



## Challenges of Natural Resource Wealth in Nigeria: A Case Study of Niger Delta Region

Nathan Udoinyang<sup>1</sup>, Reuben Daniel<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Economics, Ignatius Ajuru University, Rumuolumeni, Port Harcourt, Rivers State Nigeria.

<sup>2</sup>Department of Social Studies, College of Education Warri, Nigeria.

### Abstract

This research looks at the challenges of natural resources wealth in Nigeria: a case study of Niger Delta region. The study utilized survey methodology to collect data from the whole population of only five state that are oil producing state in Niger Delta Region in Nigeria (Akwa-Ibom, Bayelsa Delta, Edo and Rivers State). The total population of the five state was estimated at 18,151,093 as of 2006 census. With the implementation of Taro Yamane formulae, the population size decreased to 400 people. Three local government areas were selected from each of the five state making it a total of 15 LGA's. Out of the 400 questionnaires sent out, a total of 331 respondents from the 15 LGA's returned. With a mean criterion of 3.0, the statistical tools of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) were used to analyze the study's research topics. Reviewing the socio-political, economic and environmental challenges of natural resources wealth in Nigeria are: negative influence on civic space, political conflict, weakening of political institution, political instability, corruption, kidnapping, militancy, economic growth impediment, mono-economy, Dutch disease, deforestation and ecosystem degradation, biodiversity loss, reduction in soil and water quality, destruction of farmland, rural urban-drift, oil thief, illegal refinery etc. The study concluded that Nigeria's political leaders must urgently address the resource curse and immediately begin to address the long-term damage this curse has caused and brought about from a new Nigeria with a strong desire for true development based on good governance.

**Keywords:** Challenges; economic; environmental; natural resource; socio-political; Niger delta region.

### Introduction

Countries rich in natural resources have the opportunity to transform this wealth into long-term development Bulte et.al [1]. Unfortunately, many find their organizations weaker, more vulnerable, their economies disrupted, and often slower to develop once their mineral wealth is depleted Zubikova [2]. This phenomenon is often called resource curse and is related to certain

characteristics of the resource wealth: income is limited, usable, large and limited to a certain area [2]. This is not a curse, as policymakers and citizens in resource-rich countries like Nigeria can choose to develop ways to use these resources to generate profitable returns Moses & Okachikwu [3]. For the past decade, academicians and experts have been working to identify decisions governments can make throughout the mining lifecycle to ensure long-term growth [3]. Politicians can play an important role in helping rich countries implement policies that support long-term growth Auty [4]. This means that when both parties are free to organize and express their ideas, and when people can vote for candidates freely and fairly, we can see evidence that control respects better governance [4]. This is often referred to as the decision-making process, and these factors, as well as programmatic organizations that frequently formulate policy, encourage support through elections, and govern through similar and collaborative work, need to be encouraged Smith [5]. Governments have an important role to play in ensuring that natural resources are managed transparently, responsibly and in the best interests of their countries in the long term Ploeg & Van der [6]. Research by the Natural Resources Governance Institute, NRGi and IDEA [7,8] International found a positive relationship between political representation (i.e., the degree to which citizens have free and equal access to governance power) and the strength of laws, institutions, and practices. This relationship has important consequences in the world [7 & 8]. Oil, gas and mineral extraction can help more than 1.8 billion people living in poverty in oil rich countries achieve financial stability and balance the economy Sala-i-Martin & Subramanian [9]. But resource efficiency brings its own challenges, often including resource curse challenges, and organizations working with advice and guidance on effective policies can help solve these problems Gylfason [10]. According to international IDEA's Global State of Democracy Index [8], resource-rich developing countries have lower average scores than developed countries in key areas such as political representation. This is a major economic challenge because, according to [3], low-income countries have a weak system for managing property income and increasing the extraction value. The Niger Delta is a densely populated region, sometimes called the Oil River, as it is a major producer of palm oil Udoinyang [11]. The area was a British Oil River Reserve from 1885 to 1893, later expanded and made the Niger Coast Reserve. The delta is an oil-rich region that is at the center of an international debate over pollution. The Niger Delta, as currently defined by the Nigerian government, covers an area of more than 70,000 square kilometers (27,000 square miles), or 7.5% of Nigeria's land area. Historically and cartographically, Bayelsa consists of the present states of Delta and Rivers states [11]. However, in 2000, Obasanjo's government had included Abia, Akwa Ibom, Cross River, Edo, Imo and Ondo states in the region, but in this article we will separate Abia, Cross River, Imo and Ondo states as they are not producers of the country's oil [11]. About 31 million people from 40 ethnic groups including Bini, Itsekiri, Efik, Esan, Ibibio, Annang, Yoruba, Oron, Ijaw, Ogba, Ikwerre, Etche, Abua/Odual, Isoko, Urhobo, Ukwuani, Kalabari, Okrika, The Ogoni The Epie-Atissa and Obolo peoples are political inhabitants of the Niger Delta and speak about 250 different languages [11]. Languages spoken in the Niger Delta include Ijaw, Itsekiri and Central Delta languages, Edo and Ika languages are also spoken in the surrounding area. [11] noted that the Central Niger Delta later became part of the eastern part of Nigeria (one of three and subsequently one of four region), which was established in 1951. Most came from the Calabar, Itsekiri and Ogoja regions, now Ogoja, Itsekiri, Annang, Ibibio, Oron, Efik, Ijaw and Ogoni [11].

