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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Ethno-Tribal Alienation, Anti-Bullet Charms, and other Factors in the Resurgence Of Militancy in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria

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Abstract: The resurgence of militant groups and the prevailing insecurity situation in the Niger Delta region is the concern of this study. The incessant bombing and vandalism of oil installation, kidnapping, robbery, etc, has crippled socio-economic activities in the region and Nigeria at large. Although, there exists reports and studies on insecurity in the Niger Delta region, none has provided complete empirical and quantitative account on the effects of ethno-tribal alienation, proliferation of small arms, anti-bullet charms, and amnesty policy inconsistency on the re-emergence of militancy in the Niger Delta region. This knowledge gap justified the relevance of this study. Thus, this study is design to establish the connects between proliferation of small arms, anti-bullet charms, ethno-tribal alienation, amnesty policy inconsistency, insecurity of local chiefs, and the resurgence of militant groups. Findings revealed that Ethno-tribal alienation, proliferation of arms, anti-bullet charms, amnesty policy inconsistency, and insincerity of local chiefs are among the key factors responsible for re-emergence of militancy in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. Participants noted that they are aware of the potential for repressive and harsh military action as a result of their actions, thus, the study recommended among others that authorities take a more inclusive approach in dealing with the crisis

Keywords: Ethno-Tribal Alienation, Anti-Bullet Charms, Resurgence of Militancy, Niger Delta

1. Introduction

The resurgence of militancy in mid-2015 has become a major security concern to the federal government, oil multinationals, shipping companies, Nigerians, and international communities. The proliferation of small arms and the frequent use of traditional charms to commit various degrees of crime have assumed a worrisome dimension in Nigeria. The menace of cattle rustlers (Usman, 2016), insurgency, tribal war groups, criminal gangs and the re-emergence of militant groups is not unconnected to small arms proliferation in the country (Adewoyin, 2016; Enamhe, Tangban, Omang, & Ojong-Ejoh, 2021; Enamhe, Tangban, Ojong-Ejoh, Kenneth, Agba, & Ejoh, 2022). The attendant cases of robbery, murder, pipeline vandalism, kidnapping, suicide bombing, rape, destruction of farmlands and other properties in most parts of the country, especially in North-eastern states is



linked to charms and accessibility to lethal weapons. Enyim (2012) observe that native doctors make charms for notorious criminals, kidnapers, and violent politicians and this accelerates the incidence of crime rate in the country.

In 2016, an herbalist shot and killed a 13-year-old boy while testing anti-bullet charms in Amagu-Uwani, Mgboko, Aku of Igbo-Ekiti Local Government Area, Enugu State (Igata, 2016). Charms and arms proliferation accounts for high rate of occult and confraternity groups among youths in Nigeria (Folarin, 2016). While a number of other factors account for insecurity in the Niger Delta region and Nigeria at large, our concern in this study is to investigate factors particularly responsible for the re-emergence of militant groups in the past one and a half year.

This is because, in the dominance of public discourse, the issue has not attracted sufficient and empirical academic attention. Consequently, government and security agents are denied empirical data that will inform proper policy option/alternative.

The proliferation of arms and rampant use of anti-bullet charms by criminal gangs and militant groups in Akwa-Ibom, Abia, Bayelsa, Cross River, Delta, Edo, Imo, Ondo, and River States impedes development and obstruct the wellbeing of women and children as they are often displaced and rendered homeless.

The continuous attacks on oil installations security agents and business outfits has afflicted untold hardship on the people of Niger Delta region. Thus, the penitent research questions to validate in this study are:

- a) What is the correlate between small arms proliferation and resurgence of militant groups in the Niger Delta region?
- b) Does the proliferation and use of anti-bullet charms promote the resurgence of militancy in the Niger Delta region?
- c) What is the links between amnesty policy inconsistency and re-emergence of militancy in the Niger Delta region?
- d) What is the connection between ethno-tribal alienation and the resurgence of militant groups in the Niger Delta region?
- e) To what extent does insincerity of local chiefs influence the resurgence of militant groups in the Niger Delta region?.

