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Cult Violence in Nigeria and Corporate Social Responsibility in Oil Producing Communities

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Abstract

Since the beginning of 2014, reports of cult violence have increased sharply in the Nigeria's oil producing communities. Hence, we set out to examine the role of corporate social responsibility (CSR) from multinational oil companies (MOCs) in mitigating the spread of cult group violence in the region. A total of two thousand four hundred respondents were sampled across the nine states of the Niger Delta. Results from the use of estimated logit model reveal that MOCs via Global Memorandum of Understanding (GMOU) are in good position to deter the aggression and rise of cult violence using interventions for youth as a priority target group mechanism. This calls for pro-youth capacity building programmes, specially designed to equip the clusters with appropriate skills required for peaceful engagement and to complement government efforts in the planning and implementation of the development agenda for their respective communities. In turn, this will contribute towards enhancing a peaceful environment for doing business in the Niger Delta region.

Keywords: Environmental justice, cult violence, corporate social responsibility, oil producing communities, sub-Saharan Africa.

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1. Introduction

This study examines the role of corporate social responsibility (CSR) from multinational oil companies (MOCs) in mitigating the spread of cult group violence in the Niger Delta region. Cultism is an encircled organized association dedicated to the same cause; members of this group always oblige themselves to an oath and loyalty, which serve as their strong bond; it is also called secret cult (Roussel *et al*, 2017; Day and Kleinman, 2017). In Nigeria, the growth in cultism from being a form of cultural practice to a weapon for economic crime and political witch-hunting represents a challenge in communities, streets and institutions. The attendant cult-related violence is apparent in colleges, and universities as well as law enforcement, courts/judiciary, and other parastatal organizations of government and private establishments, in the light of the transition from being secret societies to spreading criminal syndicates

(Gboyega, 2005; Ogunbameru, 2004; Adegbenro and Olabisi, 2012). In Nigeria's Niger Delta region, planned crimes often manifest most noticeably as hegemony clashes between cult groups such as the Icelanders and Greenlanders, or Deywell versus Deybam. Over the past decade, such clashes have exterminated more than 1000 people, and have exacerbated an already challenging environment for business (PIND, 2018). This tendency has further fed a cycle of political and socio-economic instability given that cult violence weakens governments, encourages corruption, and provides avenues for crimes to penetrate structures of the region. Moreover, cultism exploits and worsens societal divisions, keeping complaints alive while undermining peace and stability. Furthermore, it deteriorates societal relations in the region by undermining firmness, eroding trust and legitimacy, and nurturing the creation of parallel or cooperated federal, state and local security services (PIND, 2015; Osagie *et al*, 2010). According to Okolo-Obasi *et al* (2001), the spread of cult group activities in the Niger Delta region has contributed to the rise of militant youth groups that align themselves with traditional rulers and engaged in sabotage of oil company equipment (and violence with competing groups) in order to extract concessions and compensation from the oil companies for their communities. The environmental destruction which has accompanied oil extraction, along with the relationship between oil companies and the Nigerian government and the lack of revenue sharing, has also contributed to this grievances being amplified and directed toward oil companies (Uduji *et al*, 2020c, 2020d, 2021a, 2021b).

The Niger Delta where multinational oil companies (MOCs) retain a significant presence has become a theater of persistent cult and communal deep conflicts. Yet, the MOCs have been part of a plethora of CSR activities which include the building of markets, hospitals, schools and provision of pipe borne water, among others (Amaeshi *et al*, 2006; Uduji and Okolo-Obasi, 2017). Nevertheless, in 2005, in the middle of violent clashes between age long ethnic enemies, many of the MOCs community development projects and production facilities were spoiled or destroyed; and consequently, in 2006, MOCs came up with a new model of CSR called the Global Memorandum of Understanding (GMOU). The GMOU represents a vital shift in the CSR approach in the region, emphasizing on clearer and accountable processes, and consistent communication with the grassroots, sustainability and conflict deterrence (Shell, 2013; Alfred, 2013). MOCs, by the end of 2012, had signed agreements with 33 GMOU clusters, covering 349 communities, which is about 35% of the local communities close to their business setups in the region. A total of 723 projects were effectively completed through the GMOUs with total funding of about \$117 Million. Nine of the 33 Cluster Development Boards (CDBs) had grown to become registered foundations currently receiving third party funding (Shell, 2013; Chevron, 2014, 2017).

