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INTERNATIONAL OIL COMPANIES AND INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES RELATIONS IN BAYELSA STATE, NIGERIA, SINCE 1956

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ABSTRACT

The paper interrogates the relationship between international oil companies (IOCs) and indigenous communities in Bayelsa State, 1956-2025. These communities are the natural custodians of the black gold found in their backyards, yet they receive no commensurate socioeconomic benefits. Among others, Shell, Agip, Aiteo E & P, Chevron, Total and Exxon Mobil are the major players that have caused these communities significant social, economic and environmental degradation. Arising from major oil spills, deficient compensation and corporate social responsibility, and state repression are the drivers of escalating violent conflicts in the state. At the height of this persistent conflict, the General Memoranda of Understanding (GMOUs) were born to facilitate Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives, such as the provision of social amenities, in most cases without local content, creating distrust between them. The power dynamics and hegemony theory were used to analyze the persistent conflict cycles in their relationships while data were collected through a desk library review on relevant literature, as well as primary sources. The finding reveals decades of fundamental underdevelopment, significant environmental degradation, among others are the major causes of these conflict cycles.

I. INTRODUCTION

The relationship between IOCs and indigenous communities in Bayelsa State has generated a lot of controversies. This is because crude oil has become the economic mainstay of Nigeria, just after few years of its discovery in commercial quantity in 1958 at Otuogidi town (near Oloibiri) in Ogbia Local Government Area of Bayelsa State. This breakthrough was only celebrated at the detriment of oil-producing communities whose social ecology the IOCs exploited for their benefit and the Nigerian state. The IOCs' relationship with indigenous peoples was characterized and shaped by the colonial context of power relations, as spheres of resource extraction was a keg of gun powder that exploded many decades afterwards. This shaky foundational deficiency orchestrated future imbroglios, as communities felt increasingly marginalized and deprived of the benefits of the black gold in their backyards. The huge profit from oil production and later natural gas contrasted sharply with the poverty and lack of development in these communities, fuelling perceptions of inequality and unfairness. Thus, the persistent conflicts are woven by a complex web of multiple causes, as the state is the epicenter of the oil and gas industry (Aaron, 2012, pp.259-273; Ajibade, 2019). As a result, the state experiences a persistent state of violent conflict stemming from the activities of these companies.

Arising from the decades of neglect of corporate social responsibilities on the part of IOCs, there remains a deep rift in their relationships. This sour relationship has caused much agony for these companies to freely engage their social license of operation in the state. This 'cold war' is detrimental to both sides, as well as the state, in terms of revenue that would have accrued to its coffers. The root of the persistent tensions, among others, is environmental degradation and unequal distribution of the oil wealth. Communities oftentimes feel they do not receive a fair share of the wealth generated from oil and gas extraction, leading to feelings of marginalization and economic disparity. Couples with frustration, unaddressed grievances, trust issues and a lack of commitment to sustainable development agenda triggers social conflicts (Ibaba & Ikelegbe, 2010, pp.34-48; Abutudu & Garuba, 2011, pp.7-26), especially the failure to establish effective community engagement models, with apparent absence of robust communication channels for strategic collaboration fuels the multidimensional conflicts and prevents sustainable partnerships from taking the center stage of this relationship. This complex interplay of factors highlights the ineffectiveness of the many approaches adopted by the IOCs in fostering sustainable development and mutually beneficial relationships.

This unholy relationship is the bane of indigenous communities' unrest and protests that frequently disrupt Companies' operations through sabotage, blockade and occupation of facilities (Adekola & Mitchell, 2011, pp. 50-68). Thus, the state security crackdowns, which, in most cases, have turned bloody. The Ogoni nine incidents of 1995 and the loud global outrage is a good example of the repressive attitude of the Nigerian state. The overbearing attitude of the Nigerian state, in its struggle for oil wealth over the protection of its citizens, is one significant trigger of violent conflict in Bayelsa State over the decades. The Nigerian government, in order to mitigate this perennial conflict, sought to mediate the disputes between IOCs and indigenous communities through constitutional initiatives such as the derivation principle, under which oil and gas producing communities benefits a 13 per cent derivation, which is received by state government. It must, however, be emphasized that not all indigenous communities in the state are oil and gas producing. This is especially because, when the 13 per cent is received by the state government, most of these producing communities suffer deliberate neglect in terms of development within their state, which has become a significant problem (Adekola & Mitchell, 2011).

