YOUTH RESTIVENESS AND OIL EXPLORING COMPANIES IN ISOKOLAND

NWOSUJI, EMEKA P. (Ph.D)
Department of Sociology
Enugu State University of Science & Technology
Agbani, Enugu State. Nigeria

ABSTRACT
This paper is concerned with the effects of youth restive activities on the people of Isoko Land area, considering a way of looking at this social problem and proffer possible lasting solution to incessant conflict and societal unrest. Questionnaire was used as a means of data collection and the study used the chi-square statistic to analyze and interpret the data based on the findings, it was discovered that oil exploring activities have affected the Isoko region causing unemployment and a great socio-economic marginalization in the society. This has affected the peace of the community. Finally the paper made some recommendation that the government should make policies that would assure the youths of a brighter tomorrow. Parents should also play their part by giving their children the moral and academic support they need to face the future, show and most of all watch their social behaviour.

Keywords: restiveness, marginalization, socio-economic, and oil exploration.

INTRODUCTION
Nigeria, like every other developing countries in the world is being faced among other things with the hurdle of providing solution to problems such as illiteracy, rapid population increase, poverty, acute shortage of highly skilled power, inadequate socio-economic infrastructural facilities, poor health care services, access, roads and youth restiveness as a result of the above mention problems.

In recent times, there had been the effects of the crises that affected the Niger--Delta region of the country; the result and consequences of Oil exploration activities. This development has been a worrisome, reoccurring problem. Facts abound that the Niger Delta region has not known peace government and the oil companies seem not to be bothered by the plight of a people who have been economically unstable, socially disintegrated and morally in-balanced, thus creating an atmosphere of bloody crises that has been in this region.

The governments both past and present has been investing massively in programmes that have gotten to do with the development of the rural areas knowing fully well that a larger proportion of the nations entire population lived in the rural areas. But despite these programmes, the life of the Isoko people have not been significantly affected for the better just because these programmes are kept aside or poorly implemented such programmes are ever executed at all.

To whom much is given much is expected, so says a popular wise saying, but this is untrue in the case of the Isoko people which has been a major source of the Nigeria nation's revenue. And so with the continuous bite of poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, deprivation etc on Couple of the Niger-Delie restive youth organizations of various kinds: the various communities of the area arose, each with different aims and objectives, depending on their ideology of the problems.

Thus, these youths formed organization whose activities come in different forms such as thuggery, armed robbery, sea piracy, rape, assassination pipeline vandalization, kidnapping, violent demonstrations etc. as a suit there have been calls from many Nigerians to help find solution to the problem of the youth violence. These calls became necessary because the present youths have greatly turned to violence with their back on the legitimate means set by society achieving success.
Isoko Land
Isoko land is a distinct ethnic group that lies along the South-East coastal region. Oroka O. (1998:24) stated that "the Isoko people inhabits the area enclosed roughly by longitude 60° S and 60° 25 East and Latitude 5° 15 and 5° 40” North in the Delta State of Nigeria. There are presently two local Government Areas in Isoko land. The area is made up 11 eleven clans.

Statement of the problem.
In the course of this research, it is most expedient to recognize the fundamental problem of youth restiveness that has paralyzed the oil industry. This worrisome problem has created other problems which is gradually taking on a political outlook most especially in the agitation for resource control by the people of Niger Delta. The problem may be traceable to:

i. Mass unemployment that has been experienced by the people of the region as occasioned by the gradual environment depletion associated with oil exploration activities.

ii. The general sense of serious marginalization resulting from the allocation sharing formula of the oil national wealth.

iii. The generally perceived inequality in the distribution of national wealth.

iv. The ineffective community relation's strategies of the oil companies.

v. Government insensitivity to the plight of the Niger-Delta people.

LITERATURE
The words youth and restiveness have gained fame for being bad in c way in usage especially in the Nigerian context as related to the agitation by the youth in the Niger Delta region. They are always bubbling in spirit, with high hope, big dreams, aspirations and ideas of what their tomorrow will be, they anticipate or see their future on a totally socio-economic landscape. Therefore, in this context, they would naturally be restive with an acceptable limit in a continuous order to lay a solid foundation for the realization of their tomorrow.

However, restiveness among the youths in Isokoland can be grouped Into three categories, namely:

(i) Youths engaged in genuine agitation for their rights and restoration of the dignity of their people;

(ii) Youths engaged in a self seeking and criminal activities

(iii) Youths who are seeking revenge for the "use and dump" attitude of the powerful people in the region.

