

Dynamics of Conflicts and Criminal Activities in Warri and Environs, Delta State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The onset of oil exploration in Warri and its environs accentuated the proliferation of ethnic conflict, militant and activist youth. Conflicts in Warri over the past years, are products of shifting boundaries and agitations for benefits accruing to oil bearing communities. These crises were occasioned by perception of neglect, deprivation, abuse and abandonment. Whenever there is crisis, heinous crimes against humanity were committed against inhabitants. Between 2005–2013, over 35 oil related conflicts have been recorded in Warri. This construal resource (oil) related conflicts are often accompanied with the perpetration of crimes that stamped political and economic activities. This impact on rural livelihoods and it reflects on how oil operations are prioritized over community interest. This leaves bitterness, resentments and grievances amongst the suffering citizens. While many researches focus on environmental impact of oil exploration and neglects from oil companies and government, few studies dwelt on the dynamics and modalities of conflicts resolution. The study revealed that killings, rape and sexual violence, kidnapping, stealing, torture/beating, systemic persecution of agitators and burning down of houses were the most prominent crimes committed against citizens whenever there is crisis.

Keywords: Conflicts, crime, oil exploration/power tussle and Warri metropolis

Introduction

Right from the time of Ken Saro wiwa and his massacred kinsmen, there has been series of oil induced crises among oil bearing communities in Niger Delta. Apart from the oil induced crises, major conflicts in Warri and its environs border on clash over land or power tussle (struggle for political supremacy), (Omeje, 2004; Basse, Ndem, Kichuru and Garba, 2013). Grievances for non-remittance of oil exploration benefits to host communities and the frustration from bastardized environment often trigger confrontations which precipitated criminal acts. In essence, whenever these crises occur, lots of crimes are perpetrated in the area. Hoodlums seized the opportunity of the crises to commit crimes which were put in check under normal circumstances. These crimes which affect lives, properties and economic activities in the area include killing, kidnapping, vandalism, burning of houses and properties, rape and stealing.

As one of the core oil producing states of the Niger Delta, Warri is bedeviled with militant struggle for oil royalty. In recent years, oil has become a major cause of conflict in Warri and its environs (Imoh, 2013). According to

Imobeghe (2002) in Imoh (2013), communities in Warri have become vulnerable to conflicts due to agitations over lack of payment of royalties from oil explorations. The mutual claims of marginalization amongst oil bearing communities in Warri fueled the recent conflicts that have claimed many lives. There were also conflicts bordering on hegemonic control and utilization of political apparatuses in advancing parochial goals to the detriment of other communities and groups (ibid). Over the years, there have been intra communal crises amongst communities in Warri and its environs. These crises take different dimension. When multinational companies and the state through their policies and activities fail to provide basic necessities such as security, justice, and economic opportunities for aggrieved citizens, conflict ensues (Sofiri, Joab-Peterside, Doug & Michael, 2012). Whenever disagreement or crises arises, oil exploration activities are stamped and the state collapse and implode, descending into the most abject forms of civil conflict (ibid). Oil installations and significant personalities in the community become major target for attack.

On a larger scale, these conflicts emerged as a result of agitations for reparation for damaged ecosystem and communities shifting boundaries in other to benefits from the dividend of oil exploration. Apart from conflict that arose from struggle over resources ownership and power tussle. Individuals and groups from the oil bearing communities often clash with oil multinationals over what is considered as remittance of royalties and fulfillment of social responsibilities/incentives. Deforestation from the exploration of oil and the effluents from dilapidated equipments pollute the immediate surroundings (Odisu, 2015). This endangers lives of inhabitants. In an attempt to draw the attention of concern authorities, conflict which is often fatal ensues. The crises which surface in various form, support the perpetration of crime by unscrupulous personalities. Invariably, whenever there are conflicts in Warri, citizens seize the opportunity and hide under the conflict situation to perpetrate crime.