These indigenous communities sense that the benefit of oil and gas wealth is not coming their way; rather, it is being taken to other communities that produce nothing, fueling the flames of conflict cycles. The consequence of this neglect was to resort to sabotage, pipeline vandalism, and the kidnapping of oil workers to protest the exploitation by these companies. It's in light of this seemingly glaring injustice or broad day robbery that gave birth to what came to be called militancy in the wider Niger Delta region. Understanding the dynamics of this large-scale violent conflict cycles between IOCs and indigenous peoples is the main focus of this study for analysis. Thus, the paper is divided into five segments to address their struggle to make an extremely difficult life livable.

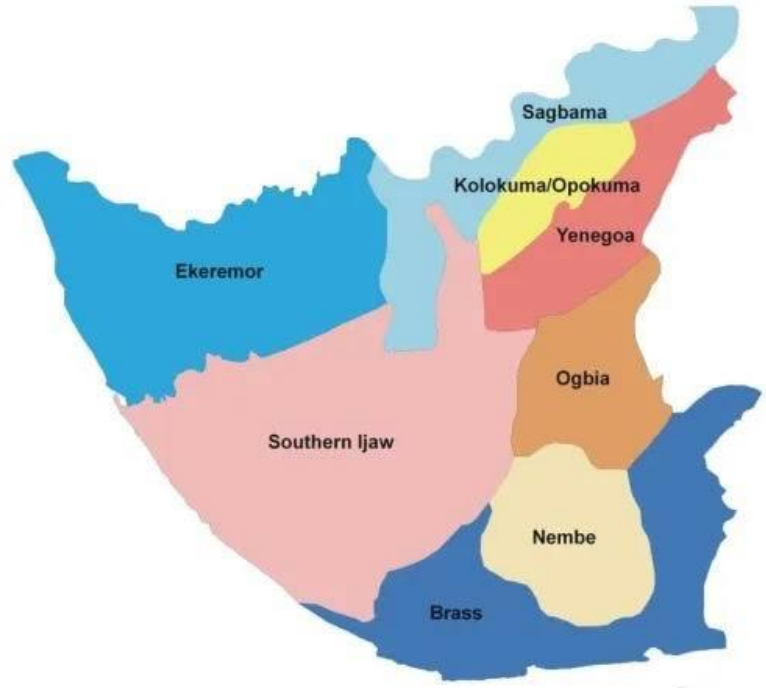
Geographical Overview of Bayelsa State

Bayelsa State is one of the littoral states in the South-South or Niger Delta region with a rich biodiversity, with a diverse range of flora and fauna such as mangrove forests, freshwater swamps, and coastal lagoons. However, the state also faces significant environmental challenges, particularly due to oil and gas exploration and production activities. Oil spills and gas flaring have led to widespread pollution, deforestation, and the degradation of the state's natural resources. This is the ancestral home of all Ijo peoples in Africa and the diaspora. These communities have long relied on the region's natural resources for their livelihoods, engaging in activities such as fishing, farming, and small-scale trading (Alagoa, 2012). However, the environmental degradation and socioeconomic challenges faced by the people have led to complex conflicts. Despite the economic importance of the state, it has also been the site of significant social and political unrest. The state has experienced a long history of violent conflicts, which has been driven by a range of factors, including environmental degradation, economic inequality, and political marginalization, with significant impacts on sustainable development.