In all the above, there is a unifying factor in understanding the reasons behind their actions which is, riot being satisfied with their present state.

These are militants who place multi million Naira ransoms on kidnapped workers, expatriates and recently the relations of political office holders. They use dynamites on crude petroleum pipelines, wreck havoc; oil workers, vandalise and steal equipment. The proceeds from these levities are not used for any known developmental projects in the "ior. or for any other purpose of benefit to the people.

C) Youths on Vengeance mission.

They are deadly in their operations because they perceive society as being unfair and unkind to them. Their sponsors got them armed for deadly assignments and when they met their set targets and objectives, 7 youths were dumped and left in the cold to care for their needs.

These sponsors used their political office to intimidate their opponents. e youths are being used and fooled only to turn round to flaunt their gotten wealth in a society where three square meals have eluded the common man.

They used the reasons for the aggression of these youths to carry out their activities, this gets them more angry with a resolve to reclaim what they believe is theirs.

In all these activities, it is increasingly difficult to separate the group(s) in "finely fighting for the dignity of the region from the self serving ones acs :hey operate in their harsh manner.
EFFECTS OF THE YOUTH RESTIVENESS

World Health Organization (WHO) in assessing the effects of violence and Health in its report of 2002:17 is of the opinion that the main of youth restiveness, almost everywhere are themselves, rents and youth adults. The resulting violence harms not only its victims but also their families. This summaries the evil of "youth-restiveness", if not promptly addressed. They kill themselves for the benefit of political office holders and the powerful in the society who at J. of the day abandon them to leak their wounds.

Other effects include:

- Shutting in about 800,000 barrels per day has been shut in by " various oil companies.
- Blowing up of pipeline, which worsens the problem of spillages and pollution, environmental degrading and destruction of farmlands.
- Increased unemployment. Some thousands of workers are losing their jobs with the oil companies because of harsh operating environment.
- Increased operational costs in the oil sector
- Creation of unfriendly investment environment
- Increased poverty
- Increased crime rate and insecurity
- Collapse of communal life
- Killing of youths, who are the main actors, increased level of orphans and drug addition.

Community Relations Activities Of Shell Petroleum Development Commission (SPDC) In Isoko Land

Before discussing the community relations' strategies of SPDC it is imperative to give a brief historical account of their activities in Nigeria,

According to Eta Oghene (2003:102) "the Shell Petroleum Development Commission in Nigeria stalled oil exploration activities in Nigeria in 1903 as Nigerian survey corporation, which was controlled by the British Colonial Administration. Though Areola (1999:94) has a varied account that oil exploration activities in Nigeria started in 1908 by a German Company called the Nigeria Bitumen Corporation, they all agree with Shell history (Shell 1999:29) that the first successful oil activities started in 1938. In that year Shell was granted oil exploration license and the first well ever drilled was in Imo in 1951, which was unfortunately discovered to be dry.

In 1956, the Oloibirı 1 oil well was successfully drilled with 4,000 barrel of oil per day production. In Isoko-land, the first well was drilled in 1959 in Ozoro-Isoko. Today, however, Isoko land hosts seven oil fields with a large number of wells. (Shell 1999:30).

The company changed name to Shell British Petroleum Company, a little after independence. The indigenization bid of the Federal Government of 1972 equally saw the company changing name to Shell Petroleum Development Company of Nigeria.

Shell Petroleum Development Company, the Largest oil and has company in Nigeria is presently the operator of a joint venture of Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) which holds 55% share the Nigerian Oil industry, SPDC 30%, ELF (now Chevron) 10% and AGIUP 5% respectively. The partners fund the operation according to their share holding.

The companies' operation is mainly in the Niger-Delta area in 1999 accounted for some 35% of Nigerian Oil production and about 53% of the oil reserve base. However, Shell in their publication fails to tell the whole world the level of development that they have brought to their host communities thereby the truth from the people. Although one will not support the method that are sometimes used by youths of the region but one normal senses will have reason to sympathize with the sense of grievance that a fair share of government revenue not been allocated for the development of the areas.

It is sad to note that when the operator of oil companies in the area is by the host community youths for one day, the government will fire, order the arrest of such youths and get them locked up. In some they are ordered to be killed because of their own right, all in the of economic crises. For instance, the pointer newspaper of April 18 1, reported that "the Federal Government lost close to 10.3 dollars, which is about 1.3 billion naira during the week long closure of only five flow station of Shell Petroleum Development (S. P.D.C) by youths of Isoko where oil production is about barrels of oil per day.