Since late 2005, there has been a proliferation of armed groups as the people agitate for payment of royalties and struggle for resource ownership in Warri Metropolis. The inhabitants often wage war against oil multinational and the state over what the host community's referred to as economic exploitation and environmental degradation (Olufemi 1999 in Odisu, 2015). Most of the perpetrators of crimes during conflicts are most times in possession of arms and ammunitions. Thus, they become prone to using them in perpetuating various crimes during crisis. Irrespective of these problems, concerned authorities have paid little attention to the cries of the people. This deprivation and neglect has left the populace in Warri feeling rejected and cheated. This has led to series of agitations (Soye, 2016). Consequently, this has resulted to the region being considered as volatile zone in Nigeria. This description scares investors and tourists from Warri and its environs. The disguise of relevant

authorities in connivance with oil multinational is termed as internal colonialism. This perception of ill treatments triggered the past crises that are recorded in the community. According to Sofiri *et al.* (2012):

In the post---colonial era, oil exploration and production has generated considerable friction from the very onset of commercial production in the late 1950s. There has been no simple or linear evolution in the pattern and dynamics of these oil---related conflict – it has mutated and hybridized in complex ways. But there is clearly a four---decade long process during which various forms of protest, political mobilization and state violence have channelled local grievances and political aspirations into something like an armed rebellion, while at the same time the boundaries between crime, violent accumulation and guerilla warfare have become blurred.

From the above statement, it is clear that there is militancy across the oil fields, and the proliferation of armed groups over the last two decades. This has distorted the smooth flow of business and other activities that enhance living in the region. These periods of intense and often violent militarization goes with various types of crimes. The perception of neglect and resources scarcity, resulting from oil exploitation and degradation has led to competition and mistrust between the ethnic groups. Each ethnic group becomes mutually exclusive and exists only for its advantage. Each unlashes uncontrolled violence against their opponents. They threaten oil companies for lack of royalties and degradation of resources. Threat to oil company is a threat to the community and Nigerian as a Nation (Odisu, 2015).

Crises and attack on oil installation often times disrupts the supply of petroleum products. According to Sofiri *et al.* (2012), “within the first six months of 2006, there were nineteen attacks on foreign oil operations and nearly 2.2 billion USD lost in oil revenues; the Department of Petroleum Resources claims this figure represents 32 percent of the revenue the country generated that year. The Nigerian government claims that between 1999 and 2005, oil losses amounted to 6.8billion USD, but this is surely a lowest mate”, (Sofiri *et al.*, 2012). Obviously, there is proliferation of arm group popularly known as militants who fight against the government and the multinational companies as they seek redress (Olujimi, Adewumi and Odunwole, 2011; Sajini, 2013 and Worlu, 2008).

Statement of Problem

There have been series of conflict in Warri amongst which devious crime are committed. Conflicts in Warri over the past years are products of shifting boundaries and agitations for benefits accruing to oil bearing communities. Struggle over oil royalties and land is considered one of the major causes of communal conflicts in Warri. Conflict ensues as each group seeks to protect and advance their interest. As the different ethnic groups and personalities

clamor for royalties, there is execution of both innocent citizens and agitators by the state in connection with any crime as the conflict last. Between 2005–2013, over 35 oil related conflicts have been recorded in Warri. This construal resource (oil) related conflicts stamped economic activities. Thus, retaliation from oil multinationals and the state were seen as necessary to secure oil installation and infrastructure. In the course of doing this, lots of lives and property were lost. The rebellion, largely youth in composition, indicts and points to the depth of marginalization, certain sectarian sentiment and tensions between oil multinationals and the host communities. This impact on rural livelihoods and it reflects on how oil operations are prioritized over community interest. This leaves bitter and lasting legacy of local resentments and grievances. Organized protest from communities (especially that involving women) points towards a deficiency and crisis of livelihoods. The onset of oil exploration in Warri and its environs accentuate the proliferation of ethnic conflict, militant and activist youth. All these activities are accompanied with myriad crime which cost the community a lot too good to bear.

Some of these conflicts which have semblance of insurgency are coloured by state/political interest, some are electoral, and others have family resemblances. Other causes of the conflicts between oil multinationals and oil producing communities according to Hassan (2013) is “destruction of wildlife and biodiversity, loss of fertile soil, pollution of air and drinking water, degradation of farmland and damage to aquatic ecosystems, all of which have caused serious health problems” for the host communities. To quell the crises, vigilante groups have come up to work hand in hand with the arm forces. Thus, systematically, the study explored the dynamics of oil related conflict and crime in Warri Metropolis. It also highlighted the extent to which the conflict has damaged lives and properties.