The National Council of Nigeria and Cameroon (NCNC) is the regional governing body [11]. The NCNC later became the National Congress of Nigerian Citizens after Western Cameroon decided to secede from Nigeria. The ruling party in Eastern Nigeria did not try to prevent secession, in fact encouraged it. At the time, the Eastern region was home to the third, fourth and fifth largest indigenous groups in the country, including the Igbo, Efik-Ibibio and Ijaw. In 1953, great troubles occurred in the Old East due to the deportation of Professor Eyo Ita by the Igbo tribe, which was the majority in the Old East [11]. He is an Efik from Calabar and one of the leaders of the independence of the Nigerian nation. The Ibibio, Annang, Efik, Ijaw and Ogoja people, the ethnic minorities of the region living on the southeastern coast and in the delta, are demanding the establishment of their own state, the Calabar-Ogoja-River (COR) country. The struggle to establish a COR state continued and became a central issue during the European debate on the status of ethnic minorities in Nigeria and her independence [11]. As a result of this issue, Professor Eyo Ita left the NCNC to form a new political party called the National Independence Party (NIP), one of the five existing Nigerian political parties on Nigerian Law and Justice. Another major crisis occurred in 1961, when the eastern region of Nigeria passed a referendum allowing the southwestern region of Cameroon (now Akwa Ibom and Cross River states) to secede from Nigeria [11]. Northwestern Cameroon is a state within the borders of Nigeria, currently located between Adamawa and Taraba [11].

Cameroon and Nigeria quarreled over the small region of Bakassi after the 1961 referendum. A new phase in the struggle was the proclamation of the Niger Delta Democratic Republic by Isaac Adaka Boro on 23 February 1966, during the rule of President Ironsi. He (Isaac Adaka Boro) was killed by the government in 1967, before the Nigerian civil war [11]. Also before the Nigerian Civil War, the Southeastern State of Nigeria (also known as Southeastern Nigeria or Southeastern Coast Nigeria) was established, which included the Colonial Calabar Division, Colonial Ogoja Division and Rivers State [11]. Eastern State and Water State became two states of ethnic minorities in the former Eastern Central State. The Southeastern State was renamed Cross River State and was later divided into Cross River State and Akwa Ibom State. Rivers State was divided into Rivers State and Bayelsa State. Ken Saro Wiwa and the Ogoni tribe as the lead figures for this phase of the struggle and nine other oil activists form Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP) in 1990 [11]. They protest the lack of economic development; For example: despite rich oil production, the region still experience lack of schools, good roads and hospitals. They also complain about environmental pollution and damage to their lands and waters caused by foreign oil companies. They complain that the percentage of revenue which determines how much revenue is distributed to the region or state. The income of the Niger Delta people was 100% in 1953, 50% in 1960 and 13% since 1999. This is the main source of the accusation that the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) is dishonest [11].