Government realize this huge amount of money from the on daily bases, but will still complain of finance when they request for anything that can change their life condition for better. The youths see these things and become restive. Robson (1978:23) stated that "Serious disagreement as a result of difference in view, idea, opinions can be extremely beneficial to relationship and society when it occurs and are properly managed."
The company manpower strength during the years was more than 9,000 people and which 3,700 were employees and the rest are contract staff. Apart from some 200 expatriates, all the company employees were Nigerians and over 60% of them were from the Niger-Delta region. A critical analysis of this claim reveals that the number of staff strength has reduced, as the company's management prefers using contract staff. Another factor that may have affected Shell staff strength is the renewed ethnic crises that have affected the area making most of the oil field servicing companies relocating to Port Harcourt and Yenego. It is also doubtful that 60% of the staff of Shell is from the Niger-Delta area given the fact, that most of the top management staff are from the three major tribes of Nigeria. Another claim by the youths of the Niger-Delta area is that most of the company's unskilled workers that form the 60% claimed work-force are from one minority ethnic group in the area. This singular reason has been the most accepted reason for the continue ethnic crises in the oil city of Warri.

Theoretical framework
Societal approach to phenomenon are the phenomenology, symbolic interactionism, Ethnomethodology, functionalism and conflict views. Ethnomethodology attempts to describe the way individuals make sense of their social experiences. The ethnomethodologist point out that different individuals can experience the same situation and yet give a quite different account of it. The tendency to relate and interpret the same situation differently does widely exist. What ethnomethodologists seek to do is to explain how individual, arrive at their accounts of events. They equally argue that sociological accounts of events are essentially not different from the common sense accounts that everybody makes of them. Functionalism uses this approach and sees groups and societies as a system made up of Interdependent parts and tending towards stability "If conflict arises, it is seen either as abnormal or as a means by which temporary strains between elements are being reduced in a move towards greater equilibrium” (Defleur 1977:20).
The basic unit of analysis is society and its various parts are understood primarily in terms of their relationship to the whole. The social institutions such as the family, religion and other are analysed as a part of the social system rather than an isolated units, in particular they are understood with reference to their contribution they make to the system as a whole.
Functionalist used the human body as an example for proper understanding of the society. They argued that an understanding of any organ in the body such as the heart or lungs involves an understanding of its relationship to other organs in particular its contribution towards the maintenance of its organism. In the same way, an understanding of any part of society requires an analysis of its relationship to other parts and most importantly, of its relationship to other parts and contributions to the maintenance of society.
Symbolic interactionist argue that it is the task of sociologist to understand the point of view and experience of the individuals involved. Society is the product of social interaction. Secondly, it has meaning in so far as human beings intend it to have. Language can be seen as an example of meaningful communication. All aspects of human social behaviour have a conscious purpose. Symbolic interactionist approach is best introduced within the specific context of socialization. Indeed, the founding father of symbolic interactionism, the American, George Mead (1863-1931) was as much a psychologist and philosopher as a sociologists.

84
with differentiated access to wealth. They saw society as essentially divided into two halves with the one half inferior to the other.

The common belief of all conflict theorists is that societies are always in a state of conflict over scarce resources. One of the most important scarce is power. Therefore, conflict theorist argue, that a society is best viewed as an area in which there is a constant struggle for power.

The relationship between the two classes is that of exploiter and exploited. This relationship give rise to conflict as a result of the exploitation of one by the other. This is just the case with the youths of Isoko land and the more reason why there is increased conflict and restiveness in the area so as to change the situation. Karl Marx (1818-1883), a major proponent of this school of thought in his view started that if the exploitation tendencies of the bourgeoisie did not stop, the proletariat will one day rise against them.

Therefore, since the activities of the youths are to a great extent directed towards social change, the use of the conflict perspective is more appropriate. It is said that a careful use of this theory will have a far-reaching effects on our understanding of the problem of youth restiveness, the causes and effects on the people, especially as it affects the Isoko land of Delta State.

Conflicts take various forms, but they are all after benefit or loss and these conflict these consequences on the socio-economic life of the people. From the look of things, violence among the youth in Isoko land, as it concerns revolution against unemployment, deprivation, neglect, lack of social amenities, exploitation, environmental pollution etc. is seen as a part of the process of social change.

Sample Population

The sample population for the research is taken from Five Local Governments Oleh, Ozoro, Olomoro, Uzere and Ulli and they are 150 respondent. The choice of the sample population include male and female. The random sampling procedure used in this study enhances the administering of questionnaire to various respondents; this is because it gives a proper representation of the population needed for the study.