Theoretical Framework

The social conflict theory was adopted and used for the explanation of the problem under study. In the social reality of crime, resources are owned by the rich and they are diverted for the use of those in affluence. According to Karl Marx and his adherents, the most important premise of social conflict theory is that, wealth is owned by the bourgeoisie and laws are designed to protect the wealthy. Those who belong to the other extreme end struggle to make a living. When living becomes unbearable, the poor resort to crime to better their lot in lives. Thus, conflict according to Marx is inevitable. Social conflict theorists suggest that crime in any society is caused by class conflict. Laws are created by those in power. According to Siegel 2000 and other Marxists, the laws are made to protect basically those in power.

Inequality in class is perceived as the major cause of the conflict. Unequal access to wealth and power gives room to the perpetration of crime. Leaning on tenets of Marx, the poor commit crime because of frustration, anger and

blocked opportunities of actualizing their need. Oil production, shifting of boundaries and struggle for supremacy-power are carried out to further the interest of those concerned. Thus, in a snapshot, struggle for scarce resources and power are the major cause of the conflicts in Warri and its environs. Some personalities hide under the conflict situation to commit crime. Through the struggle they inflict pains on community members. Community and the nation at large is subjected to great loss. Lives and properties are destroyed; activities are put on hold and majority fall under the class known as “internally displaced”.

The main tenets of this theory are that, state and oil multinationals dominate and exploit the poor masses for labour and raw materials. The neglected are dependent on state and oil personnel for survival. The differential power relation and development present a social structure of inequality. This inequality facilitates the exploitation of the poor masses by state and oil companies. Thus, major merchants who are involved in oil exploration used their advantaged position in exploiting the resources found in Warri and its environs to the detriment of the indigenes. The process of laying solid foundation for exploration and exploitation led to derogation of the indigenous beliefs and practices. Basic laws enacted increased the level of disintegration thereby leading to high level of crisis. The divergent interest fractionized social structures, classes and cultural beliefs. Thus, land came under the control of the state. To fight for reparation, the state has to endorse. This worsened the powerless situation of the poor masses.

The elite can afford expensive lawyer but the poor cannot. These negligent suffer the consequences of degradation in abject poverty. To continue to enjoy the opportunities, the wealthy continue to dominate. To ensure dominance, the affluence requires the exploitation of others. Institutions and practices within Warri and Nigeria as a whole are designed and managed in order to ensure that the poor masses remain marginalized, oppressed and vulnerable. To overcome the situation, the poor masses turn to crime. They device any means which are most often unconventional to gain the material wealth which they lack.

The frequent crises are thus due to idleness of majority of the population which comprises the youths who are jobless. These groups of persons parade themselves looking for unsuspecting personalities and prospective companies to extort. Little misunderstanding becomes over blown to the point that there is escalation of crises which leads to the destruction of lives and properties. Businesses are stampeded, presence of oil in itself is a ready platform and source of clash and perpetration of crime. Oil induced crises provided opportunity for the globally renowned and resource ridden members to be involved in more lucrative crime whenever there is crisis. Aside from the oil induced crisis, struggle for political administration of the community makes the zone unfriendly. Thus, factor responsible for these crises is frustration and aggression arising from unfulfilled and blocked channels to the satisfaction of needs.

Frustration-Aggression Theory

The frustration aggression theory was propounded by a Psychologist, Albert Bandura (1962). Various authors have opined that conflict is perceived as an instrument of survival under blocked opportunities or difficult circumstance. Those who propounded this theory identified major conditions in which the individual or group deploy conflict. According to Bandura, the obstruction or blockade of efforts by the individual to achieve desired goals such as holding unto power, wealth, social status, security, equality and freedom breeds to frustration which triggers conflict. Thus, a causal link has been established between unfulfilled rising expectation, conflict and crime. In this sense, it is believed that confrontations or conflict arises from unfulfilled expectation that is held by people who had experienced hardship or enslavement but were promised improved material condition or freedom. On the other hand, a relationship has been established between relative deprivation and conflicts. Deprivation that an individual or group of persons experience in relation to others around them irrespective of the oil explored from their community is perceived to be responsible for the conflicts. These conflicts and crimes were intended to redress the situation.