2. Research Method and Materials

2.1. *The study area*

This study will be carried out in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. The region comprises of nine mandate states namely – Abia, Akwa-Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Delta, Imo, Ondo, and Rivers States. The Niger Delta is the delta of the Niger River sitting directly on the Gulf of Guinea on the Atlantic Ocean in Nigeria. The Niger Delta, as now defined officially by the Nigerian government, extends over about 70,000 km² (27,000 sq mi) and makes up 7.5% of Nigeria's land mass. Historically and cartographically, it consists of present-day Bayelsa, Delta, and Rivers States. In 2000, however, Obasanjo's regime included Abia, Akwa-Ibom, Cross River State, Edo, Imo and Ondo States in the region. The Niger Delta region is typically considered to be located within nine coastal southern Nigerian states, which include: all six states from the South South geopolitical zone, one state (Ondo) from South West geopolitical zone and two states (Abia and Imo) from South East geopolitical zone. Of all the states that the region covers, only Cross River State is not an oil-producing state. Some 31 million people of more than 40 ethnic groups'including:the Bini, Ohaji/Egbema, Itsekiri, Efik, Esan, Ibibio, Annang, Oron, Ijaw, Igbo, Isoko, Urhobo, Kalabari, Yoruba, Okrika, Ogoni, Ogba–Egbema–Ndoni, Epie-Atissa people and Obolo people, are among the inhabitants of the political Niger Delta, speaking about 250 different dialects. Language groups spoken in the Niger Delta include the Ijaw languages, Itsekiri

language, Central Delta languages, Edoid languages, Yoruboid Languages, and Igboid languages.

As the source of Nigeria's oil wealth, the Niger Delta region contributes about 80% of the country's revenue, and 74% of export earnings. Over half of the area is crisscrossed with creeks and dotted with small islands, while the remainder is a lowland rainforest zone. This topography encourages people to gather in small communities of the estimated 13, 329 settlements in the region, 94% have populations of less than 5,000. The Delta region's economy is dominated by the oil industry, although it accounts nationally for only 0.15% of employment. The Niger Delta is a very densely populated region sometimes called the Oil Rivers because it was once a major producer of palm oil. The area was the British Oil Rivers Protectorate from 1885 until 1893, when it was expanded and became the Niger Coast Protectorate. The delta is a petroleum-rich region and has been the center of international concern over pollution that has resulted principally from major oil spills of multinational corporations of the petroleum industry. The Niger Delta lie predominantly in the tropics having two seasons-the wet and dry seasons. The wet season begins from May to September, while the dry season begins in October and ends in April. The Niger Delta is located on latitude 4°15'N and 4°50'N and longitude 5°25'E and 7°37'E.

The livelihoods of the people of the Niger Delta is primarily based on fishing and farming. History has it that the Western Niger was controlled by chiefs of the four primary ethnic groups the Itsekiri, Isoko, Ijaw, and Urhobo with whom the British government had to sign separate "Treaties of Protection" in their formation of "Protectorates" that later became southern Nigeria. Central Niger Delta consists of the central section of coastal South-South Nigeria which includes Bayelsa, Rivers, Abia and Imo States. The Central Niger Delta region has the Ijaw (including the Nembe-Brass, Ogbia, Kalabari people, Ibani of Opobo & Bonny, Abua, Okrika, Engenni and Andoni clans), the Ogoni people (Khana, Gokana, Tai and Eleme), the Etche, Egbema, Omuma, Ogba, Ikwerre, Ndoni, Ekpeye and Ndoki in Rivers State, Abia State and Imo State, who are considered as a sub-group of the Igbo ethnic group. Eastern Niger Delta consists of Cross River State and Akwa Ibom State.



Figure 1. Map of Niger Delta Region

2.2. Population of the study

The research topic provides the specifications that influenced the choice of the study population. Consequently, the population comprised of all the nine states in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria with Cross river and Bayelsa as case studies.

Table 1. The population size of States in Niger Delta Region



States in Niger delta region	Population States Land area (km ²)
Abia	4,877 2,833,99
Akwa Ibom	6,806 3,920,208
Bayelsa	11,007 1,703,358
Cross River	21,930 2,888,966
Delta	17,163 4,098,391
Edo	19,698 3,218,332
Imo	5,165 3,934,899
Ondo	15,086 3,441,014
Rivers	10,378 5,185,420
Total	112,110 31,224,587

With this table the population size is a total of 112, 11031,224,587, but the population that would be used for this study include the total population of Cross river and Bayelsa State with a population figure of 329,374,592,324. The reason for the selection of this population is based on the assumption that, the states in these category have more experience of militancy activities and have indigenes that are in a better position to supply reliable information on the activities of militancy in the study area.