The State was created out of the old Rivers State on October 1, 1996, with eight Local Government Areas; namely, Brass, Ekeremor, Kolokuma/Opokuma, Nembe, Ogbia, Sagbama, Southern Ijaw and Yenagoa (Emmanuel & Sofiri, 2020, pp. 5-42). The state covers an area of 21,108.4 square kilometers, located at latitude 40 45' North and longitude 60 05' East. It shares boundaries with Rivers State to the West and Northwest, Delta State to the East and Southeast, and

the Gulf of Guinea to the South (Aigberua, Taraou & Erepamowei, 2020, pp. 59-67). The state is known for its tropical climate, with high humidity and significant rainfall throughout the year, supporting lush vegetation and diverse ecosystems. The state's vegetation includes mangrove forest, tropical rainforest, and wetlands, providing habitats for a variety of plant and animal species. Bayelsa State is crisscrossed by several rivers, including the Nun River, Brass River, Santa Barbara River, Nicholas River, and Sangana River, which play a vital role in the state's ecosystem and its blue economy. The presence of extensive water bodies and wetlands contributes to the state's rich biodiversity and supports activities such as fishing and agriculture. With a population of approximately 2.3 million people (Bureau of Statistics, 2016), the state is predominantly inhabited by different Ijo groups, who are known for their rich cultural heritage and traditional seafaring lifestyle.

Fig 1: Map of Map of Bayelsa State



This map of Bayelsa State, is showing the eight local administrative areas of the state. The state is a major contributor to Nigeria's oil and gas production, with several major oil and gas fields located within its borders. The state currently has 12 Oil Mining Licenses (OMLs) and 4 Oil Prospecting Licenses (OPLs) and accounts for roughly fifteen percent of the country's 159 OMLs. Specifically, two of Nigeria's three giant oil reservoirs are located in Bayelsa: Nembe Creek and Gbarain fields. These fields, along with over 258 oil fields, 2,616 oil wells, and 232 oil facilities crisscrossed by 5,000 km of pipelines, and produced roughly 290,000 barrels of crude oil per day in 2019, contribute significantly to Nigeria's oil production (Okonta & Douglas, 2003; Senatu et al, 2023).

Research Methodology and Demographic Profile of Respondents

This paper adopts the historical and qualitative case study approach to gain an in-depth understanding of the complex dynamics in the relationship between IOCs and indigenous communities in Bayelsa State over the decades. Qualitative methods are well-suited for exploring intricate social phenomena through the collection of rich contextual data from secondary sources. While the historical method is top-notch for generational problems that have catalyzed into a multidimensional web to quarry through eyewitness accounts of those lived experiences variedly in forms, thus illuminating them in living memories. The combination is an established groundswell known to unravel the myths and traditions, as well as behaviors influencing violent conflicts in the Niger Delta social ecology.

Demographic Profile of Respondents

Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		

Male	108	60	
Female	82	50	
Age Group			
18-30	54	30	
31-40	63	35	
46-60	18	18	
61 years and above	18	18	
Educational Qualification			
No Formal Education	27	15	
Primary Education	36	72	
Secondary Education	82	50	
Tertiary Education	45	25	
Occupation			
Fishing	54	30	
Farming	45	25	
Trading	36	20	
Civil Service	37	25	
Others	18	10	

Source: Field work, 2025

Theoretical Analysis

This paper is anchored on the power dynamics and hegemony theory by Italian Marxist philosopher and political theorist Antonio Gramsci. Gramsci developed the concept of hegemony in his writings, particularly in his "Prison Notebooks" (Gramsci, 1971, p.10), which he composed while imprisoned by the Italian fascist regime in the 1920s and 1930s. Gramsci's work on hegemony is central to his broader analysis of power relations, ideology, and social change within capitalist societies. Power dynamics and hegemony theory offer valuable insights into understanding the complex relationship between IOCs and indigenous communities of Bayelsa State, Nigeria. While the companies exercised significant power relations in the socioeconomic sphere, the indigenous communities wallowed in degradation. Arguably, the basis of power dynamics is one of relational power within social structures and interactions with vast resources and global reach, wielded immense economic power, enabling them to exert considerable influence over the Nigerian state and indigenous communities. The power dynamics allowed them to shape policies and decision-making processes in ways that served their interests, oftentimes at the expense of these communities (Watts, 2004, pp.50-80; Peluso & Watts, 2001; Rachar, 2016, p.227).