However, the degree of the contribution of the GMOU initiatives to the community development in the region remain questioned. For instance, academics such as Aaron (2012); Asgil (2012); Edoho (2008); Eweje (2006); Ekhaton (2014); Marchant (2014); Slack (2012); Tuodolo (2009); Idemudia (2014, 2016) and others have disputed that the GMOU model is not far reaching or deeply rooted. On the other hand, academics like Ite (2007); Lompo and Trani (2013) and others support GMOU initiatives, arguing that the new CSR model is positively impacting on local community development given the magnitude of governmental failure. Yet, Uduji and Okolo-Obasi (2017, 2020, 2019a, 2019b) have recently included a distinction in tone of the debate as they have suggested that the GMOU initiatives of MOCs have added to the need of rural farmers, women in small-scale fisheries and livestock keeping, and youths in traditional industries livelihood, though social capabilities have truly worsened in attendant communities. Likewise, Uduji *et al* (2018b, 2019a, 2019b, 2019c) have stressed that the GMOU initiatives to some extent have added to the development of youths in cultural tourism,

HIV/AIDS response in host communities, and women in agriculture but have also ignored equalities. Accordingly, following the foregoing debate, this paper adds to the public-private partnership debate on the cult as a social challenge from the CSR perspective of MOCs in four areas that have been given much attention in the literature.

- To what extent is cult violence spread among the population along sex, age, and location (urban/rural) in oil-producing communities of the Niger Delta in Nigeria?
- What is the level of GMoU interventions of MOCs' in oil-producing communities of Nigeria's Niger Delta region?
- Do GMoU interventions of MOCs impact on reducing cult violence in oil-producing communities of Nigeria?
- What is the consequence of reducing cult violence activities in Nigeria's oil-producing communities?

Study hypothesis

Accounts of cult violence have abruptly increased in Nigeria since the beginning of 2014. This has been for the most part noticeable in the oil-producing communities, where the violence has been spread over the entire region. In Niger Delta states, cult violence has taken on different communal, criminal, militant, and/or political undertones, subject various situational tendencies. For instance, in July 2015, cases contained a major clash between rival cult groups – Daywell and Deebam – in the northern Local Government Area (LGA) of Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni that took about 16 lives. Lately, there was also a stated clash between rival cult groups – Greenlanders and Icelanders – in the southern LGA of Degema. Besides, political threats by cult groups such as the Icelanders and Greenlanders are obvious in the central LGA of Andoni. Given how prevalent the rise in cult violence and insecurity have become in the region, as well as the risk of viable peace and development, we hypothesize that:

- Multinationals oil companies have not made any substantial GMoU interventions in oil-producing communities of the Niger Delta in Nigeria (i.e. Null hypothesis).
- GMoU of MOCs has failed to lessen the rise in cult violence in the oil-producing communities of the Niger Delta in Nigeria (i.e. Null hypothesis).

Other parts of the paper are structured as follows. Section 2 provides a brief background, literature and theoretical underpinnings. In Section 3, a description of method and materials is provided while Section 4 presents the empirical results and corresponding discussion. Section 5 provides concluding remarks, caveats and future research directions.

2. Background, literature and theoretical underpinnings

Environmental degradation and loss of traditional livelihood

According to Francis *et al* (2011), the deterioration of the Niger Delta environment is one of the most visible forms of the negative impact of oil exploration and sets the region apart from other poor regions in the country. Environmental damage, a major focus of local discontent, has often brought communities into conflict with the federal government and oil companies (Ejumudo, 2014). Oil spills, gas flaring, and shoreline flooding and erosion are the main environmental challenges faced by the host communities in the region (Udo, 2020). Protecting the natural environment of the Niger Delta is closely linked to the protection of the economic wellbeing of its citizens; destruction of the environment through oil spills and gas flaring has made the poorest communities vulnerable and has had direct deleterious impacts, such as harming traditional livelihoods of the people (Mmadu, 2013). The negative impact of

environmental damage due to oil extraction on employment in fishing and agriculture in the region has not been offset by the addition of new jobs in the oil industry (Kalama and Asanebi, 2019). The main implications of this dependence are that environmental degradation has a greater impact on the poor youths than on the wealthy homes, and the Niger Delta region has a high vulnerability to poverty because of the high proportion of the population dependent on agricultural income source (Ejumudo, 2014). According to Adegbenro and Olabisi (2012), cultism can be viewed as a product of societal pressure and as a result, it is entirely viewed from a cultural context. Arijesuyo and Olusanya (2011) reasoned that it is the cultist's incapacity to gain status acceptable in conventional society that makes the cultist disrupt the means to goals. Barker (2010) states that cultism is a learning behavior from intimate group preference; and people who join cult groups may be products of a disorganized environment where norms and values are muddled. Hence, Rousselet *et al* (2017) propose that if cult violence is seen as comparable to militancy, political or communal violence interventions that focus on livelihood of young people are probably more applicable in reducing the intensity.

