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AMNESTY PROGRAMME, ENABLING LAWS AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN NIGER DELTA OF NIGERIA

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Abstract

The Niger Delta Region remains the greatest wetland and resource region in Africa; it is rich in renewable, non-renewable, natural, terrestrial, and aquatic lives and human resources located within the Gulf of Guinea in the Atlantic Ocean. The environment and ecology support major economic activities which accounts for over 60% of the oil production and export since 1958. However, the export revenue and foreign exchange received in return have not translated equitably to the development of the region thus the ugly scenario engendering anger, distrust particularly against the federal government of Niger and culminating in the struggle, destruction, economic

strangulation, and degradation that play out in the region. Efforts to douse the ensuing tensions and brewing crises from the region resulted in the amnesty programme. This paper evaluates the region; its resources, amnesty programme, and laws aimed at setting the region on the path of sustainable development. The objective is to find a relationship between the existing resources and the acclaimed development of the region to see how the extant laws have promoted and sustained empowerment in the region. A serious disconnect between the people, their resources, and sustainable development is discovered. The conclusion is that the existing legal frameworks have not yielded the much-required impact and recommend the enactment of some laws that will promote sustainable peace and enduring development.

Keywords

Niger Delta Region, Resources, Amnesty, Law, Peace, Militancy, Sustainable Development

1. Introduction

The Niger Delta (ND) is the producer of oil palm and petroleum in Nigeria, and in Africa in general. It is estimated to occupy a land space of 75,000km² of 923700km² in Nigeria and is acclaimed to be the largest Wetland ecosystem in the world sitting on the Gulf of Guinea on the Atlantic Ocean to the South and Cameroon. Popularly called the oil rivers, are home to over 30 million people and have been the centre of international controversy for several years. The main occupation of the Nigeria delta people are fishing and farming according to Ikahi, *et al* (2015) and Iruo, F.A. *et al*,(2019), but due to the adverse use of the environment for oil production and exploration activities over the years, Nriagu, J. (2016) and Adekola, J. *et al* (2016), believes that the affected communities have become vulnerable to several environmental threats, hazards to health and livelihood, climate change issues, and poverty with enormous cases of environmental degradation and oil spills have been recorded. The UNEP Nairobi 2011 report says that the extent of this damage is unknown and unascertainable but the effect on the environment has giving rise to heavy and persistent periodic flooding, erosion, lack of nutrient and crop yields, biodiversity, depletion, and damage to ecosystems (flora and fauna), pollution, gas flaring in Nigeria and poverty; in addition to unsustainable development in the area. The soil nutrient is damaged, cellular respiration is halted and roots are starved of vital oxygen. The upsurge in pipeline vandalism, poor infrastructure maintenance, spills or leaks at the wall heads, human error, persistent oil theft, and intentional vandalism continue to plague the region. Thus, this research seeks to examine the

resultant degradations, their effect on the Niger Delta region, and what can be done to improve the livelihood of the host communities using the instrumentality of the laws of the land.

The Niger Delta occupies the South-South, South-East, and South West zones, consisting of Rivers, Bayelsa, Akwa-Ibom, Cross River, Delta, Edo, Imo, Abia, and Ondo States of Nigeria. It is also home to the aboriginal communities of the Ijaw, Isoko, Itsekiri, Ishan, Ilaje, Ibibio, Anang, Efik, Ekpeye, Ikwerre, Edo, Ogoni, Ogba, Engene, Ukwani, and Ukwia people of Nigeria and cuts across 800 oil-producing communities. It is located east of Niger and close to the Atlantic Ocean. They are endowed with rich natural resources, and seats as Africa's pride with the largest mangrove forest and freshwater swamps in the western region. It also has a high concentration of rich biodiversity. Pollution is unquestionably one of the primary ways of degrading the environment which results to wear and tear, deprivation of dignity, and deterioration of the region as observed by Osaro, E. *et al* (2017).