Hegemony Theory, as articulated by Antonio Gramsci, offers further insights into the dynamics at play. Hegemony refers to the dominance of one group over others through a combination of coercion and consent. OIC's dominance was reinforced by its ability to garner consent from the Nigerian government and local compradors, which benefited from the company's patronage (Watts, 2004). Thus, a hegemonic relationship allowed IOCs to maintain their operations while minimizing resistance from indigenous communities, even in the face of environmental degradation, human rights violations, and socioeconomic marginalization (Obi, 2010, pp.219-236; Obi, 2009, pp.103-128). However, the indigenous communities did not passively accept the OIC's hegemony. Thus, various forms of resistance emerged, ranging from peaceful protests to militant activities. Militant groups such as the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND), Niger Delta Volunteer Force, Egbesu Boys and many others became platforms for violent agitations, for examples. These resistance movements challenged IOCs' dominance and sought to assert indigenous communities' rights to a clean social ecology and sustainable development.

The combination of the two frameworks further provides a nuanced understanding of the involvement of the Nigerian government, which nearly always collaborates with IOCs due to its dependence on oil and gas revenues and the influence of the industry globally. This created a complex web of power relations, where indigenous communities faced multiple sources of oppression and marginalization, not only from IOCs but also from their government. The applications of this model provide a more valuable and consistent analytical framework for understanding the complex relationship between IOCs and indigenous communities in Bayelsa State vis-à-vis contemporary

Capitalist reality. It is safe to argue, for example, the complicity of the Nigerian state, created hegemonic structure that marginalized the indigenous communities' and perpetuated environmental degradation and socioeconomic injustice, and the communities' resistance on many fronts, serves as the social pillar of hegemonic relationship, for analysis.

Nigerian State, International Oil Companies and Indigenous Communities Relationships

The relationship between the Nigerian state and IOCs operating in Bayelsa State has been a complex and contentious one. The discovery of oil at Otuogidi (near Oloibiri) in Ogbia LGA of the state in 1956 in commercial quantity, and subsequent ones at Nembe Creek Field, Soku Oil Field, Santa Barbara Field, Odema Creek Field, Tebu Daba Oil Field, among others, have led to a dynamic and oftentimes awesome interaction between the Nigerian government, IOCs and indigenous communities. As aforementioned, a major area of friction in the relationship is the challenge of ownership and benefit sharing. The Nigerian government, through its national oil company NNPC (now Ltd), maintains a majority stake in all oil operations in the country, with the IOCs playing the role of partnership (Obi, 2010). The exclusion of these communities from the revenue distribution table while sharing oil revenues amongst three tiers of governments (federal, states and LGAs) has been a dangerous constitutional aberration. Although there remains to be seen a significant walk away from the old ways by the establishment of the Petroleum Industry Act 2021, constitutionalizing indigenous communities' direct percentage share of the benefit of the oil wealth.

Until the passage of the PIA 2021, most of the relationships between IOCs and local communities were determined by Global Memoranda of Understanding (GMOUs), wherein IOCs entered into specific arrangements with Communities' to secure and retain their social license to operate rather than address their pollution related liabilities. The reality is that the absence of effective redress has meant, in its entirety, the lines have been constantly blurred (Senatu et al, 2023). The dangers of accurate proportion of IOCs annual income to an environmental remediation fund and a decommissioning and abandonment fund levels determined by the IOCs' audits is one side while the contribution of three percent of their annual spend as package for host communities trust fund (HCTF), for community development, including infrastructure, economic empowerment opportunities, educational development, healthcare provision and environmental protection measures among others, is another. This support is modelled on the GMOU approach in that the IOCs will be responsible for the composition of the board of trustees (BOT), is really a worrisome bureaucratic game for another day.