The people of the Niger Delta argue that the money allocated to them from the government budget is not enough to support the development of the region, given the borders of the region and the devastation caused by oil extraction. That's why they need a management system. FGN refused to accept this offer on the grounds that the remaining 87% would be used for construction elsewhere in the country. FGN also believes that regional income distribution can improve land and that the reason for the lack of development in the region is the mismanagement of

distribution by regional political leaders [11]. In 1995, Ken Saro Wiwa and nine other oil activists from Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP) were arrested and killed under Sani Abacha regime [11]. Although the protests were never as strong as they were during the Saro-Wiwa period, there is still an oil reform movement based on peaceful protests today as the Ogoni struggle served as a modern-day eye opener to the Peoples of the region [11]. Unfortunately, oil production has had a negative impact on the Niger Delta region as unprecedented oil spills have continued for the last 5 years, making the region one of the most polluted places in the world [11].

It is estimated that there have been 10 oil spills in the European Union in 40 years, and 9,343 oil spills in Nigeria in 10 years [10]. Negligence of the oil industry has also contributed to this situation; This is best illustrated by a report published by the Nigerian National Petroleum Cooperation [NNPC 12] in 1984, long before the conflict broke out: We see that the country's water and plants are slowly being poisoned and the plants are being destroyed. But since the birth of the oil industry in the Niger Delta region over fifty years ago, the government (let alone oil tycoons) has not taken effective steps to manage the problematic environment for business [12]. The cost of environmental damage in the Niger Delta region from land extraction due to gas emissions, dredging of major rivers, oil spills and oil and gas extraction is approximately \$758 million every year [5]. Unfortunately, 75% of the costs, including water pollution, agricultural poverty and biodiversity loss, are borne by local communities [11]. To this end, this article focuses on the challenges of natural resources wealth in Nigeria: a case study of Niger Delta region.

## **Literature Review**

### ***Conceptual Review***

#### ***Natural Resource***

Natural Resources are things or physical things that no one can produce; So they include everything we can see and things we can't easily see but are there. What makes these free gifts important is their location, ownership and utility. Therefore, most points are related to these problems. According to the definition of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD 13], natural resources are assets that exist in nature and can be used for production or budgeting purposes. This definition focuses on the value or benefit of natural resources.

Another view of UNESCO [14] is that natural resources in a broad sense include everything that is available to human use anywhere in the universe. The physical body contains solar energy and gravity, as well as rocks and rain. It includes wildlife and wild life in the biological field, as well as human resources UNESCO, [14: 2].

The World Trade Organization [WTO 15] defines natural resources as "goods that are found in the natural environment, are rare and useful in their raw form or in production or use after minimal processing" WTO, [15: 46].

## *Theoretical Review*

### *Resource Curse theory*

One of the most famous resource theories is the resource curse theory, also known as “The Paradox of Plenty.” The term "Resource Curse" was first coined by British economist Richard M. Auty in his [4] article "Sustainable Development of the Mining Economy: An Essay on the Resource Curse." The theory explains that “many countries rich in natural resources do not take advantage of their natural resources, and the governments of these countries do not respond well to the needs of the people” [4]. [4] observes: “While natural resource-seeking countries are expected to achieve better growth outcomes, resource-rich countries have greater influence and independence from their neighbors' resources, reducing economic growth and development”. This means that resource-rich countries are subject to negative impacts that affect their development, but non-resource rich countries are not.

### *Empirical Literature Review*

Nathan Udoinyang [16] examine oil: the hindrance to the economic diversification in Nigeria. The paper showed the relationship between oil and the Nigeria economy, the positive and negative contribution of oil to Nigeria economy are: increasing the country's income, foreign exchange size, providing job opportunities, increasing the standard of living, providing infrastructure, Economic development; Explaining the negative impact of oil on the Nigerian economy, it made the country economically unstable, changed people's values and attitudes, caused conflicts, fatigue, and oil neglected agriculture, which affected the country's economy in many ways, uneven development of other industries, unemployment in rural and urban areas, and increased corruption and crime. Therefore, the conclusion of this article is that the Nigerian government must stop the negative impact of oil on the Nigerian economy in order to make Nigeria a good country and give practical advice to the diverse on Nigerian economy.