2. Research Methodology

This paper adopts the doctrinal research methodology in examining the Niger Delta, her natural resources, issues of amnesty in the region and to ascertain, if there is, any synergy for sustaining the developments of the oil-rich region which has been the subject of vicious controversies over the years. For ease of readership, the main words are explained first followed by an analysis of the research.

2.1 Resources

Dictionary.com (2020), defines resources as the collective wealth of a country or its means of producing wealth. Nigeria's Niger area is rich in renewable and non-renewable energy that has produced so much wealth to her over the years. These are examined a bit closer for better understanding. ND is the epicentre of West African economic resource base lavishly endowed with abundant natural resources such as oil, gas, coal, bitumen, minerals, and renewable energy resources (solar energy, wind energy resource, hydro and radioactive minerals) for nuclear energy, criss-crossed with 60% (percent) of creeks and dotted island, and lowland rainforests and over 75% of its settlement lying along the coastal regions of Nigeria. The region is traversed by large numbers of mangroves, rivers, streams, rivulet, and canals; a composite concept that encompasses natural systems and biological species.

2.2 Oil

It is from the geographical zones of the Niger Delta that Nigeria's major revenue is derived. The Delta has more than 900 oil wells located in the region and is guest to several international oil companies (IOC's) such As Shell, Agip, Total Fina, Exxon-Mobil Corporations, and several independent companies who have their presence in the region.

Efenakpo, O. D., *et al.* (2019) noted that crude oil is the most important asset of the region which dominates the Nigerian economy. Its petroleum resource deposits are large and have made them subjects of environmental degradation associated with anthropogenic activities apart from crude oil, other non-renewable sources deposits.

2.3 Infrastructure

The Niger Delta region has over 100 flow stations and gas plants, 1,500 km of oil and gas flow lines giving rise to more than 221 oil spills per year and there are also countless numbers of oil rigs both onshore and offshore, platforms, a network of pipelines both existing and abandoned, campsites, flow lines and station, trunk lines, motorised and non-mobile equipment's, all constituting health and environmental hazards to the delta region communities.

2.4 Biodiversity

Britannica, (2019) and greengets.org explains that biodiversity means the variety among living organisms as they interact in their natural environment. The term also refers to the number and variety of living organisms.

2.5 Fauna and Flora

The full range of species in the Niger Delta is unknown because of new ecological species being discovered. Besides, there are more than 4,600 faunal plant species of which about 205 are endemic and 484 species are plants in 112 families. There exist mammal species; birds, reptiles, higher plants, and birds remain unstudied in large areas. Other faunal distributions such as the mona-monkey, speckle-throated otter, and marsh mongoose exist in large numbers. Clawless otters and new species of genets have also been identified. The freshwater swamp forest harbours the black squirrels and antelopes, as well as other species of monkeys and apes, including chimpanzee.

Daniel E. J. (2020) wrote that elephants, Schlatter's guenon are also found in the Niger Delta. In recent years, most of these species are now being classified as vulnerable, threatened, or endangered. Studies have indicated that the commonest fish species in the Niger Delta include croakers, barracuda, shiny nose, and catfish. In addition to crustaceans and molluscs found in abundance.

In terms of plant specimens, the delta as a region is replete with floral compositions like the red mangrove tree (*Rhizophora racemosa*) with its characteristics stilt or prop roots. Other trees like salt ferns are found, while the exotic spiny false date (*Nypafruit cans*) exists also. In addition to these, there are also the freshwater *Raphia* (*raffia*) swamps, floodplain forest, and upland rainforest.

2.6 Amnesty Programme

For Wayne, E. N. (2011), amnesty is a term or concept which is derived from the Greek word ‘amnesia’ meaning “forgetting”. Used in the Niger Delta sense, the amnesty ideology relates to the uprising in the area. According to Wayne, E. N. (2011), this concept is used to show forgiveness on some offenders who would otherwise have been sentenced by the chief executive of government for criminality.