The relationship between IOCs and indigenous communities is what could be referred to as a "resource curse", characterized by persistent conflicts and tensions. These conflicts, as aforementioned, oftentimes arise from the unequal distribution of the oil wealth, as well as environmental degradation and social marginalization experienced by local communities. By addressing these challenges, various conflict resolution approaches have been utilized, though with varying degrees of success. One such framework as has been aforementioned GMOU, which was introduced by Shell, Agip, etc. at different times. This is a negotiated agreement between OICs and communities that aims to enhance community development, environmental protection, and conflict resolution. Under this framework, communities are given a greater role in the decision-making process and the management of community development projects (Obi, 2010; Ajibade, 2019). Thus, IOCs and indigenous communities work in partnership to identify and address grey and contentious interests for these communities. The partnership gave room to initiate and develop projects, adding Local content that would benefit the communities.

The GMOU framework is engendered for investments in infrastructure, education, and healthcare, as well as frantic efforts at mitigating environmental impacts. However, the effectiveness of the GMOU, like many other approaches, has been characterized by mixed feelings. While it has helped to reduce some of the tensions between OICs and their host communities, conflicts have continued to arise, particularly around issues of environmental degradation and inequitable distribution of benefits. While some critics have argued that the GMOU model falls short of addressing the underlying power imbalances and structural inequalities that have fueled the conflicts, the introduction of community development agreements (CDAs), which are legally binding contracts between IOCs and their host communities only provides a platform for negotiating the terms of oil exploration and production, as well as the allocation of benefits and the management of environmental degradation on the social community (Obi, 2009). The implementation of CDAs has

also been mixed, with some communities reporting positive outcomes, while others complain of its negative applications. The implication is that the conflict dynamics frameworks have not been able to cater for all the problems they envisage resolving, and, in most cases, exacerbate the situation rather than resolving the problems. Thus, it only escalates the conflict trends with many unfulfilled promises, frustrations and so on.

Thus, the Nigerian government has historically been accused of favoring the interests of the IOCs over those of the local populations. This has manifested in the state's use of military force to quell protests and unrest in the state, as well as the perceived absence of investment and social services. The IOCs, on the other hand, have been criticized for their environmental practices, which have led to widespread pollution and ecological damage in the state; they are often characterized by tensions and conflicts. Arguably, there is no IOC's headquarters currently in these places or state capital, only Liaison or District Offices are seen. All the IOCs' headquarters have been relocated to Lagos and Abuja for strategic marginalization. For this reason, the oil-producing communities suffer from meaningful engagement with these IOCs. This has led to feelings of marginalization and the absence of partnership over the IOCs' operations. This absence of partnership and consultation between the IOCs and local stakeholders, have led to feelings of marginalization and dashed hopes of community ownership over their operations.

Above all, Shell divestment of OML 29 did not consider local content. The cry is that many of such divestment never considered people from oil-producing communities. Shell divestment of OML 29 is one good example. This unequal distribution of economic benefits, Locals oftentimes feel they are been marginalized without the benefits of first refusal, leading to resentments and protests (Idemudia, 2009, pp.133-141; Idemudia, 2009, pp.96-116). This is exacerbated by the significant environmental damage caused by the IOC's operations, which overwhelmingly impact land, lives and livelihoods. To address these issues, a more collaborative and participatory approach to the operations of IOCs is sine qua non in this direction. This would involve greater community engagement, more equitable benefit-sharing arrangements, and stricter environmental regulations. Despite the streaming of PIA and Local Content Acts (LCAs), the progress has been slow, and the tensions between the IOCs and oil-producing communities remain significant. A more deliberate action on the part of government to address these issues through the PIA to promote sustainable development is required. However, the results of these efforts have been mixed, and the underlying tensions between the Nigerian state, IOCs and locals remain unresolved.