Adela Zubikova [2] Resource curse: case study of Nigeria. The purpose of this article is to examine the validity of capital curses in the case of Nigeria at the beginning of the new millennium. The theoretical part describes the role of natural resources as a form of capital, the symptoms of the so-called curse, and the transmission of the curse. The performance tests various hypotheses developed by comparing scientific data on the impact of natural resources. The validity of the Prebisch-Singer theory, the symptoms of the Dutch disease and its negative impact on political governance (presidency, corruption, high government spending and ineffective political decisions) have been fully tested. The consequences are often considered to be the result of curses.

Moses Duruji & Okachikwu Dibia [3] investigate crude oil, resource curse and the splintering of Nigeria into national pieces. The aim of this study is to reveal why Nigeria is still underdeveloped despite income growth and how this affects the unity of the country. This is due to the poor development of Nigeria and especially the land and insecurity in the country. This study examines the natural resources literature on the curse to explain and understand why Nigeria is yet to develop despite the income from crude oil and how this poor structure led to the



crisis in the country, leading to its collapse. Use secondary data to obtain data for analysis. Qualitative data analysis was used to analyze the data. The study found that the continued development of Nigeria, especially the Niger Delta, could lead to a nationwide uprising that would transform Nigeria into a fragmented country. The study recommends that the Nigerian leadership must urgently ensure effective governance to save the Niger Delta and the entire country from the misery of underdevelopment.

Kadafa Adati Ayuba [17] investigate the environmental impacts of oil exploration and exploitation in the Niger Delta of Nigeria. This article aims to explore the various environmental issues associated with oil exploration and spills in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria and provide an understanding of the environmental impacts occurring in important breeding wetlands and marine ecosystems. Secondary data was used and analyzed using descriptive methods. Aim to get a feel for the needs, present data-based facts, and clearly understand the issues. There is no doubt that oil has brought great benefits to the Nigerian nation and people, but pollution from the oil industry has caused great destruction in terms of soil and drinking water, especially in the Niger Delta region. Decline of fish, crabs, mollusks, sea snails and birds. Large areas of mangroves have been destroyed, affecting land and sea. Some spills in the past have resulted in the complete displacement of some communities, destruction of old buildings, contamination of fresh water, loss of forests and agriculture, destruction of fisheries, and decline of fish stocks in the Niger Delta. mother. Income Oil exploration and extraction activities cause environmental changes. Which will have the biggest impact? Monitoring is also important but is not available in the Niger Delta region. Track the locations of oil companies; This situation limits the administrative capacity and efficiency of the government. The article suggests that reforming and changing the law, reviewing oil companies' licenses and reviewing penalties would go a long way in ensuring compliance, even though the government may not be able to monitor these sites on a regular or frequent basis. From the above evidence, it can be seen that Nathan Udoinyang [16] examine oil: the hindrance to the economic diversification in Nigeria, Adela Zubikova [2] Resource curse: case study of Nigeria, Moses Duruji & Okachikwu Dibia [3] investigate crude oil, resource curse and the splintering of Nigeria into national pieces and Kadafa Adati Ayuba [17] investigate the environmental impacts of oil exploration and exploitation in the Niger Delta of Nigeria. None of these studies address the socio-political, environmental and economic issues arising from Nigeria's natural resources in any research. Based on this study, the studies were conducted to collect existing research.

