight and enforcement activities. There are numerous indications of these weaknesses, inadequacies and poor performance.

There is laxity, sluggishness and passiveness in the Directorate of Petroleum Resources' (DPR) monitoring, oversight and enforcement functions. The DPR has not effectively occupied its roles and effectively engaged the oil industry operators in terms of effecting compliance with rules, standards, regulations and prescriptions. Oil industry practices in the management of waste, and environmental pollution is extremely poor and far below international standards.

The explanations for the poor performance are several. The NNPC and the DPR have lacked adequate technical and technologically competent manpower to effectively monitor the petroleum industry. Furthermore, the technological capacity, to effectively monitor and oversee the industry is poor. There is the problem of overlapping functions, the lack of effective co-ordination and sometimes distrust, between the DPR and other agencies of government (Gidado 1999). This limits the latitude and span of activities and hampers effective functioning.

Hutchful (1998) has identified several difficulties of the Petroleum inspectorate, which reflect those generally faced by such Third World Institutions that regulate critical resource sectors and powerful multinationals. First, the Department found it difficult to regulate a critical resource exploitation, in which the Nigerian state was extensively involved. Particularly it was difficult to regulate the negative externalities of oil and gas production, which itself constituted the revenue base of the government. The inspectorate and in deed the state is expected to supervise and regulate an industry in which the state was a major stake holder and beneficiary. As an equity holder in the MNOCs, the state and the inspectorate lacked the "Distance and arms-length relationship required to impose costly regulations (Hutchful 1998). More specifically, powerful political elite and bureaucrats benefited from the MNOCs and the negative externalities of their operations and production. Second, the multinational oil companies which were supposed to be overseen were powerful large, complex, technologically advanced and very influential.

Third, the regulatory agencies, in this case the Petroleum inspectorate Department did not have the capacity and ability to effectively supervise and monitor the oil industry. The inspectorate staff were not adequately trained and equipped and they did not have the logistic capability to effectively supervise the petroleum industry. Furthermore, the capacity to gather, process, analyze and interpret data and materials was poor because of poor logistic, research, scientific and laboratory capabilities. Finally, the inspectorate staff did not match the MNOCs in terms of competence, incentives, commitment and technical and operational experience and equipment and infrastructural support.

Cases/instances of oil-induced crises/state violence and reactions in the Niger Delta region

In the course of further investigation to find out whether there is a link or relationship between petroleum prospecting with State violence and hostage-taking in the Niger Delta, the following cases and instances of state violence perpetrated by the Nigerian government in collaboration with multi-national oil companies and the attendant reactions in from of kidnapping/hostage-taking were evident. These were revealed in the following responses and observations, viz:

The deployment of two worships and about 15,000 Nigerian troops to occupy Bayelsa and Delta states as the Ijaw Youth Movement (IYM) mobilized for Operation Climate Change' in December 1998 as a fall out of the 'Kaiama Declaration'. The solders deployed to Bayelsa State specifically mentioned that they have come to attack the youth trying to stop the oil companies. This statement was visited with great impulsion by the youth as more than two thousand youths processed through the streets of Yenagoa in black attires, singing and dancing on the morning of December 30, 1998. Consequently, the soldiers opened fire with rifles, machine guns, and tear gas, killing three protesters and arresting twenty-five youths. As a follow-up the youth demanded for the release of those detained and was turned back by the soldiers and in the process three inure protesters were shot dead and these include Okere, Gadafi and Brown. The military administrator imposed a dusk-to-dawn curfew in Bsyelsa State and banned meetings. The attendant scenario was military roadblocks where local residents and commuters were severely beaten and detained at the slightest provocation, and at night women/girls were raped.

The attack of two Ijaw communities in Delta State , Opia anti Ikiyan by one hundred soldiers from the military base at Chevron's Escravos facility on January 4, 1990 where the traditional ruler of Ikiyan, Bright Pablogha was shot dead along with others when he went to the river to negotiate with the soldiers. In this invasion, approximately one thousand inhabitants of the two villages were found dead and sixty-two persons were missing months after the attack. The soldiers further set the two villages ablaze, destroying canoes/fishing equipment, killed livestock, and destroyed churches and religious shrines. See also (Human Rights Watch Report, November 2003:3 and Sebastian Junger, 2007:7).