2.3. Sampling techniques

The sampling technique adopted in this study is purposive sampling. The technique was adopted because it is “very useful in explorative studies of this nature as it encourages the researcher to go directly to respondents who have useful information that would aid the research work. Here the researcher purposively selects seven (7) Local Government from Cross River State and eight Local Government from Bayelsa State for the study. A total of fifteen (15) Local Government Areas were selected they include Calabar Municipality, Calabar South, Bakassi, Biase, Akpabuyo, Odukpani, and Akamkpa from Cross river and Ekeremor, Kolokuma/Opokuma, Yenagoa, Nembe, Ogbia, Sagbama, Brass and Southern Ijaw from Bayelsa respectively. Respondents was selected through purposive sampling procedure from the selected Local Government Area.

The major instrument of data collection was a closed ended questionnaire. In-depth interview (IDI) was conducted with respondents respectively from the fifteen local government area. The method was used to interview respondent particularly from study area. The collection of both quantitative and qualitative data became inevitable because triangulation as a research methodology allows the use of different data collection methods within one study to ensure that data are revealing what they ought to reflect.

Research ethics will fully be adhered to in this study. Consent of stakeholders and appropriate authorities will be sort. Respondents will be duly informed of the nature of the study and their involvement(s). The anonymity and confidentiality of participants will be ensured. The study posed no danger to the social and physical environment of the study area. States covered will not suffer any social and physical environmental damage but rather, the outcome of the research will help in many ways to improve the study area.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Results

a. Proliferation of small arms and resurgence of militant groups in Niger Delta region

The independent variable in this proliferation of small arms, while the dependent variable resurgence of militant groups in Niger Delta region. Both variables were measured



continuously and simple linear regression statistics was used to test the hypothesis at .05 level of significance and the result is presented in table 1.

Table 1 presents the result of data analysis on the contribution of proliferation of small arms to resurgence of militant groups in Niger Delta region. Results revealed R-value of .362^a, R² = .131, adjusted R² = .130, p = .000^a for proliferation of small arms and resurgence of militant groups in Niger Delta region. Correlation coefficient is a standardized measure of an observed degree of relationship between variables, it is a commonly used measure of the size of an effect, and that values of ±.1 represent a small effect, ±.3 is a medium effect and ±.5 is a large effect.

The R² –value of .131 imply that 13.1% of total variance is accounted for by predictor variable (proliferation of small arms). The regression ANOVA revealed that the F (2, 996) 150.389; p < .000, is significant. Thus the null hypothesis was rejected. This implies that there is a linear association (contribution) of the predictor variable (proliferation of small arms) to arms to resurgence of militant groups in Niger Delta region. The adjusted R² (.130) shows some shrinkage of the unadjusted value (.131) indicating that the model could be generalized on the population.

Table 1. Summary simple linear regression: proliferation of small arms and resurgence of militant groups in Niger Delta region.

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Sig
Regression	21218.258	2	21218.258	150.389	.362a	.131	.130	.000a
Residual	140524.641	996	141.089					
Total	161742.899	998						

a. Predictors: (Constant), proliferation of small arms
 b. Dependent Variable: resurgence of militant groups

b. Proliferation/ use of anti-bullet charms and resurgence of militant groups in Niger Delta region

The independent variable in this proliferation use of anti-bullet charms, while the dependent variable resurgence of militant groups in Niger Delta region. Both variables were measured continuously and simple linear regression statistics was used to test the hypothesis at .05 level of significance and the result is presented in table 2.

Table 2 presents the result of data analysis on the contribution of proliferation use of anti-bullet charms to resurgence of militant groups in Niger Delta region. Results revealed R-value of .289^a, R² = .084, adjusted R² = .083, p = .000^a for proliferation use of anti-bullet charms and resurgence of militant groups in Niger Delta region. Correlation coefficient is a standardized measure of an observed degree of relationship between variables, it is a commonly used measure of the size of an effect, and that values of ±.1 represent a small effect, ±.3 is a medium effect and ±.5 is a large effect.

Table 2. Summary simple linear regression: use of anti-bullet charms and resurgence of militant groups in Niger Delta region.