## **Methodology and Material**

This study used a survey research design to examine the challenges of natural resources wealth in Nigeria: a case study of Niger Delta region. Primary and secondary data were used in the research. The population of this study includes only the oil producing state in Niger Delta Region in Nigeria which are Akwa Ibom (3,902,051); Bayelsa (1,704,515); Delta (4,112,445); Edo (3,233,336) and Rivers State (5,198,716). Its total population combine together was estimated at 18,151,093 as of the 2006 census. With the implementation of Taro Yamane, the population size decreased to 400 people. It allows the researcher to access important information for the study. Data are presented using descriptive statistics tools such as percentages, mean and standard

deviation. On the other hand, the three research questions were analyzed using the 5 Linkert mean and standard deviation scales in Social Science Statistical Software (SPSS). The research questions were analyzed using a mean scale of 3.0; A total score below 3.0 indicated that participants disagreed with the research question, while a total score above 3.0 indicated that participants agreed with the research questions. Objective detection methods were used in the research. For clarity, (3) local governments were selected as samples for this study. Purposive sampling was chosen for use in this study because it provides a non-probability sample selected based on characteristics present in specific populations and across all study practices. It can also help researchers identify stereotypes that exist in each group. Based on purposive sampling technique, one local government areas were selected from each of the three (3) senatorial districts in each of the State and 80 questionnaires were distributed equally to each state.

## Presentation of results and discussion of findings

The data analysis was based on the research objectives. Primary and secondary data were reviewed. In the main analyses, participants were identified based on specific demographic characteristics. Age, gender, marital status and academic demographic variables are calculated using percentages. In secondary analysis, we used standard deviation, and mean for descriptive statistics.

**Table 1: State Distributions of the Questionnaires.**

State Selected	No. of L.G.A	Names of L.G.A Selected	No. of Selected L.G.A	No. of Questionnaire Distributed/Returned
Akwa Ibom	31	Eket, Ikot Ekpene, Uyo	3	80/63
Bayelsa	8	Nembe Sagbama Yenagoa	3	80/71
Delta	25	Warri-South, Sapele, Oshimili-South	3	80/58
Edo	18	Auchi, Esan South-East, Oredo	3	80/65
Rivers	23	Port Harcourt, Eleme, Ogbe/ Egbema/ Ndoni	3	80/74 331/400

Source: authors compilation (2024)

**Table 2: Sociodemographic characteristics and economy of the respondents**

Socio-Demographic Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	173	52.3
Female	158	47.7
Total	331	100
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Single	107	32.3
Married	224	67.7
Total	331	100

<b>Age Range</b>		
Below 30 years	49	14.8
31-40 years	72	21.8
41-50 years	98	29.6
51 years and above	112	33.8
Total	331	100
<b>Highest Educational Qualification</b>		
WAEC	97	29.3
NCE/ND	82	24.8
HND/BSC	110	33.2
MSC/PHD	42	12.7
Total	331	100
Total	331	100

Source: Authors Survey, 2024.

In Table 2 we can see the details of the population. Among the 331 respondents, the percentage of married men is higher than that of single, accounting for 67.7% of the total. Gender distribution is 158 females (47.7% of total) and 173 males (52.3% of total). In terms of age, the largest number of respondents were aged 51 and above, 114 (33.8%); Similarly, when asked about educational background, the highest respondents had BSC/HND 110 (33.2%) and the lowest respondents had MSC/PHD 42 (12.7%).

## Data Analysis

In order to determine the degree of relevance for the research issue, the data for this study is presented and examined below using basic percentage and SPSS software.

## Research Question One

What are the socio-political challenges of natural resource wealth in Niger Delta Region in Nigeria?

**Table 3: Respondents' Perceptions on the socio-economic challenges related to natural resource wealth in Niger Delta Region in Nigeria**

S/N	Factors	Mean	Standard Deviation	Decision
1	Adverse effect on air quality.	4.2	3.8	Agreed
2	Political conflict.	4.1	3.	Agreed
3	Weakens government politics.	3.6	3.4	Agreed
4	It's lead to psychological problem when leaders get caught up in the growth of income and don't see what to do with the income.	3.3	3.7	Agreed
5	Political instability.	4.4	4.0	Agreed
6	Corruption between the political class and society as a whole.	3.8	3.5	Agreed



7	Conflict between political parties and factions.	3.5	3.3	Agreed
8	It leads to kidnapping.	3.8	3.4	Agreed
9	It leads to militancy.	4.5	4.1	Agreed
	<b>Aggregate Mean</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>Agreed</b>

Source: Authors survey, 2024.