2.6.1 Who Grants Amnesty?

Section 175 of the CFRN provides that the president and governor reserve the powers to grant amnesty at the federal and state levels respectively. Adangor, Z. (2015) and Adegbite, O.B. (2020) are of the views that the pardon, clemency, or reprieve may come in the form of parole. For instance, the 1986 United States Immigration Reform and Control Act 1986 grants amnesty to undocumented aliens in the US.

It is pertinent to note that prior to the introduction of amnesty, the federal government of Nigeria had proffered solutions to the Niger Delta problems without a headway, as numerous interventive bodies and policies such as the Willink’s Commission of Inquiry of 1954 had been set up to ascertain and allay the fears of the minorities. Similarly, the Niger Delta Development Board (NDDDB); a rural development authority had been set up in 1976, the Oil Mineral Production Area Development Commission (OMPADEC), and the present NDDC were set up in the year 2000 to resolve the lingering problems be-deviling the area, but to no success. These agencies did not realize the aims for which they were set up due to a lack of strong leadership at both the national, regional, and local levels in Nigeria.

Cambridge Dictionary describes synergy as teamwork or the totality of what can be achieved working together than each working separately. In this research, the position is that dept of development can be sustained of the region resources and wealth, when the extant laws on the subject are woven around the power of amnesty. The two working together can result in much gain than each working separately.

2.7 Development

Amaramiro. A.S. *et al* (2017) defines the term “development” as polemical as it is vague and nebulous, hence there is no universally acceptable definition of the term. Conversely, Nkwocha *et al* (2018) assert it has generated several controversies. Feldman, M. H. *et al* (2016) denotes that that development is seen when the economy is improved in the areas of new goods and services, innovations, and entrepreneurship. That the development of the people can only be meaningful in terms of the development and welfare of the whole man.

To Pearce *et al* (1993), economic development is achieving a set of social goals, over time, it is progress”. Hence, Asher, R.E (1970) opines that development is a dynamic process that constantly ushers in changes that result in improvement and progress.

2.8 Sustainability

Sustainable refers to that which can be kept going or maintained. To sustain is to prevent from collapsing or giving way, it could also mean giving support to development while sustainability in the Niger Delta region means to have the ability to be maintained at a certain rate or level to avoid the depletion of natural resources in order to maintain an ecological balance or environmental quality. For the region to have healthy communities there is a need for clean air, natural resources, and a nontoxic environment. There is, therefore, a contention that for development to be sustainable there must be a nexus or meeting point between the Niger Delta, its biodiversity, amnesty, laws, programme, and sustainable development.

3. Research Issues

The research focused on the paradox of the citizens and the eventual birth of militancy. Nwauzi, L.O. *et al* (2019) believe that the Niger Delta people were alienated from their natural endowment, as a result suffer abject poverty, deprivation, and exploitation, despoliation, expropriation of all sorts, including environmental hazards (case of soot in Rivers State, where dark oily particle is seen on roofs of houses and even on humans. This is believed to be as a result of improper emissions discharged from oil spill and explorative activities in the region) which threatens their sources of livelihood and promotes health hazards.

Consequent upon these paradoxical maladies, citizenry protestations which attracted government intervention began as discussed above to avert the brewing economic crisis that gave way to militancy in the region and the subsequent amnesty programme. Another issue identified

through this research was that of the agitations of the region resulting in kidnappings, bombing of oil installations and infrastructures, and armed banditry.

4. Analysis of Issues

The effect of the militancy actions in Niger Delta instigates a state of general insecurity and underdevelopment; loss of oil revenue due to constant kidnapping and abduction of oil workers. Bunkering was at its highest ebb and militants continued to blow up oil. It was at the height of all these vices that the Federal Ministry of Niger Delta Affairs was created, with it came some relief. The agitations and violence in the region were reduced when repentant militants were disarmed, rehabilitated, and re-integrating, and assimilating into the society.

Good success was recorded using the amnesty arrangement, not without its setbacks; however, it helped to contain the menace of violence, kidnappings, and abductions that reigned at the time.