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Sig
Regression	13519.140	2	13519.140	90.843	.289a	.084	.083	.000a
Residual	148223.758	996	148.819	B = .265				
Total	161742.899	998						

a. Predictors: (Constant), use of anti-bullet charms
 b. Dependent Variable: resurgence of militant groups

The R² –value of .084 imply that 8.4% of total variance is accounted for by predictor variable (use of anti-bullet charms). The regression ANOVA revealed that the F (2, 996) 90.843; p < .000, is significant. Thus the null hypothesis was rejected. This implies that there is a linear association (contribution) of the predictor variable (use of anti-bullet charms) to



resurgence of militant groups in Niger Delta region. The adjusted R^2 (.083) shows some shrinkage of the unadjusted value (.084) indicating that the model could be generalized on the population.

c. Inconsistency of amnesty policy and resurgence of militant groups in Niger Delta region

The independent variable in this hypothesis is inconsistency of amnesty policy, while the dependent variable resurgence of militant groups in Niger Delta region. Both variables were measured continuously and simple linear regression statistics was used to test the hypothesis at .05 level of significance and the result is presented in table 3. The table 3 presents the result of data analysis on the contribution of inconsistency of amnesty policy to resurgence of militant groups in Niger Delta region. Results revealed R-value of .307^a, $R^2 = .094$, adjusted $R^2 = .093$, $p = .000^a$ for inconsistency of amnesty policy and resurgence of militant groups in Niger Delta region. Correlation coefficient is a standardized measure of an observed degree of relationship between variables, it is a commonly used measure of the size of an effect, and that values of ± 1 represent a small effect, $\pm .3$ is a medium effect and $\pm .5$ is a large effect.

The R^2 -value of .094 imply that 9.4% of total variance is accounted for by predictor variable (inconsistency of amnesty policy). The regression ANOVA revealed that the F (2, 996) 103.686; $p < .000$, is significant. Thus the null hypothesis was rejected. This implies that there is a linear association (contribution) of the predictor variable (inconsistency of amnesty policy) to resurgence of militant groups in Niger Delta region. The adjusted R^2 (.093) shows some shrinkage of the unadjusted value (.094) indicating that the model could be generalized on the population.

Table 3. Summary simple linear regression: inconsistency of amnesty policy and resurgence of militant groups in Niger Delta region.

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Sig
Regression	15250.279	2	15250.279	103.686	.307a	.094	.093	.000a
Residual	146492.620	996	147.081					
Total	161742.899	998						

a. Predictors: (Constant), inconsistency of amnesty policy

b. Dependent Variable: resurgence of militant groups

d. Ethno-tribal alienation and resurgence of militant groups in Niger Delta region

The independent variable in this hypothesis is ethno-tribal alienation, while the dependent variable resurgence of militant groups in Niger Delta region. Both variables were measured continuously and simple linear regression statistics was used to test the hypothesis at .05 level of significance and the result is presented in table 4.

Table 4 presents the result of data analysis on the contribution of ethno-tribal alienation to resurgence of militant groups in Niger Delta region. Results revealed R-value of .111^a, $R^2 = .012$, adjusted $R^2 = .011$, $p = .000^a$ for ethno-tribal alienation and resurgence of militant groups in Niger Delta region. Correlation coefficient is a standardized measure of an observed degree of relationship between variables, it is a commonly used measure of the size of an effect, and that values of ± 1 represent a small effect, $\pm .3$ is a medium effect and $\pm .5$ is a large effect.

The R^2 -value of .012 imply that only 1.2% of total variance is accounted for by predictor variable (ethno-tribal alienation). The regression ANOVA revealed that the F (2, 996) 12.529; $p < .000$, is significant. Thus the null hypothesis was rejected. This implies that there is a linear association (contribution) of the predictor variable (ethno-tribal alienation) to resurgence of militant groups in Niger Delta region. The adjusted R^2 (.011) shows some shrinkage of the unadjusted value (.012) indicating that the model could be generalized on the population.



Table 4. Summary simple linear regression: ethno-tribal alienation and resurgence of militant groups in Niger Delta region.

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Sig
Regression	2009.394	2	2009.394	12.529	.111a	.012	.011	.000a
Residual	159733.505	996	160.375					
Total	161742.899	998						

a. Predictors: (Constant), ethno-tribal alienation
 b. Dependent Variable: resurgence of militant groups

e. Insincerity of local chiefs and resurgence of militant groups in Niger Delta region

The independent variable in this hypothesis is insincerity of local chief, while the dependent variable resurgence of militant groups in Niger Delta region. Both variables were measured continuously and simple linear regression statistics was used to test the hypothesis at .05 level of significance and the result is presented in table 5.

Table 5 presents the result of data analysis on the contribution of insincerity of local chief to resurgence of militant groups in Niger Delta region. Results revealed R-value of .172^a, R² = .029, adjusted R² = .028, p = .000^a for insincerity of local chief and resurgence of militant groups in Niger Delta region. Correlation coefficient is a standardized measure of an observed degree of relationship between variables, it is a commonly used measure of the size of an effect, and that values of ±.1 represent a small effect, ±.3 is a medium effect and ±.5 is a large effect.