Data in Table 3, 1-9. The research question aims to discuss the socio-economic challenges related to natural resource wealth in Niger Delta Region in Nigeria. From table 3 above, it can be deduced that adverse effect on air quality, political conflict, weakening of government politics, psychological problem when leaders get caught up in the growth of income and don't see what to do with the income, political instability, corruption between the political class and society as a whole, conflict between political parties and factions, kidnapping and militancy are all the socio-economic challenges related to natural resource wealth in Niger Delta Region in Nigeria. The aggregate mean criterion is 3.9 which is above the mean criterion of 3.0 and the aggregate standard deviation is 3.7 which is above the standard deviation of 3.0 indicating that all the respondents anonymously agreed on the socio-economic challenges related to natural resource wealth in Niger Delta Region in Nigeria.

## Research Question Two

What are the economic challenges of natural resource wealth in Niger Delta Region in Nigeria?

**Table 4: Respondents' Perceptions on the economic challenges of natural resource wealth in Niger Delta Region in Nigeria**

S/N	Factors	Mean	Standard Deviation	Decision
1	It brings about economic growth impediment.	3.2	3.3	Agreed
2	Mono-economy	3.9	3.7	Agreed
3	It lead to Dutch disease which cause inflation or exchange rate appreciation and shifting labor and capital from the non-resource sector to the resource sector	3.4	3.3	Agreed
4	Negligence of other sector economy	4.2	3.8	Agreed
5	Inequitable development among the various sector of the economy	3.8	3.4	Agreed
6	Urbanization that lead to increment of rent and food items	3.7	3.4	Agreed
7	Industrialization that lead to congestion and economy dependency	3.1	3.1	Agreed
	<b>Aggregate Mean</b>	<b>3.6</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>Agreed</b>

Source: Authors survey, 2024

In the data in Table 4, 1-7. The research question centered on the economic challenges of natural resource wealth in Niger Delta Region in Nigeria. From table 4 above, it can be deduced that economic growth impediment, mono-economy, Dutch disease, negligence of other sector of the economy, inequitable development among various sector of the economy, urbanization that lead

to increment of rent and food items, and finally industrialization that lead to congestion and economy dependency are all the economic challenges of natural resource wealth in Niger Delta Region in Nigeria. The aggregate mean criterion is 3.6 which is above the mean criterion of 3.0 and the aggregate standard deviation is 3.4 which is above the standard deviation of 3.0 indicating that all the respondents anonymously agreed on the economic challenges of natural resource wealth in Niger Delta Region in Nigeria.

### Research Question Three

What are the environmental challenges of natural resource wealth in Niger Delta Region in Nigeria?

**Table 5: Respondents’ Perception of environmental challenges and natural resource wealth in Niger Delta Region in Nigeria**

S/N	Factors	Mean	Standard Deviation	Decision
1	Deforestation.	4.4	4.0	Agreed
2	Loss of biodiversity.	3.8	3.5	Agreed
3	Destruction of ecosystem.	3.7	3.4	Agreed
4	Degradation of soil quality.	3.8	3.7	Agreed
5	Degradation of available water quality.	3.9	3.6	Agreed
6	Destruction of agricultural land.	4.3	3.9	Agreed
7	Emigration of members from the community due to oil spill .	4.1	3.7	Agreed
8	Challenging patriarchy and gender stereotypes that favour men for jobs over their female counterparts.	4.0	3.8	Agreed
9	It leads to rural-urban job draft.	3.8	3.5	Agreed
10	It brings about congestion.	3.9	3.6	Agreed
11	It leads to oil thief and illegal oil refining.	3.1	3.1	Agreed
	<b>Aggregate Mean</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>3.6</b>	<b>Agreed</b>

Source: Authors survey, 2024

The data in Table 5, 1-11. The research question focus to discuss the environmental challenges of natural resource wealth in Niger Delta Region in Nigeria. Looking at table 3 above, it can be seen that deforestation and forest degradation, biodiversity loss, ecosystem degradation, reduction in soil quality, reduction in available water quality, destruction of agricultural land, emigration of members from the community due to oil spill, challenging patriarchy and gender stereotypes that favour men for jobs over their female counterparts, rural-urban job drift, congestion, oil thief and illegal oil refining are all the environmental challenges of natural resource wealth in Niger Delta Region in Nigeria. The aggregate mean criterion is 3.9 which is above the mean criterion of 3.0 and the aggregate standard deviation is 3.6 which is above the standard deviation of 3.0 indicating that all the respondents anonymously agreed on the environmental challenges of natural resource wealth in Niger Delta Region in Nigeria.