The sample size was structured to suit the purpose of the research for adequate representation of the population to be achieved.

**TABLE 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marital Status</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Single</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>36.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorced</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widowed</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>IS0</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table above shows that 36.7% (55) of the total respondents are married 30% (45) are single, 20% (30) are divorced while 13.3% (20) are widowed. The table indicates that majority of the men and women are married.

**TABLE 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Christianity</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>66.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Islam</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African Tradition</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2. indicates that majority of the respondent are Christian 66.7% while there was not a single Moslem and 33.3% of the total

DISCUSSION ON FINDINGS
It is decided upon the rejection of the null hypothesis in the hypothesis one, which states that there is a relationship between the non-challant attitude of the oil exploration company's and the youth restiveness in Isoko land. It is true that the presence of oil exploration activities has negatively affected the region mostly on economic terms of primary productive activities. It is important to note that the oil exploring companies provide very limited social infrastructures as well as economic empowerment programmes. It is also on the discovery of this research that the rate of youth restiveness is on the increase in the area. Their primary occupation which forms an important aspect of their economic life is being affected by the oil exploring activities in the region, and the primary occupation of farming, fishing make up the vocation for the people.

From hypothesis two, the findings reveals upon the rejection of the null hypothesis (Ho and the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis (Hi) that there is a relationship between the oil exploring activities and the youth restiveness in Isoko land. From this hypothesis, it is very clear that there is a relationship between the oil exploring activities and the youth restiveness in Isoko land. This is true because the oil exploring activities have not yielded a positive results in improving the economic conditions of the citizens of the Isoko land region and this has led to the frustration and aggression in the people which eventually gave way to youth restiveness in the region.

CONCLUSION
Well over the 45 years of oil exploration in the area, the last decade has witnessed very low oil production caused by youth restiveness. This research has looked into the facts; situations and what must be done to resolve the issue once and for all. Though youth empowerment and equitable distribution of economic resources has been proved as true as solution to youth restiveness, all Nigerians who intends to do what is right and helpful but often not succeeding, and lovers of humanity must continue to ensure that life becomes more meaningful for the people.

The government should therefore act in response to the difficult situation of the people by way of making good policies that would positively affect their lives. The area should be opened up with a network of good roads, social infrastructures and adequate employment opportunities created for the youths of the region. The leaders within the area should see youth restiveness as an urgent problem that need to be addressed without delay. It is the responsibility of everybody to ensure that peace is restored in the area, meaningful development can not take place when parties involved disagree.

This study have been able to reveal
1) That the major reason why youths are restive is as a result of frustration caused by unemployment, as a result they resort to violent activities to turn the situation around.
2) The inability to fulfill physiological needs which are the basic needs, can drive any man crazy and even resort to other means of achieving desired needs.

So, if it is established that most of the youths are unemployed, why then do we expect less of what is happening? "A hungry man they says is an angry man". Sharing the same view, Akaruese, L. (1995:4) narrowed the causes of the various youth violence in Isokolarid to frustration caused by unemployment. Unemployment as we know brings about poverty. Thus, in order to survive, and also be able to meet up with social standards, these youths become available and used to all sorts of social vices and violence. The former Minister of Women Affairs and Youth Development, Hajia Aishat Ismail in the pointer newspaper publication of May 14th (2002:3) identified poverty and idleness as the major factors responsible for youth restiveness in the country. The Minister went further to emphasize that poverty and unemployment and the attempt to break loose from them has not only affected the mentality of the people, but has also caused a great hindrance to the growth of the entire nation.
RECOMMENDATION

Based on the study findings this paper wishes to recommend the following: that the government as a matter of priority make policies and programmes that will give hope to a promising future for the youths of these region. They should make programmes that will enhance both the physical and mental abilities of the youths.

On this note, parents are advised to reduce the rate and length of their absence from home in search for better opportunities and be more concerned in the upbringing on their children.

Finally, most people in the Niger Delta area are almost reduced to nothing as a result of youth restiveness activities, and if these restiveness is left unabated it will bring about reduction in life span.

Therefore, the government should endeavour to assist by rehabilitating those affected person(s) and communities to reduce their suffering and make life more purposeful and meaningful to them.

References

Academic Association Peacewor’c (2000); Conflict Management Training, Published by A.A.P.
David Minar and Scolt Greener (Ed.) (1989): The Concept of Community: (Readings with Integration) Aldine Publishing Company, Chicago, USA.
Ikime O. (1972); The Isoko People: A Historical Survey, Ibadan University Press.