The reaction of the Niger Delta youth was to sustain Operation Climate Change and started the disruption of Nigerian oil supplies in earnest from 1999 by turning off valves throughout the region. In the process a high conflict between the Niger Delta youth and the Nigerian Government ensued and as such several military attacks were further carried out killing scores of youths including the Odi massacre. The Niger Delta youth also reacted again in renewed efforts in earnest from 2004, by launching militarized attacks on oil installations without human casualties to expatriate oil workers rather they took them hostage for several reasons including the non-fulfillment of development promises to oil-bearing communities in particular and the region at large, state violence perpetrated through the JTF, as well as other personal welfare reasons as shown in the police records in table 1.2 below.

As enumerated earlier in this papers the following actions of the Nigerian State and oil companies were instances of state violence and the attendant reactions of the oil-bearing people of Niger Delta could be summarized as hereunder:

The rising class struggles and attendant spate of injustice and deprivation of minorities after independence gave rise to Boroism in 1966; the unanswered demands of the Ogoni Bill of Rights gave rise to Saro-Wiwaism, and the attendant intimidations, arrests and finally the execution of Ken Saro-Wiwa along with low-teen members of MOSOP culminated to several uprisings in Ogoni Land;

Shelf's deviancy to clear an oil spill in Aleibiri Creek and attendant intimidation of Negotiators with security operatives by SPDC gave rise to the 'Aleibiri Declaration' in 1997; the intimidation and arrest of Timi Ogoriha by Bayelsa State Military Administrator in 1997 gave rise to the first uprising of

the 'Egbesu Boys of Africa'; the killing of Chief Ajoko of Kaiama by soldiers on seeing his shrine with red linen suspected to be the Egbesu War Power prior to Kaiama Declaration gave rise to several hostilities including the Kaiama Declaration of 1998; the threat by the former Head of State, General Abdulsalem to deal decisively with Niger Delta Youths and openly stated that their demands cannot be met while responding to the demands articulated in the Katama Declaration and the attendant deployment of soldiers to mount military toll gates at Kaiama Bridge-top instigated several uprisings as the 'Egbesu Boys of Africa' settle (I scores with them prior to the Odi Massacre of 1999; the Odi Massacre was another clear case of State-sponsored violence which end up producing more hardened militants who are now jailbreaks operating as hostage-takers in the Niger Delta Region as a result of the breakage of Port Harcourt prisons with explosives when Mr. Ken, the leader of the Militants-Soldiers war at Odi and some of his men were awaiting execution (this was confirmed by one of the jailbreaks who is now the leader of Greenland Boys, a militant Group stationed around Mbiana area in Rivers State); the aftermath effect of the 2003 elections violence whereby the militants that were used as thugs by the politicians felt abandoned after the elections and resorted to using the firearms supplied to them by political office seekers during the elections for kidnapping/hostage-taking: etc. etc.

Model specifications and estimation

The following simple model in log-form is designed for this study.

$$GDP = f(a_0 \text{Log} + b_1 \text{Log COPEAK} + \dots \mu_i)$$

Where GDP = Gross Domestic Product (At Current Prices)

a_0 = Regression Constant

b_1 = Regression Co-efficient

COPEAK = Cost of Peace-Keeping

Methodology

The secondary method of data collection was adopted in this study, which involves a longitudinal survey method for a period of ten (10) years, i.e. 1999-

2008. The data for the study were generated from the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) statistical bulletin of 2009.

In analyzing the data generated from this study, the simple regression analysis was employed as shown in the model above, which was computed with the aid of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) .

Analysis and Result

The data generated from this study were analysed in this section and the result obtained is presented in the table below.