Material/Methods

The research is descriptive. It surveyed respondents at a single time to elicit information on the dynamics of conflicts and crime in Warri and environs, Delta State Nigeria. The study was conducted in Warri and its environs. The area was chosen due to recurrence of unrest and attendant criminal activities in the community. Warri is a city in Delta State, Nigeria. It is an oil hub in Southern Nigeria. Ogbe-Ija, Uwie and Okere were selected for survey. These communities were selected because they are oil bearing communities that are often affected by frequent escalation of conflicts and perpetration of crime. The total population of study area is 311,970 (2006 national population census). Out of these populations, a total of 425 participants were drawn as respondents. The respondents for the study included: a) chiefs b) household heads c) community members and d) oil workers, e) crime suspects and f) youths and g) Business men h) police. The inclusion criteria for participants were predicated on occupation, residency and voluntariness. Oil workers, crime suspects and force men were purposively sampled. These respondents were selected on purpose because of their significance in generating relevant information on conflict and crime in Warri and Environs, Delta State.

The research adopted a purposive and probabilistic method of sampling. Purposive method of sampling was used in the selection of chiefs, force men, oil workers and crime suspects who are mainly involved in the conflict. These respondents were central in the collection of data that was used in the explanation of variables. Random method of data collection was used in the selection of household heads, youths and Business men. Randomizing

respondents enhanced representation and generalization of results. The research made use of both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection. Thus, the use of instruments was triangulated for the collection of primary and secondary data. Quantitative data were gathered with the use of semi-structured questionnaire, while qualitative data was generated through in-depth interview archival study and key informants.

A total of 425 questionnaires were administered to the respondents within the selected communities in Warri and environs. The semi structured questionnaire contained 20 items which was divided into sub-sections accordingly in respect to the problem they were addressing. The sub-sections were socio-demographic characteristics and the main problem under study. A total of 25 IDIs were conducted across the respondent who met inclusive criteria in Warri and environs. The IDIs elicited information from the respondents which borders on their level of awareness and perception of the conflict, its cause, crime, consequences and the challenges of curbing crime during conflict in Warri. Quantitative data was analyzed using Chi- Square statistical tool. Chi square test showed the correlation between oil exploration, conflict and high rate of crime in the community. Qualitative data was content analyzed.

Results

For marital status, total of (48.7%) respondents were married. Total of (28.5%) respondents were single. While (15.7%) were divorced, (7.1%) were cohabiting. Total of (25.2%) respondents were SSCE holder. A total of (22.1%) and (19.3%) were Diploma and B.Sc holders. Those with higher degrees and category that fell under others were (7.3%) and (26.1%). Those who are security men were (12.7%), chiefs were (14.4%) and household heads were (17.4%). Youths were (17.2%) and oil workers were (15.7%). Corporate workers and categories that fell under others were (12.7%).

The incessant conflict in Warri and Environs arose over tensions between foreign oil corporation and a number of Deltans who feel they are being exploited. Ethnic and political crisis has continued throughout 1989-1990s. Since Nigeria became completely economically dependent on petroleum exploration, crisis has continued to loom large. Lives and other substances on the surface of the earth in Warri and environs continued to suffer lack and dissatisfaction.

Thus, the cause of most conflict according to respondents is struggle over land and claim to resources. Also struggle for political administration of the community were responsible for most of the crises. An interviewee revealed that land was the ultimate cause of the conflict which has claimed lives of large numbers of people. These struggles are largely fueled by agitation to land ownership and ploy to have a better share in oil royalties. Marginalization and neglect were reported to be principally responsible for the crises. This has also resulted to shifting boundaries in order to claim lands where oil companies and oil wells are located.

According to a key informant, recurrent occurrence of conflicts and criminality in Warri and its Environs over the years has led to the destruction of lives and properties worth millions of naira. Amidst the lack, the destruction of available basic infrastructure worsens the condition of community members. These impart negatively on their abilities to live and maintain a vibrant economy compared to their counterparts in other Nigerian states. This affects oil production and farming (agricultural products). Income levels drops and poverty of the people increases. Consequently, this stimulates movement of companies, investors and prospective individuals to other states. Apart from crime of arson during conflicts in Warri, house breaking (burgle) and other forms of criminality have become prominent during conflicts. Because most of the youths are in possession of arms and ammunitions, it becomes very easy for them to kill and break into people’s homes and take away their property. There is high level of Vandalism. The vandalism were occasioned by high level of joblessness and poverty. No good and portable drinking water, no enough schools, social support, poor access to health care, social welfare and other Social facilities. This instigates frustration that pushed people towards committing crime. The crimes that are committed ranged from property crime, violent crime, vandalism and rape. The following as presented in the table below shows the dynamics of crime in Warri and its environs;