4.1 Effect of Militancy and the Ideology of Amnesty in Niger Delta Region

The ideology of amnesty was founded by the appropriate body on repentance and acceptance as said earlier to forgive militants that arose from the Niger Delta people, to stem the tide of atrocities perpetrated by hoodlums who masqueraded as militants; whom human life worth but a little in an atmosphere of perennial blood-bath. Indeed, people woke up in the hands of the ubiquitous purveyors of violence with the tool of nefarious crime antics like kidnapping, armed robbery, oil pipeline bunkering, and child theft. It afforded the tendency of taming the insurgency of crime and checking on the crime rates as the perpetrators were given a new lease of life to better their lots. It has in many ways aided the economic growth of the country as it forestalls oil pipeline vandalization and bunkering and opened opportunities for the economy to thrive again amidst peaceful co-existence.

The perceived abuse and rape of the economy perpetrated by persons, who believe that their agitations and demonstrations fall on deaf ears, took the laws into their hands on the belief that government would not heed to their plight. The amnesty programme rejuvenated their lost hopes and gave the indigent the orientation that government is once again poised to change their lot and do away with insecurity that had assumed an epidemic dimension in the Niger Delta states prior to this time.

The resurgence of criminality and wanton armed robbery attacks, bomb explosions, and mindless, vicious acts of violence across the country necessitated the feeling of insecurity and profound fear of criminal victimization among the people with gruesome stories of human carnage. The programme to a large extent opened up communication channels between the government and those groups. The voice of the people began to be heard, their problems and plights analyzed and a common ground being dialogued on with shared responsibilities to improve the economy of states.

5. Combating Niger Delta Problems through Laws

This paper asserts that the problems confronting the Niger delta can be resolved effectively through the application of laws and not by armed struggle. While armed struggle may secure temporary relief, it is the view of the writers that a durable well-articulated law that ensures social orderliness; one that is directly associated with societal growth in the view of Collins, O.C. *et al* (2017), becomes indispensable as a more enduring legal reform to secure a lasting solution. Robust legal engineering and repeal of obnoxious laws, drastic political and economic restructuring, promotion of good governance, development of good partnerships and social inclusive activities with key stakeholders (state, International Oil Companies (IOCs), NNPC communities, Federal Government) among others are capable of addressing the myriad problems confronting the Delta region according to Ibiba, S. I. (2011).

The existing legal regimes on the subject cover a wide collection of environmental protection, waste, land territorial laws, and legislations. It also includes the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (CFRN)1999, (as amended), National Policy on Environment 1989, Federal Environment Protection Agency Act, 1988 (FEPA), National Environmental Standard Enforcement Regulation Agency Act, 2007, Endangered Species Decree Cap 108 Laws of Federation of Nigeria (LFN),2004, Environmental Impact Assessment Act, 1988/1992; Territorial Water Act 1967; Oil in Navigable Waters Act, 1978; Exclusive Economic Zones Act, 1978, and Energy Commission Act, 2003. Many of these laws have been modified by review, amendment and have been codified into the current laws of Nigeria. We shall examine the respective impacts of some of these laws to see their sustainability index in the region.

5.1 The CFRN, 1999 LFN 2004.

Section 1(3), CFRN affirms that the constitution is the supreme law in Nigeria and all other laws derive their relevance from it. The inconsistency of any law with the Constitution renders such

law null and void to the extent of the inconsistency. The Nigerian Constitution takes cognizance of the need to protect the environment and has made provisions for it.

Section 20 provides for protection, improvement, and safeguard of the environment, for example, the water, air, land, forest, and wildlife of Nigeria. Section 17(2) (d) further provides that exploitation shall be for the good of the community, with the aim of preventing environmental pollution. However, Chapter II on Fundamental Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy reduced their effectiveness, as they have been made non-justiciable as argued by Eze, A. G. *et al.* (2012). Besides Sections 20 and 17(2)(d) of the Constitution, Section 33 guarantees the fundamental right to life while Section 34 guarantees the right to human dignity which oil pollution destroys. These two sections have been linked to the unhealthy condition of the environment and the low average lifespan of Nigerians.