The R²-value of .029 imply that only 2.9% of total variance is accounted for by predictor variable (insincerity of local chief). The regression ANOVA revealed that the F (2, 996) 30.242; p < .000, is significant. Thus the null hypothesis was rejected. This implies that there is a linear association (contribution) of the predictor variable (insincerity of local chief) to resurgence of militant groups in Niger Delta region. The adjusted R² (.028) shows some shrinkage of the unadjusted value (.029) indicating that the model could be generalized on the population.

Table 5. Summary simple linear regression: insincerity of local chief and resurgence of militant groups in Niger Delta region.

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Sig
Regression	4766.274	4766.274	4766.274	30.242	.172a	.029	.028	.000a
Residual	156976.625	156976.625	157.607					
Total	161742.899	161742.899						

a. Predictors: (Constant), insincerity of local chief
 b. Dependent Variable: resurgence of militant groups

3.2. Discussion of Findings

The purpose of this investigation was to assess the impact of proliferation of small arms, anti-bullet charms, ethno-tribal alienation, amnesty policy inconsistency, insincerity of local chiefs on the resurgence of militants groups in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. The result for hypotheses one shows that there is a significant relationship between proliferation of small arms and resurgence of militant groups in the Niger Delta region. The finding revealed that the high rate of proliferation of small arms and light weapons in the Niger Delta is a function of related fundamental issues that borders on the discovery of oil and subsequent exploration of same oil in the region. The purchased of weapons in the Niger Delta, according to Otodo, Emelah, Ubodiom, and Micheal (2018), have resulted in unprecedented fatalities and injuries ranging from hundreds to thousands. Odi, Ugep-Idomi, Oku Iboko-Ikot Offiong, Ijaw-Itsekiri, and, more recently, the Omoku war, are examples of such confrontations in the Niger Delta that have resulted in the wanton devastation of lives. At the same time, the increased availability and proliferation of small



weapons throughout the area has aggravated crime rates. Additionally, residents in the region are concerned about crime, particularly armed robbery and kidnapping. The finding is also in line with the finding of Onuoha (2009) which disclosed that since the early 1990s, the Niger Delta has witnessed the emergence of several armed groups. According to one June 2004 anti-cult law in Rivers state, armed groups in the state number close to 100. Thus, the Delta has become a haven for the proliferation of small arms, which the militias have put to use on different occasions.

Data generated from most of the participants established that weapons were easy to acquire either by outright purchase or hire. In the same vein, Bombito stated, “Anytime we go to rob, we will get guns from other gangs or hire from even the police. Later we bought our own guns.” When asked how easily they got the small arms used in armed robberies, Bombito noted, “Not really difficult, because we used to rent guns from them.” Their collective views on the availability of arms accords with the literature review which indicates that Nigeria is almost awash with small arms like AK-47 rifles, the weapon of choice for armed robbers, kidnappers, and Boko Haram terrorists in Nigeria (Omede, 2011).

Sometimes, militant groups attacked either lone policemen at checkpoints, duty posts, or raided police stations for weapons and ammunition. Access to weapons in such an easy manner has influenced the level of militant groups’ incidents in Niger Delta region and, indeed, Nigeria. Participants Yomis, Shalala, Dizzy, Smoker, Bigman, and Bigears all insisted that weapons were easy to get. Dizzy stated, “We get local pistols, and one of our guys had a good English pistol, and we had one AK-47, though we hired that AK-47 at an expensive rate. The AK-47 belonged to a Yam Association Chairman, so anytime we want to go for an operation, we go there we hire it.” There is ample support for this findings in the literature reviewed for this study. The proliferation of small arms guarantees access to individuals, gangs, and armed robbers. In addition to sophisticated weapons like AK-47 rifles, locally manufactured weapons are available to militant activities especially armed robbery for a price. Some of the participants confirmed this. Blackie stated, “I go to collect them from Warri, we buy them from Warri from somebody.” In addition, they had access to pump actions and cartridges. Locally manufactured pistols and other small arms were available for purchase. In addition to these weapons, they sometimes attacked the police to snatch weapons. The literature reviewed for this work confirms that millions of small arms are in circulation and available to non-state actors in Nigeria (Adewoyin, 2019).