Table 1: Dynamics of Crime in Warri and Environs

	Responses	Frequencies	Percentage %
1	Killings/extermination	119	28
2	Beatings	41	9.6
3	Rapping of women/girl	44	10.4
4	Burning of buildings (properties)	77	18.1
5	Stealing	73	17.2
6	Kidnapping	71	16.7

From table 1 above, (28%) respondents revealed that killing and extermination is one of the heinous crime committed against citizens whenever there is crisis in the area. These killing occur due to perceptions of unequal distribution of socio-political power and scarce economic goods. This account for lots of lives lost during the past crises that were recorded in Warri and its environs. Killings are so high that pregnant women were not spared. To avoid been killed, many flee their home, thus they become internally displaced. Beating of innocent personalities is one of the dynamics of crime in Warri and environs. Apart from running to avoid been killed, majority flee from their homes to avoid being beaten by militants (9.6%). A total of (10.4%) reported that some of the assailants are involved in rapping and sexual violation of women and girls. This was affirmed by some key informants who reported that some women/girls always become pregnant at the end of each crisis to an unknown

rapist. Some gave birth to children whose father is unknown. To avoid situations like this, some of the pregnancies were terminated. International human right bodies such as Nuremberg recognized rape and sexual assault as crime against humanity. Thus, it has been branded as one of the highest form of crime against humanity which offends the weak individual and the state. Some victims are infected with dangerous diseases and are left with to treat with huge sums of money in the midst of their lack. Larger percentage of the respondents (18.1%) revealed that there is deliberate burning down of buildings (properties) by angry mobs. The respondents lamented that whenever there is crisis in the area, the first thing that occurs is burning down of properties. This is followed by stealing (17.2%) of important properties that belong to the companies, government and community members. They scare people away with their arms and thereafter disposed them of their belongings. Key informants revealed that, coconuts, yams, and plantains were harvested from people's compound during crisis. Also according to the respondents, wares from the stores and notable markets in the community were catered away as owners flee for safety as militants invade the area. Kidnapping according to (16.7%) respondents is one of the major crimes perpetrated by the hoodlums during crisis. A large number of people was abducted; some were kill while some were released unharmed. All these crime is occasioned by poverty and perception of neglect, deprivation, abuse and abandonment.

With Delta people growing increasingly dissatisfied with environmental, social and economic apparatus rapidly deteriorating, conflict became inevitable. There was extra judicial massacre, which led to dehumanization of citizens. There were obvious evidences of genocide. According to respondent, in 1998, struggle for petroleum deepened and the lives that was lost following the crisis, in conjunction with kaima declaration was enormous. Protester often suffer immeasurable harm as soldiers open fire with rifles, machine guns and tear gas, thus killing many people and leaving many injured.

Emergence of Arm Groups in Warri

The ethnic unrest and conflict following the various conflicts mostly those of the 1990s coupled with multiple small arms and other weapons led increasingly to the militarization of the zone. Politicians who offered financial and arm help to citizens with the aim of furthering their political ambitions was after the politics used for fighting war during oil related conflict.

Youths declared war with the oil cooperation and threatened to disrupt oil production activities through attack on well and pipe lines. This they did and shell for fear of high record of death rate evacuated 235 non essential personnel from major oil fields, cutting oil production by 30,000 barrel per day (4,800m³/d). This was a great loss to the oil company, the workers, the government and the indigenous people who are highly impacted on by the occurrences.

Oil exploration and production has generated considerable friction from the very onset of its commercial production in the late 1990s. There has been no

simple pattern and dynamics of these oil related conflict. The conflict has mutated and hybridized in complex ways. Various forms of protest, political mobilization and state violence have channeled local grievances and political aspirations into armed rebellion. Crime, violent accumulation and guerilla warfare have become inevitable whenever there is conflict.

Piracy and Kidnapping

According to respondents, since 1990-2012, Nigeria experienced large spike in piracy of its coast. A key informant revealed that, “by early 2013, Warri and environs became the second most pirated community in Nigeria”. Youths and various aggrieved groups hijacked 12 ships, kidnapped 33 sailors and killed oil workers. Many bodies that sprang up have resorted to taking foreign employees of oil company hostage. Although many was released unharmed, over 200 foreign workers have been kidnapped since 2012. The victims reported to have remained in shock of their experience and have never remain the same again. They walk with fear and feel that the experience may return since the issue of negligence has not been finally and permanently resolved.