Prior to the enactment of the above provisions of the Constitution, previous constitutions had had no provision concerning the environment and the 1999 CFRN disallowed the enforcement of treaties not enacted by the National Assembly (Parliament). The implication being that environmental protection treaties (on oil pollution) could not be enacted into law by the Nigerian National Assembly. It is seen later that NESREA made attempts to contain this perceived lacuna in the Constitution but the supremacy of the Nigerian constitution could not be derogated by the mere enactment of an Act.

On the non-justiciability of the Constitutional provisions on environmental protection, it does appear that Chapter II of the Fundamental Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy implies that no action can lie against any organ of state for failure to comply with the provisions of the section. It is on account of this that private citizens are not allowed to bring action against the government or its agents to court nor question them when there are breaches of environmental pollution laws.

Similarly, the NNPC's Joint venture with the IOCs means that no private citizens can bring or cause the government to ensure clean air, land, and water of Nigeria by mandamus or any legitimate actions in court. These remedies have been effectively whittled down by the provisions of Section 6(6) (c) of the Constitution which provides that the judicial powers must conform to Chapter 11 of this Constitution.

Plessis, A. D. (2009) aptly noted that South Africa has moved away from this position to recognize environmental rights as human rights to be protected under its Section 24, Constitution of

the Republic of South Africa, 1996. It is been further argued that an anthropocentric or human rights approach reflects a holistic view of humanity in which humans are central.

5.2 Oil in Navigable Water Act, LFN 2010 (ONWA)

The ONWA, LFN2010 created several pollution offences to punish polluters. The Prevention of the Pollution of the Sea by Oil 1954 to 1962 was included in this law for the purpose of implementation. ONWA concerns itself with the discharge of oil from ships. The Act has some preventive provisions in section 5(1), a clear attempt to prevent pollution of the sea in the course of transporting oil or oil-related product by ship.

Nwifo, C. C. (2010) reiterates that the law empowers the harbor authority to provide facilities instead of discharging it into the water. This law has also been criticized for the lenient penalties it metes out on offenders, its ineffective enforcement of the laws contained therein, and the perceived ridiculously low fines than as pointed out by Igbokwe, M.I. (2001).

The implication is that oil, pollution, and the environment become tied up with both case effects and solutions. Despite its being comprehensive, the fines stated therein are believed to be too low as it does not sufficiently serve as a deterrent to violators considering the negative impact of oil pollution. It is further noted that violators may always afford to pay the penalties easily and continue in their pollution of the waters.

5.3 National Oil Spill Detection and Response Agency Act (NOSDRA)

NOSDRA established the National Oil Spill Detection and Response Agency. This Agency is at the forefront of the response to oil spill incidents in Nigeria and the numerous environmental degradations' issues in the areas. It is focused on ensuring preparedness, detection, and response to all oil spillages in Nigeria. Its main mandate was to ensure timely, effective, and appropriate responses to all oil spill incidences, as well as protect and ensure clean-ups of all threatened environment and all impacted sites to the best extent. However, some of the perceived defects in this Act include; low fines, poor inspection, and regulatory capture, the requirement of confidentiality of information from the Agency when required by the Court does not show seriousness on the part of the Agency in preventing pollution. It is further observed that Oil Company's personnel usually lead oil spill investigations and NOSDRA does not initiate oil spill investigations themselves leading to regulatory capture according to Saleh, M. A. *et al.* (2017). A survey report of the World Bank observes that oil companies understate the incidences of oil

spillage. However, since 2013, an Oil Spills Monitor application has been established to check oil spills in the region.