Another key finding that coincided with the literature review was the easy access participants had to small arms, which they either hired from the police or bought from dealers or local manufacturers. Participants admitted that small arms like AK-47 rifles, pump action guns, the English pistol, or Berretta were commonly available. Additionally, small arms used in kidnapping, robbery and assassinations operations were hired from the police, which Dudusco and Crawler confirmed when admitting that they would buy ammunition from police. The production of small arms ensures the selling of these weapons cheaply to individuals, groups, and armed robbers who employ them in the dangerous trade of robbing Nigerians and foreigners (Obi, 2014). The constant supply of these arms into the hands of young people accounts for their involvement in robberies, assassinations, kidnappings, and murders (Ojajorotu & Idowu, 2016). The prevalence of weapons, among other factors, has created a crime-infested environment (Tarila, 2017).

The analysis on this hypotheses show that use of anti-bullet charms and the resurgence of militant groups in the Niger Delta region. The result indicates the probability that the use of anti-bullet charms gives the militant groups confidence and famous in their resurgence. This finding is similar to the findings of Omeje (2004) which reported that outmatched by the military power of their adversaries, these Ijaw groups re-invent and tap into the spiritual power of the ancient Egbesu deity in their homeland, a magical device that complements their limited firepower. Most Ijaw youth fighters are generally believed to be members of the Egbesu cult, and it is widely held that the Egbesu offers magical protection against gunfire to these young militias.

The most unexpected finding was participants near unanimous belief in the efficacy of charms. Participants believed in the protective power of charms; even when they appeared to fail, rationalizations were made to continue believing in them. Even the reformed armed robbers who have embraced Christ and are now active Christians insisted that they found charms to be effective. They stated that they witnessed the protective powers of the charms, which only failed occasionally because some rules were broken. All but one participant expressed a strong sense of belief in the effectiveness of charms, juju, or fetish powers. Yomis said, "I do use charms. I swallowed it, some were rubbed on me, all over the body after incisions; they cut me with razor and rub it for protection." The area boys who did not engage in robbery activities also believed in the protection they thought the charms offered. Rednose affirmed this by stating, "They will tie a fowl or goat, they will fire the goat, it will not enter, and it will not die." This finding has not been highlighted by literature like the other findings.

All but one participant expressed a strong sense of belief in the effectiveness of charms, juju, or fetish powers. Yomis said, "I do use charms, I swallowed it, some were rubbed on me, all over the body after incisions, they cut me with razor and rob it for protection. I have seen some people they will be firing them, and they will not die, it will not enter them." Rednose affirmed this by stating that "they will tie a fowl or goat, they will fire the goat, it will not enter, and it will not die." He, however, stated that one day, they fired at one of his friends and he died. Despite this, they still believed in it. Bombito stated that he "was not afraid of death because of the charms, I made up of mind that since I was killing, one day it will be my turn to be killed." He stated that apart from the belief in charms, he needed the money the trade yielded. He stated, "Although I know it is a dangerous crime, I needed the money."

Blackie confirmed this widespread belief in the power of charms by stating, "I always visited one powerful man to cook me up with magical power." He continued saying, "I believed in the power of charms to keep me out of trouble." Yomis also stated that some of his friends who were fired on by the police went and disarmed the policemen, that the bullets had no effect on them. He asserted, "It's true, you know there is charm sir." Smoker used to decorate his body with various types of charms. He stated, "At every given time, I had charms on my waist, wore them on my neck, I swallowed some, tied some on my wrist, and I had many in my pockets." Smoker indicated that the charms made him fearless. He said, "Yes, I was not afraid, from there we went to Kwale, Delta State with my friends to do juju (charms) so if the shoot us, it won't enter." Bigman insisted, "We had water in a pot that we used to wash our face. So even you can operate in your own house and nobody can recognize your face again."

The findings of hypotheses three revealed that the inconsistency of amnesty policy significantly affect resurgence of militant groups in Niger Delta region. The findings of the study revealed that the program excluded nonviolent youth who have played important roles in the conflict and had been negatively impacted by it, as well as women and girls (Tobor, 2016). The unclear selection criteria leave room for abuse and resentment. It is argued that ex-militants never surrendered all of their weapons during the disarmament phase of the amnesty process, which increased their capability to engage in the bombing, sabotage, cultism, kidnapping, killings, and protests (Eke, 2016). Joseph (2010) posited that, despite the militants surrendering many arms and ammunitions, it is unquestionably scanty when weighed against the percentage of enlisted militants in the amnesty program. According to a respondent, A lot has happened since we left the creeks, a lot of boys have benefited including myself, I was trained in welding which I am using today to feed myself plus the allowances too (Interview at Abuloma community, 23/7/2016).