Environmental Degradation and Indigenous Communities' Response

The oil industry saw a rapid expansion with profound escalation in environmental damages, community grievances and violent repression as successive military regimes aggressively prosecuted more extraction in the 1970s and 1980s, respectively. This is the "golden age" of the petroleum industry (Omeje 2006a, pp.477-499; Omeje, 2006b), with overwhelming benefits on the part of the Nigerian state and significant environmental degradation on indigenous communities, as well as an era of irrevocable breakdown in cooperative partnership. Consequently, the inherent issues of environmental degradation, such as oil spillages, with deficient compensations, the non-employment of people from these communities into managerial positions, were channeled to the forefront, and many others became central conflict issues. The series of violent conflicts was transformed into a phenomenon called militancy. And the government's misrepresentation of this struggle against the oil companies is the function of the Federal Government of Nigeria, with a crackdown response, without taking cognizance of the rights of indigenous communities (Omeje 2006a), opens the "Pandora's Box" of legitimacy of the government. This unthinkable display of suppression of Indigenous Communities birthed the idea of separatism and resource control agenda by the people of the state and by extension the Niger Delta region.

But the quick and sensible intervention of President Yar'Dua's administration saved the nation from another civil imbroglio. The Administration's engaged stakeholders and militants with interests in genuine resolutions of grey areas such as the Amnesty program and the ministry of Niger Delta Affairs to mitigate the long neglect of these communities, as well as mainstreaming the agenda of the infrastructural deficit of state vis-à-vis the region, calmed already frayed nerves. The aforementioned bold step rejigged a systemic compromise for the oil and gas industry to thrive in the state, with huge ecological funds downplaying the social impacts (Isumonah, 2004, pp433-453). The era signals a growing partnership, community engagement and brings to the fore some of the causes of oil spills

that occurred in Bayelsa State arose from ageing or poorly maintained infrastructures and operational errors, and not sabotage in all the cases. The consequences of these oil spills were profound and multifaceted. Agricultural lands and fishing grounds, which were the economic lifeblood of many Bayelsa communities, were rendered unusable, jeopardizing food security and traditional livelihoods (Isumonah, 2004) the contaminated ecosystems posed severe health risks, with documented cases of skin lesions, respiratory problems, and other illnesses linked to the exposure to oil pollution.

Beyond oil spills, the practice of gas flaring also had severe environmental impacts. The large concentration of oil fields and gas flaring releases vast quantities of greenhouse gas and other pollutants into the air, contributing to local air pollution and potential climate change impacts. Also, the construction of pipelines and production facilities led to the clearing of vast swaths of forests and mangrove ecosystems, disrupting delicate ecological balances and threatening biodiversity. Local communities, whose traditional ways of life were intimately tied to these natural environments, witnessed the gradual erosion of their cultural heritage and way of life. As the environmental degradation intensified, so too did the frustration and anger within these communities. They perceived that oil companies are an exploitative force, extracting the indigenous wealth while leaving behind a trail of destruction and little in the way of tangible benefits or compensation (Amnesty International, 2009; Amnesty International, 2014).

The laughable Community's effects are declining catch yields for fishermen, diminished crop yields for farmers, and increased health problems, all of which are attributed directly to the impacts of IOCs' operations. Communities' response to a livable environment, such as protests and demonstrations against IOCs, became increasingly common; with communities demanding accountability, environmental remediation, and adequate compensation for the losses they had suffered (Obi, 2010). However, many felt that their concerns were largely ignored or met with inadequate responses from the companies and the Nigerian government. The environmental degradation also exacerbated existing socioeconomic inequalities and marginalization within these communities. Those who relied heavily on natural resources for their livelihoods, such as subsistence farmers and fishers folk, were disproportionately affected, while the benefits of oil wealth remained concentrated among elites and urban dwellers.

Militancy Crackdown

As the environmental degradation and its consequences intensified, with the perceived lack of adequate response from IOCs and the Nigerian government, tensions have escalated into open conflicts and militancy since 2000 A.D. The growing frustration and sense of injustice among local populations, fueled by decades of unfulfilled promises, marginalization, and the destruction of traditional livelihoods, created a fertile ground for radicalization and the emergence of militant groups (Obi, 2010), these groups, initially formed as community self-defense organizations, increasingly adopted confrontational tactics to disrupt IOCs' operations and demand concessions from the IOCs and the government. The response was the birth of the Movement for the Survival of the Izon Ethnic Nationality in the Niger Delta (MOSIEND), led by T K Ogoriba, in 1992. MOSIEND engaged in various forms of protest, including blockades of oil installations, hostage-taking of oil workers, and sabotage of pipelines and infrastructure. These actions aimed to draw attention to the group's demands for greater control over local resources, environmental remediation, and improved socioeconomic conditions for the communities.