## Discussion of Findings

Responses to the research questions revealed the socio-political, economic and environmental challenges of natural resource wealth in Niger Delta Region in Nigeria. The existence of natural resource wealth in Niger Delta Region in Nigeria have brought about so many socio-political, economic and environmental challenges to the people of Niger Delta Region of Nigeria among them are: negative influence on civic space, political conflict, weakening of state political institution n, cognitive problem where leaders become enmeshed in the revenue boom that they no longer can discern what useful things to do with the huge revenue, political instability, corruption among the political class and society, conflict among political parties and groups, kidnapping and militancy, economic growth impediment, mono-economy, Dutch disease, negligence of other sector of the economy, inequitable development among various sector of the economy, urbanization that lead to increment of rent and food items, industrialization that lead to congestion and economy dependency, deforestation and forest degradation, biodiversity loss, ecosystem degradation, reduction in soil quality, reduction in available water quality, destruction of farmland, relocation of community members from their community as a result of oil spillage, patriarchy and gender base challenge where male are preferred for job than their female counterpart, rural urban-drift, congestion, oil thief and illegal refinery which is in line with the findings of Nathan Udoinyang [10] that oil which is a natural resources is the hindrance to the economic diversification of Nigeria, Adela Zubikova [1] that Dutch disease, political conflict, weakening of government politics, psychological problem when leaders get caught up in the growth of income and don't see what to do with the income, political instability, corruption between the political class and society as a whole, conflict between political parties and factions are the challenges related to natural resources in Niger Delta Region of Nigeria, the study is also in line with that of Moses Duruji & Okachikwu Dibia [2] that natural resources in Niger Delta Region of Nigeria has led to negligence of other sector of the economy, inequitable development among various sector of the economy and finally the study is in line with the findings of Kadafa Adati Ayuba [11] that natural resources in Niger Delta Region of Nigeria brings about massive destruction to agricultural lands, drinking water, mangrove forest, fishing grounds and declination of fish, crabs, mollusks, periwinkles and birds, destruction of mangrove forest, complete relocation of some communities, loss of ancestral homes, pollution of fresh water, loss of forest which were the major source of income for the Niger Delta people before the discovery of natural resources.

## Conclusion

Niger Delta is blessed with crude oil as a natural resource. It has been a supply of the majority of government's funding. Despite the large budget it gives to government, the political management of Nigeria has now no longer been capable of translate this into the improvement of the country. This is due to the useful resource curse which inflicts its outcomes and effects at the people. One of its afflictions is bad political management with inside the control of the herb useful resource, which has caused the underdevelopment of the country, greater acute with inside the Niger Delta vicinity wherein crude oil is produced. As a result, agitations and conflicts in palms abound. Underdevelopment and palms disaster additionally influences the Niger Delta. This take a look at

observes that if the natural resource wealth keeps below bad political management, the opportunity of this type of rebellion towards Nigeria is possible. The end consequently is that Nigeria's political management desires to urgently address the useful resource curse and start straight away the remediation of the age-lengthy damages due to this curse and start a brand new Nigeria with eager hobby in proper improvement anchored on top governance.

## **Recommendation**

To address the challenges associated with natural resource management in the Niger Delta and Nigeria as a whole, it is crucial to implement a more inclusive and transparent approach. Policymakers should establish consensus-driven strategies that involve all stakeholders in the decision-making process, ensuring that communities directly affected by resource extraction are fully engaged in policy formulation and implementation. Transparency must be prioritized, with the government consistently communicating its policies and actions to the public. It is equally important to ensure that the wealth generated from natural resources is utilized in a manner that benefits the host communities, local governments, state, and the entire nation, thereby promoting equitable development.