Many indigenes suffered as government launch military crackdown on militants, they patrolled and hunted for militants, searching all civilian for weapons and raided numerous militant hideouts. Pipeline attacks have become common during the moment of insurgency in Warri.

From responses extractions, a lot of people were murder by the aggrieved youths. Following this, extra judicial massacre, which led to dehumanization of citizens, ensued. There were obvious evidences of genocide which remained unquestioned. These actions have been tagged ethnic cleansing by various organizations and concerned bodies. This unethical human exploitation which warrants past crises placed extra judicial punishment on citizens who on their own wish to live a peaceful live. To fight back and quell conflict, Warri and its environs has suffered state funding of terrorism and death squad. Kidnapping was on its highest cadre. People feared to come out of their house to carry out their normal business for the fear of being kidnapped. Thus, forced disappearance and unjust imprisonment, was top of the day. To silence opposition from aggrieved youths, enslavement, torture, rape, racial, political or religious repression has become a veritable tool by the military as okayed by the state.

The Correlation and Cost of the Conflict

According to the respondents, economic loss to government, individual, community and businesses were recorded whenever there is crisis. But these losses appear not to worry concerned personalities as nothing is done. Thus, null hypothesis states that neglect from oil companies and subsequent conflict do not cause socio-economic damage to the people.

Effects of oil exploration and conflict on lives and economic activities in Warri and its Environs

Respondents	Strongly Agreed	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Female	92	75	0	47	214
Male	89	76	0	46	211
Total	181	151	0	93	425

$$X^2 = (o-e)/e$$

Where:

O= observed frequency

E= expected frequency

$$X^2 = 214 \times 181 / 425 = 91.2$$

$$214 \times 151 / 425 = 76.1$$

$$214 \times 93 / 425 = 14.8$$

$$211 \times 181 / 425 = 89.8$$

$$211 \times 151 / 425 = 74.9$$

$$211 \times 93 / 425 = 80.1$$

Contingency table

O	E	E-o	(e-o) ²	e-o) ² /e
92	91.2	-0.8	0.64	0.01
75	76.1	1.1	1.21	0.02
0	0	0	0	0
47	14.8	-32.2	1036.84	70.1
89	89.8	-0.1	0.01	0.00
76	74.9	-1.1	1.21	0.10
0	0	0	0	0
46	80.1	34.1	1162.81	14.5
X²				84.71

$$DF = (C-1) (R-1)$$

$$DF = (4-1) \times (2-1)$$

$$= 3$$

Table value of 3 at 0.05 critical value is 7.81

$$X^2 = 84.71$$

Since the calculated value is greater than the table value, the null hypothesis is rejected and alternative is accepted. This implies that, presence of oil and exploration causes conflict which in turn affects peace and socio-economic activities in Warri and its environs. From the fore going, it is believed that the conflict heralds stagnation in the activities of farmers and

traders. This affects every other sector in the nation especially in the community. Indigenes and aliens alike flee from the community to avoid being attacked. According to a key informant,

The conflicts have cost the economy more than (\$2m) between 2010-2015. It has slow down market activities, development and economic growth. By killing both agitators who are mainly youths, farmers and business men, destroying productive assets, preventing trade, deterring investment, and eroding trust between markets actors, large sums of money is lost. The crisis heightened the security challenge and insurgency of kidnapping which was mediated. Unlike other crisis which is concentrated on a fraction of the community, resources based conflict affected many people in Warri and environs. *KII, Male, 2017*

A total of (87%) revealed that, conflicts is responsible for many deaths that were recorded in the area especially the death of youths, farmers and business men who are mainly resident in the area. This led to relocation of many businesses and significant personalities who are scared of being attacked. This has negatively affected the output of farmers in the region. Socio-economic effects of the conflict resulted to reduction of crop yield and income of both farmers and business men. The conflicts caused the displacement of farmers, relocation of companies, loss of lives and properties. Loss of products in storage and destruction of public and private facilities cause setbacks. A total of 34% respondents affirmed that, some people pray for disagreement and escalation of conflict because they hide under the conflict to steal, torture, and rape innocent citizens.