5.4 Oil Pipeline Act, LFN, 2004 (OPL)

Pipeline breakage and sabotage are among sources of oil and environmental pollution in the region. The Oil Pipeline Act provides for the grant of licenses and the establishment and maintenance of pipelines incidental, supplementary to oil fields, oil mining, and for purposes ancillary to such pipelines. The Act further provides for the offence for damages and remediation against pollution from pipelines. Paragraphs 11(5) (a) & (b) states that a holder of a license shall pay compensation to any person whose land or interest in land is injuriously affected and to a third party who suffers from oil spill damage in the course of exploration, exploitation, or refining by oil companies.

Thus, the Act follows incidences of oil, pollution, and damage to the environment which makes it difficult to decouple one from the other in section 21 for compensation where the local community's interests become affected. The Act however has been criticized for paying more attention to issues of compensation payment rather than on environmental protection and remediation.

5.5 Petroleum Act, LFN, 2004.

The main law that supervises co-ordinates and regulates the environment including the acquisition of participatory rights in the oil business is the Petroleum Act, Laws of Federation (LFN) 2004. Section 9 deals with the ownership and grant of licenses by the government and contains some general provisions and help to prevent pollution in the course of oil operations.

5.6 Environmental Guidelines and Standards for the Petroleum Industry in Nigeria (EGASPIN), 2007

This is an offshoot of the FEPA Act, 1988 as amended in 1992, the only comprehensive legislation governing environmental protection in Nigeria in 2007 before its amendment via (NESREA). Although the Nigerian Department of Petroleum Resources (DPR) regulates the oil and gas industry in Nigeria, the role of NESREA as an agency is that of a watchdog of all environmental breaches, cannot be undermined. It is to the extent of its underutilization that the Nigerian environment is faced with degradation and annihilation in Sections 7(1) and (2), NESREA Act, 2007. DPR set up useful guidelines and standards for the protection against pollution while NESREA agency has been

criticized for poor penal provision, poor enforcement of its regulation's inadequate operation; facilities, and regulatory capture.

5.7 Environmental Impact Assessment Act, 2004

This Act deals with the potential and permanent impact caused by oil via pollution. The EIA was passed into law to restrict public and private projects to be carried or executed after proper screening, so as to ascertain their environmental impact and to determine appropriate remedies for the improvement of the environment following which permission to carry on with the project would be given or denied. Section 12 provides that the agency shall permit or refuse a potential project where it is likely to affect the environment. If any project is successfully executed, the Agency acting under the Act must have given the permission for such project; and would have undertaken its potential and strategic impacts not only on the environment but also on flora and fauna. The Act ensures further that, the environment is a safe place because assessment would have shown that there would be a likelihood of environmental degradation.

6. Niger Delta, Amnesty, and Laws: Synergy for Sustainable Development

According to Dike, S.C. (2015), oil companies in the region are likened to a two-edged sword which has brought development and improved standard of living but their activities have also led to severe degradation of the environment, with resultant damages to life and health. Oil companies have secured huge wealth for the nation since the 1958's, developed the country's oil industry, created an elite class as well as an urban society through oil infrastructure. It has similarly improved human capacity, brought Nigeria into the global limelight through diplomacy, and made Nigeria an African player in the field of politics, deployed oil money to solve some African problems, developed civil societies, and enhanced a vibrant press but the question is whether these are indeed sustainable developments. The region notably suffers from abject poverty, deprivation, exploitation, despoliation, and expropriation of all sorts, environmental hazards, and threats to their sources of livelihood as observed by Ruonagbe, I. *et al* (2011).

The fulcrum of sustainable development lies in the proper application of the natural resources in the environment to meet the present and to preserve the future needs of the environment and its biodiversity. These resources should be utilised and constantly renewed through stabilising carbon emissions to acceptable boundaries for sustaining health systems for the

benefits rather than to damage the economic, social, and physical environments in which the Niger Delta people live.