There is a need to enact legislation that mandates the government to be accountable, providing clear accounts of how natural resource wealth is managed. This includes establishing stringent laws to penalize any form of corruption or misappropriation of resource wealth by government officials or their aides, whether they are in power or not. Negotiations with extraction companies should focus on creating a fair and reliable fiscal framework that ensures the nation derives maximum benefit from its resources. Moreover, extraction companies must be held accountable for environmental pollution, with direct compensation made to affected communities in the Niger Delta.

To minimize environmental impacts, the adoption of environmentally friendly technologies in petroleum development should be encouraged, such as converting gas flaring into alternative energy sources. Both government and oil companies should engage in active environmental restoration efforts to repair damage caused by extraction activities. Establishing and supporting environmental management and research institutions will enhance the monitoring and evaluation of ecological concerns. Regular Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) and Environmental Impact Statements (EIS) should be conducted to ensure that extraction activities do not harm the environment. Lastly, fostering public awareness and education on environmental and resource management issues is essential for promoting community engagement and ensuring sustainable management of the Niger Delta's natural resources.

## **References**

- Bulte, E., Damania, R. and Deacon, T. Resource intensity, institutions, and development. *World Development*, 33(2005)1029-1044.
- Adela Zubikova (2017) Resource curse: case study of Nigeria. 29 May 2017, 8th Economics & Finance Conference in London. DOI: 10.20472/EFC.2017.008.016.

- Moses Duruji & Okachikwu Dibia (2017) Crude oil, resource curse and the splintering of Nigeria into national pieces. *Covenant Journal of Business & Social Sciences* 8 (2) 60-75.
- Auty, R. (2001). The political economy of resource driven growth. *European Economic Review*, 45(2001)839-46.
- Smith, B. (2004) studied oil wealth and regime survival in the developing world in the *American Journal of Political Science*. 48 (2004) 232-246.
- Ploeg, F. (2011). Natural resources: curse or blessing? *Journal of Economic Literature*, 49(2011)366-420.
- Natural Resource Governance Institute, NRG (2015). The resource curse. The political and economic challenges of natural resource wealth, NRG reader.
- International IDEA, Global State of Democracy Indices, available @ <https://www.idea.int/gsd-indices/#/indices/world-map>
- Sala-i-Martin, X.; Subramanian, A., Addressing the natural resource curse: an Canadian the economics of exhaustible resources economic performance. *Journal of Economic History*, 67(2003)1-32.
- Gylfason, T., Natural resources, education and economic development. *European Economic Review* 45(2001).847-859.
- Nathan Udoinyang (2020) Oil: the hindrance to the economic diversification in Nigeria. *International Journal of Economics & Finance Research & Applications* Vol. 4, Issue 1, 46-54.
- NNPC, Nigerian National Petroleum Cooperation, (1984). Monthly petroleum information. September, Lagos, Nigeria, 53pp.
- Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). Retrieved from <https://stats.oecd.org/glossary/details.asp?10=1740>.
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (1964) Natural Resources. Retrieved from [www.unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001436/143605eb.pdf](http://www.unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001436/143605eb.pdf)
- World Trade Organization (2010). Natural Resources: Definitions, trade patterns and globalization. Retrieved from [https://www.wto.org/english/res\\_e/booksp\\_e/anrep\\_e/wtr10-2b\\_e.pdf](https://www.wto.org/english/res_e/booksp_e/anrep_e/wtr10-2b_e.pdf).
- Nathan Udoinyang (2024). The undertone of socio-political tussle in Niger Delta region of Nigeria. *International Journal of Trendy Research in Engineering and Technology* Volume 8 Issue 4 August ISSN No. 2582-0958.
- Kadafa Adati Ayuba (2012) Environmental impacts of oil exploration and exploitation in the Niger Delta of Nigeria. *Global Journal of Science Frontier Research Environment & Earth Sciences*. Vol. 12 Issue 3, 19-34.