Key informants opine that:

There is no effective quality and technical measures and transparent contracting system. There is also

wrong prioritizing in the selection of the training programme which leads to total redundancy of the participants after training (Interview at Buguma, Asari-Toru LGA 6/7/2016). Not well managed because the exgenerals would not have been the ones to pay us, we should receive our money through the bank not cash at hand (Interview at Port Harcourt 11/5/ 2014); our ex-militant generals have taken over the programme, they are now the managers of the programme (Interview at Abonnema Wharf, Port Harcourt 25/8/2016); has not been managed and executed as conceived because some unscrupulous elements have hijacked the whole thing by cutting down on the promises by the federal government (Interview at Buguma, Asari Toru LGA 14/10/2016). According to our interviewee in Amassoma, Southern Ijaw LGA in Bayelsa (22/8/2016), the late president had good plans for the people of the Niger Delta. We thought it will favour our region but those managing the programme perverted it. We are betrayed and enslaved by our leaders.

According to FGD respondents (Izonfade, Burutu, Delta State, 28/6/14):

The personnel in charge of Amnesty programme are not implementing it to the benefits of every individual but rather for their selfish reasons. There is high level of corruption in the management of the programme by the managers of which they are not to be trusted. Majority of them are greedy and selfish; there is mismanagement of funds by the managers and those in charge of the programme. No accurate account can be given. The major problem we face in Amnesty programme is corruption. No one is to be trusted in the affairs of this programme; the salaries of ex-militant are short-changed, the leaders and managers are using this to enrich themselves; there is mismanagement of funds, corruption. There is no adequate monitoring of this programme. The personnel are just doing things on their own. There is lack of funds to run the programme; Politicians are using this programme to enrich themselves.

Field observations and experiences with the ex-militants in different project locations during the field work reveal the following:

- a) Some ex-militants lament that the Amnesty Programme is a total failure and that they regret participating. They are dissatisfied with the programme and think that if care is not taken, they would fall back to militancy.
- b) Many of the ex-militants live poor-shitty life as their feeding allowance was cut short by more than half and they do not have anything to fall back on. More specifically, some of the ex-militants were short paid by their ex-militant leaders and are thus paid between N20,000 and N45,000 instead of the monthly N65,000 approved by the Federal Government.

- c) Many of the actual ex-militants have not undergone training while the relatives and loyalists of big politicians were enlisted and sent for training abroad.
- d) Those that were sent to skill acquisition centres were not properly trained, hence most of them cannot not perform the skills they were trained for.
- e) Ex - militants that have been trained have not been employed and some have no hope of employment.

A key informant highlighted the following inconsistency and implementation problems faced by the Amnesty Programme:

- a) The management of the Amnesty Programme gave preference to some of the ex-generals to the detriment of others.
- b) Some ex-generals initially did not participate in the Amnesty Programme because they thought it was a set up by the government until they realized that the programme was genuine, hence they later came out and enlisted in the programme but they were sidelined in the management of the Amnesty Programme and some of their boys have not gone for training up till now.
- c) The 3rd phase/batch of training of ex-militants did not go round. It did not carry along all the remainder of genuine ex-militants.
- d) Some of the ex-militants that are loyal to some powerful ex-generals have gone for training more than once.
- e) Some of the ex-generals receive the money meant for the payment of stipends to ex-militant boys in block and distribute same in piecemeal to the ex-militant boys.

There was also significant relationship between ethno-tribal alienation and the re-emergence of militant groups in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria on hypotheses four. This study result has shown that an increase in resource allocation without a proper governance structure for the distribution of resources will not reduce the militancy in the Niger Delta region. In fact, an increase in resources could actually result in increased conflict in the region. This is because an increase in resource allocation will increase the quest for political authority which is seen as an avenue for resource distribution. This could lead to a situation whereby more political elites will continue to seek more ingenious means to access political positions. Furthermore, the number of development agencies set up by the federal and states government with little or no coordination is a clear example of poor governance of resources. The agencies instead of working together to develop programmes that would benefit the region and lift the people out of poverty work separately without any coordination. The result is project overlap which then leads to non-implementation of projects. An increase in resources in the region without a proper channel for resource distribution will only increase the resources available for bureaucracy which will not reduce poverty in any way.

An Itsekiri political office participant revealed:

One ethnic group refuses to acknowledge the other as co-owners of natural resources. The Ijaw felt that the oil was solely theirs. What about the Urhobo and Itsekiri, who also suffer from the effects of oil exploration? What about non-indigenous people who have made Warri their home? The proposed bill on oil deposits should be comprehensive. The lack of cooperation among ethnic groups in the Niger Delta, according to the participants, hampered the National Assembly's passage of the Petroleum Industry Bill.