7. Conclusion of Paper

A law which promotes continuous gas flaring with paltry sums as the penalty is obviously anti-human with negative sustainable development of the region, but one that ensures social orderliness that is directly associated with societal growth becomes indispensable. Some of the legal frameworks discussed above failed to truly apply the principle of true federalism in resource control, which should ensure the equality of all the states of the federation and the mutual respect between them. The federal government on one part and the federal government and local government on the other with each other controlling certain sphere of influence and resources from their region will add to the solution.

Besides, with good governance and a robust legal regime in place, the regime of agitation for resource control and unsustainable economic development pattern would be reduced. If a law to compel the end of gas flaring had been in place, it would have incentivised adequate funding of the gas flare reduction infrastructure, while youth restiveness would have been addressed through adequate funding of the NNDC, Ministry of Environment and the Amnesty programmes and transparency in oil revenue allocation and use; promotion of education over risky behaviours, access to education, provision of healthcare, energy, water resources, electricity and services of public interest would be sustained. Besides, these concerns are that some of the laws that apply to the region have become outdated and no longer actively promote the sustainable development of the region either because they are pro-establishment; serving the interest of their masters in this case the federal government of Nigeria to the detriment of the people in the oil-producing area. The jurisprudence behind these laws appears to have been crafted for the benefits of the capitalist few leaving the downtrodden people riddled with poverty and environmental degradation as observed by Armed, S.M. A. (2017).

Without any risk of repetition, the exploration of oil in the Niger Delta region has recorded its gains amidst several challenging factors which gave way to the degradation of the environment to the detriment of lives, flora, and fauna. To lend support on the way forward, this paper recommends the following:

1. Obnoxious and outdated laws such as the Petroleum Act, 1969, the Land Use Act, 1978, and Constitutional amendment should be abrogated.
2. Full fiscal federalism should be encouraged.
3. The deliberate infrastructural and human capacity development be initiated and funding of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation and Federal Ministries of Niger Delta Affairs and Environment be desired to help reposition the sector for maximum productivity, growth, and sustainable development.
4. The regional government is encouraged to promote respect for and enforce human rights in the Niger Delta and valued reorientation for the host communities by strategies for peace, arbitration, and mediation services.
5. A win-win approach is necessary for all-round remediation, restoration, and improvement of the Niger Delta environment amidst good collaboration between owners of oil wells and licensees, and between host communities and the government is indispensable. With modular and small-scale refineries built and legally maintained in the region, management and servicing of such structures will be easy while degradable activities resulting from oil spills will be forestalled, thereby reducing illegal activities and crime.
6. When these laws and enforcement mechanisms are fully empowered, issues of regulatory capture would be minimised. The reduction of regulatory capture means that the laws would be effective to track offenders and defaulters. This will in turn promote sustainable ecosystem economic activities and human empowerment.
7. Above all, job creation and business retention through workforce development programs that will assist indigenous people to get the needed skills and education will abound. The World Bank posits that this would also include small business development programs that are geared towards helping entrepreneurs get financing or network with small businesses. Toby B.G (2019) agrees that the word sustainable development as defined by Hornby, A.S (2006) would take on its true meaning in preventing the region from collapse and gives it support to develop and maintain the region's visibility through enhanced standard of living to the end that overall improvement of the environment is continuously sustained.

7.1 Scope of the Study

This research is limited to the period of the amnesty and synergy that can be built with the extant laws to sustain development in the region.

7.2 Future Scope of Research

The future scope of discussions will consider the support and promotion of respect for the environment especially the oppressed poor from the region. Above all, arguments will be driven towards transparency and accountability from management on proceeds from oil. It will be incumbent on the federal government to activate machineries to promote transparency in extractive industries. The Nigerian Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative Act, 2007 would no longer be a paper tiger which does not hold managers of the resources from the region accountable to the people. The law that promotes respects and protects human dignity, rights, memorandum of understanding (MOU) and that which also promotes the adoption of best international practices in dealing with Nigerians at the same time respecting local laws and taxes will receive further insight on this area to foster sustainability of the region beyond rhetoric.

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