As the conflicts escalated, other militant groups emerged, each with their specific grievances and tactics. The Egbesu Boys, a militant youth organization rooted in traditional Ijo culture, became notorious for their use of violence and confrontational tactics. They were known for their involvement in kidnappings, pipeline vandalism, and armed clashes with security forces (Ikelegbe, 2001, pp.437-469; Ikelegbe, 2006, pp.208-234). The rise of militancy in Bayelsa State was further fueled by the proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALWs). The availability of SALWs was occasioned by funding from various sources, not limited to ransom payments and oil bunkering activities. This created a vicious cycle, where the escalation of conflicts led to increased militarization and the further erosion of law and order in the state. The IOCs responded to the escalating conflicts, oftentimes involved the deployment of state security forces, leading to violent crackdowns and human rights abuses. The infamous Umuechem incident in 1990, where Nigerian security forces allegedly attacked and killed several protesters, further inflamed tensions and reinforced the perception of collusion between IOCs and the government against local communities (Ikelegbe, 2006), for example. The

Nigerian government's approach to addressing the conflicts was loudly criticized for its heavy-handedness. The Ogoni example is a living library for life. The deployment of the Joint Task Force (JTF), a military operation aimed at curbing militant activities in the state and the wider Niger Delta region, resulted in numerous human rights violations and further alienated local communities. As the conflicts escalated, IOCs' operations in Bayelsa State became increasingly disrupted, with frequent shutdowns, evacuations, and production losses, with oil theft syndrome (Syva, 2022; Daniel, 2012).

In the face of escalating conflicts IOCs' infrastructural development strategies to address the grievances of indigenous communities in the state is becoming a fad. However, these initiatives often fall short of addressing the root causes of the tensions and fail to establish a sustainable and mutually beneficial relationship. The community development programs (CDPs), which aimed to provide infrastructure, social services, and economic opportunities to indigenous communities such as the construction of roads, hospitals, schools, and water supply systems, as well as the provision of scholarships and job training initiatives, and others, are not commensurate with community's yearnings for development. Weathering the ineffectiveness of these programs was oftentimes undermined by allegations of inadequate funding, corruption, and lack of genuine community participation in the design and implementation processes. Many communities felt that the development initiatives were tokenistic and failed to address the broader issues of loss of lives and livelihoods, marginalization, environmental degradation and pollution (Pyagbara, 2007; United Nations Environment Program, 2011). Although there is an ongoing engagement with community leaders and other local stakeholders through various dialogue and consultation meetings. These efforts, among others, led to the establishment of community liaison committees (CLCs), town hall meetings, and stakeholder forums aimed at facilitating communication and addressing community concerns in recent times. But there remains to be seen how the teething challenges of environmental degradation and remediation, partnerships, decades of unfulfilled promises, marginalization and so forth, are address in the foreseeable future.

I. CONCLUSION

The paper discusses the many cycles of violent relationships between IOCs and indigenous communities for decades that have triggered violent conflicts such as deceitful promises, marginalization, frustration and poverty, as well as environmental pollution and degradation. The core of these cycles of conflicts have been OICs' failure to address CSR, which often failed to address the root causes of environmental degradation, socioeconomic inequalities, the absence of genuine community participation as well as sustainable development. As these communities continue to grapple with the realities on oil and gas extraction activities couples with oil spills, pollution, and overwhelming damage and devastation to the ecosystem endangers their lives and traditional livelihoods would apparently cause violent conflicts in their relationships, often exacerbated by conflict merchants or local compradors. The usefulness of energy for sustainable growth in many oil and gas producing regions of the world pushes for genuine stakeholders' engagement, transparent and accountable governance mechanisms, and commitment to prioritize the well-being of indigenous communities for sustainable economic development and the remediation of the ecosystem, are key to the peace, growth and stability of the relationships.

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