The above finding is in agreement with the finding of Anugwom (2011) that in Nigeria's oil-rich Niger Delta area, ethno-tribal estrangement has grown apparent in the current young militant movement. Also, Anugwom (2011) found that most of ethnic conflicts are State-sponsored in the Niger Delta region. In order to reduce human insecurity thereby breaking the dynamics of conflict in the Niger Delta, there is need to overhaul the process of resource distribution in the region. There must be clear structures in place to channel the distribution of resources in a clear, transparent and less bureaucratic ways.

The last hypotheses was to establish the relationship between insincerity of local chiefs and the resurgence of militant groups in the Niger Delta, and there is significant, positive and high correlation between the two variables. This means that the degree of communities with a well-defined leadership structure, exhibit high level of transparency and governance of resources which provides a blueprint for development. Such communities experience fewer conflicts when compared to those that do not have a well-defined structure. To collaborate with this the finding of Agbibo (2013) who state that Niger Delta residents are increasingly seeing local elites as members of Nigeria's corrupt national elites. Unfortunately, many of the leaders of the Niger Delta's opposition movement have "settled" in Abuja, the nation capital, and have become millionaires. In their battle for justice and survival, this displays a lack of vision and depth. Clearly, these leaders are in need of a better solution. The infiltration of non-arm bearing associates and relations of big politicians, ethnic leaders and ex militant leaders into PAP is a major source of tension and concern by ex-militants. A key informant stated that:

Everyone that fought for this struggle knows how we suffered for years, until Amnesty was introduced. When it was introduced, many politicians see it as opportunity to favour their love ones and relatives while those who suffered for the struggle were left out. Many people who did not participate in the struggle are now benefitting from it. It is not allegation, it is a true (Interview at Amasoma, Southern Ijaw Local Government Area, Bayelsa State, 5/10/2016).

According to some of our respondents "prominent people put their relatives instead of the real persons that fought the fight (Interview at Bori, Rivers State 15/9/ 2016); some of them are boys of these big politicians. We know them, but they do not associate with us (Interview at Abuluma, Port Harcourt, 19/9/16)

4. Conclusion

Since 2016, there has been a resurgence of militant organizations in the Niger Delta region, largely orchestrated by beneficiaries of the post-amnesty programme, notwithstanding the benefits they receive. The Niger Delta's revival of armed organizations has impeded economic growth and thrown the social order into disarray. Ethno-tribal alienation, proliferation of arms, anti-bullet charms, amnesty policy inconsistency, and insincerity of local chiefs are among the key findings of the study results. Participants noted that they are aware of the potential for repressive and harsh military action as a result of their actions, but recommended authorities to take a more inclusive approach in dealing with the crisis. They were also aware that their activities could pose problems for the government at all levels due to the loss of oil revenue resulting from oil facility outages. The following recommendations were made:

- a) The relationship between greater educational attainment and the creation or participation in insurgency is the first point to consider. Several members of various armed groups in the Niger Delta have a first degree or equivalent, with others having higher qualifications, according to this study. According to the participants in this study,



rising education in the Niger Delta enhanced awareness of the activities of other stakeholders, resulting in more educated people joining militant groups or participating in militant operations. It is clear from this study that the militants' amnesty granted in 2009 did not fix the situation. People's culture and identity have been harmed; as a result, any strategy aimed at addressing human security must focus on changing people's attitudes, particularly among adolescents. Another intriguing study would be to look into the influence of human insecurity on the culture and identity of Niger Delta indigenes.

- b) Dual sovereignty must be replaced by more hospitable conditions in the Niger Delta if the Niger Delta peace initiative is to be sustained. All of the negative elements that make insurgency desirable and unavoidable, such as pollution, poverty, unemployment, infrastructural shortfalls, resource deprivation, and marginalization, must be addressed in order to bring about such conditions. Most significantly, conditions antithetical to greed, corruption, triangulation, and our own brand of federalism, which this study implicates as conditions favorable to insurgency, must be replaced by conditions antithetical to dual sovereignty. All of this suggests that, in order for peace to be established and maintained over time, all of the powerful political and economic interests whose manipulations directly but unobtrusively caused both the poor conditions in the Delta and, eventually, the violence, must be dismantled. The concerns of ordinary citizens of Niger Delta communities would not be incorporated into the Amnesty agreement due to the continuation of these significant political and economic pressures. Unfortunately, the more disenfranchised these regular people become from peace talks and settlements, the more likely the youth will devolve into militants.

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