Table 1: Impact of Cost of the Peace Keeping on Gross Domestic Product

Statistical Variables	Values
Co-efficient of Correlation (R)	0.8392
Co-efficient of Determination (R ²)	0.7043
t-statistics	-2.318
P-value	0.0214
Regression Constant	-3.246
Regression Co-efficient	-.5671

Source; SPSS Version 16 Window Output

The table above shows a correlation co-efficient (R-value) of 0.839

This suggests that cost of peace keeping in the Niger-Delta region has a strong impact on Gross Domestic Product. However, the regression constant of the model indicate a negative value, which implies a negative relationship between cost of pace keeping and Gross Domestic Product. More so, the analysis shows that one percent increase in COPEAK brings about 56.71% decrease in GDP. Again, the p-value(0.021) revealed that there is a significant impact, hence the null hypothesis, which states that cost of peace keeping in the Niger-Delta region ahs no negative significant impact on economic development of Nigeria, was rejected.

Conclusion and recommendations

The Niger-Delta region of Nigeria has become very volatile in recent times resulting to insecurity of lives and property. Militancy, kidnapping killings and other vices have become the order of the day. Multinational companies are spending so much money hiring security agents to protect their facilities and personnel. The government is equally spending huge amount of money to maintain peace-keeping forces in the region and also to provide compensation to the militants. This study revealed that the cost of peace keeping in the Niger-Delta region has a negative significant impact on the economic development of Nigeria. This finding agrees with previous studies such as Akeem and Erhun (2010) and Thomas (2008).

Reports from daily newspapers, radio and television in Nigeria have shown that the cost of peace enthronelement in the Niger-Delta region is almost equivalent to the cost of providing development and other compensation plan to the people. It is therefore out of place for governments to continue investing in security measures of the Niger-Delta region, rather than providing solution to the Niger-Delta question. Based on the above, it is recommended in this paper that the federal government and her parastatals (e.g. NDDC) as well as the multinational oil companies, should pay special attention to the Niger-Delta question by making provision for higher level of infrastructure such as electricity, good roads, efficient communication systems, portable water, employment opportunities for the youth scholarship awards, among others. This will bring about peaceful co-existence in the region thereby eliminating the cost of peace enthronelement and consequently improve the economic development of the country.

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Table 1.2: Police Records on Some Cases of Kidnapping/Hostage-Taking/Sea Piracy in Niger Delta

S/no	Nature of Case	Date reported	Location of case	Militants involved	Host ages/victims & Their Origin	Date released	Reason for action
1	Kidnapping	03/03/04	Biseni, Bayelsa (BYS)	32 Militants	13 hostages	08/03/04	Oil company security operatives/youths clash
2	Hostage-taking	19/12/05	Peretoru, BYS	24 Militants	42 hostages	03/01/06	Impeachment of BYS speaker/governor
3	Hostage-taking	15/12/05	Swali, BYS	48 Militants	14 expatriates & 1 Nigeria	23/02/06	Arrest of one militant in Port Harcourt
4	Sea piracy	19/01/06	Sagbname BYS	9 Sea Pirates	6 policemen	19/02/07	No source of livelihood
5	Militant attack	10/05/07	Otueke, BYS	Faceless Militants	16 victims	23/05/07	Detention of Alamieyeseigha
6	Kidnapping	25/05/07	Akassa, BYS	40 Militants	9 expatriates of TEXACO	08/06/07	Oil production without development of the area
7	Kidnapping	31/07/07	Amarata., BYS	14 Militants	11 year-old Boy of a member of BYHA	04/08/07	Welfare of militants
8	Kidnapping	08/08/07	Gbarain, BYS	11 Militants	Mother of the speaker of BYHA	22/08/07	Welfare of militants
9	Kidnapping	18/08/07	Akassa, BYS	23 Militants	Mother of a member of BYHA	07/09/07	Welfare of militants
10	Kidnapping	08/10/07	Odi, BYS	Commander Pius Group	1 Nigeria	15/10/07	Ransom
11	Kidnapping	15/10/07	Southern-Ijaw, BYS	Unknown	1 Nigeria	15/10/07	Ransom

Source: Culled from Police Crime Diary, Bayelsa State Command