Psychologically, (63%) of the participants who witnessed the various clash harborphobia of going to farm or their business. The fear of facing another attack by the heavily armed hoodlums pulls them back at home. These conflicts according to (65.2%) respondents strained the cordial relationship which the community members enjoyed over the years. According to a participant;

Whenever there is conflict, it leads to shortage of food supply. There is increased poverty, migration of entrepreneurs, and dislocation of people from their farm lands. There was tension and suspicion of the various ethnic groups. This raised intense fear in the atmosphere already charged with insecurity. *IDI, Female, 43 yrs, May, 2017*

The state and oil multinationals dominate and exploit the poor masses for labour and raw materials. The neglected are dependent on state and oil personnel for survival. The differential power relation and development present a social structure of inequality. This inequality facilitates the exploitation of the poor masses by state and oil companies. Thus, major merchants who are

involved in oil exploration used their advantaged position in exploiting the resources found in Warri and its environs to the detriment of the indigenes. The process of laying solid foundation for exploration and exploitation led to derogation of the indigenous beliefs and practices. Basic laws enacted increased the level of disintegration thereby leading to high level of crisis. The divergent interest fractionized social structures, classes and cultural beliefs. Thus, land came under the control of the state. To fight for reparation, the state has to endorse. This worsened the powerless situation of the poor masses.

The effects of the various conflicts include psychological disturbances of various types and severity. Warri dwellers are always alert in case of fall out. According to a key informant, majority have developed high blood pressures. They cannot abandon their home, they live perpetually in fear. Fear of conflicts which could lead to loss of life and property turn them to dead men alive. Some of the experiences are so catastrophic and horrifying that they cause serious psychological harm to the victims. For some victims, the trauma lingers for long even after the event itself has ended. The horrifying experience leads to general increase in anxiety, fear, and avoidance of emotionally charged situations and the frequent remembrance of the traumatic event induces hypertension on victims. Apart from the loss of lives and property, investible resources are often diverted to security issues and conflict management. The psychological impact of conflicts and crime causes depression which is agonizingly too traumatic.

Adaptation Strategy

Adaptations strategies in response to the changes in the social systems that are now bedeviled with anomie and blocked opportunities range from individualism, collaborations and innovation which are most often illegitimate. For innovations as adaptation strategy, because the opportunities are blocked, most often good goals are pursued with the use of unconventional means. Illegitimate means are mostly prioritized and utilized in pursuing good goals. For instance, to adapt, there is innovation of “deve” levy and obtaining of prospective personalities by some groups especially among the youths. Collection of “deve levy” is a pre-requisite social responsibility that is legitimate and needful to develop the environment where resources are explored from. Some adopt ritualism, a situation where the goals are abandoned but the legitimate means are pursued. These pertain to the religious in the community who are not really interested on materials things but are focused on eliminating exploitation and marginalization. Some take to retreatism, a situation in which the goals and the means are abandoned. As helpless persons they withdraw into their shell and seat at the fence. Whatever happens they manage the situation. On a larger scale, majority adopts rebellion, a situation in which the social structure, the institutions, goals and means are rejected and a new structure is advocated for. This is typical of restive youths who rebel against the old and the new practices. Lastly, few adapt by conforming, a situation in which though tough the goals are accepted and

pursued, along with the legitimate means. The opportunities of maintaining peace and health became blocked with the intensification of unsustainable exploitation of resources which depleted the forest and also demeaned the beliefs/practices. Peace, health and integration were high prior to the commencement of oil exploration because the goals and legitimate means were clearly articulated and promoted. All community members enjoyed equal opportunities of accessing the available resources. Environment was not destroyed and agitation and claims to land were minimal. Oil exploration and concomitant enlightenment, created factions and a social class in the community where members were formally barely differentiated.

Conclusion

The onset of oil exploration in Warri and its environs accentuated the proliferation of ethnic conflict, militant and activist youth. All these activities are accompanied with myriad crime which cost the community a lot too good to bear. Various conflicts in Warri borders on political and administrative struggle; struggles over land resources, boundary dispute, ethnic differences. Thus, Conflicts in Warri over the past years, are products of shifting boundaries and agitations for benefits accruing to oil bearing communities. As oil exploration increase, peace and growth plummeted. These crises were occasioned by perception of neglect, deprivation, abuse and abandonment. Respondents revealed that killing, rapping, kidnapping, stealing, beating and burning down of houses were the most prominent crimes committed against citizens whenever there is crisis. This accounted for loss of lives and properties. Many are internally displaced and many have lost their balance in life.

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