2.2 Issues of Cult Violence and Insecurity in Nigeria

In Nigeria, the source of cultism is linked to the pre-colonial era when people in the rural communities organized themselves into groups with the aim of making requests to their ancestors for guard by way of rituals (Gboyega, 2005; Kpae, 2016). This existed in many parts of Nigeria, particularly the south-west (Yoruba) with the predominance of *Ogboni* secret cult (Bergman, 2016; Oluwatobi and Babatunde, 2010). The Efik-Ibibio culture was secured by a cult group, the *Ekpe* that was indigenous to south-south (Niger Delta) Nigeria. The *Ekpe*, meaning *Lion*, became a widely known secret society which later spread and impacted on other ethnic cultural groups in Nigeria (NDDC, 2001; Uduji *et al*, 2019b). Though, before Nigeria achieves her independence in 1960, these ancestral cults' practices had progressed from the rural communities to the urban areas, and in due course to the tertiary and secondary institutions (Ezema *et al*, 2017; Uduji and Okolo-Obasi, 2019a, 2019b). The newly enlisted cult members were affirmed with the oath of secrecy binding to all members; promising themselves never to divulge their secret to non-members, and never to contradict the cult groups' rules and regulations as well as giving total submission to the cult members and their activities (Arijesuyo and Olusanya, 2011; Barker, 2010; Boeri, 2002). In tertiary institutions, the initiation ceremony, which the cult members popularly referred to as *Blending* takes place outside the campus of the universities inhabited by the cult group. The congregation of the newly enlisted for initiation ceremony is nicknamed *Jolly* or *Jollification*; which is prearranged for members among undergraduate students to acquaint themselves with the activities of the cult group (Daodu, 2003; Medaiyanose, 2016; Rotimi, 2005).

For the Niger Delta, the backgrounds of the main cult groups operational in the region are described as follows. The *Vikings* supreme confraternity, also called the Norsemen Klub of Nigeria was born at the University of Port Harcourt in 1982 with the mission to stimulate unity and brotherhood on campus as well as to better the society (Egbochukwu, 2009; PIND, 2015). However, when a surge of militarization swept through confraternities across Nigeria in the 1990s, three splinter groups arose from the Vikings which are the Deywell, the Deebam and the Icelanders. Unlike the parent cult Vikings, these new groups were not bound by the institutional operation code and prescribed power structure; hence they were able to spread influence outside the campus vicinities and into the surrounding local communities (Obah-Akpowoghaha, 2013; PIND, 2018). The *Deebam* sect is mainly involved in prearranged crime and racketeering activities to settle expensive membership dues. The group's influence in Emuoha LGA is so intense that it has stretched into the political sphere; violence related to this group usually occur when individuals fail to pay levies tied to election rigging or in conflicts

with the rival cult groups (Kpae, 2016; PIND, 2015). The *Deewell* group is not university associated and mostly engages in petty crime and street brawls using machetes, broken bottles and locally-manufacture guns; they lack funds and consequently are unsuccessful against their rivals. Consequently, another splinter group (Icelanders) was formed, and this further weakened them against the rival groups (Udo and Ikezu, 2014; PIND, 2018). The *Icelanders* epitomize the most violent groups in the region, as extortion, kidnapping and bootlegging are means of their generation of income. Moreover, they were also known for illegal activities on energy infrastructure in the region (Osagie *et al*, 2010; PIND, 2015). The *Greenlanders* emerged in 2013 from Icelanders split due to some irresolvable differences among them and since then have extended their sphere to cover the entire oil-producing communities. Furthermore, they have been connected to interfering with oil company equipment in order to extract benefits from oil companies (Uduji and Okolo-Obasi, 2019a; PIND, 2018). Violence with opposing groups and attacks on oil infrastructure and industry personnel have made the region for all intents and purposes ungovernable (Asgil, 2012; Boele *et al*, 2001; Watts, 2004; Marchant, 2014). Figure 1 displays the reported fatalities by year and type in the Niger Delta, 2010-2018.

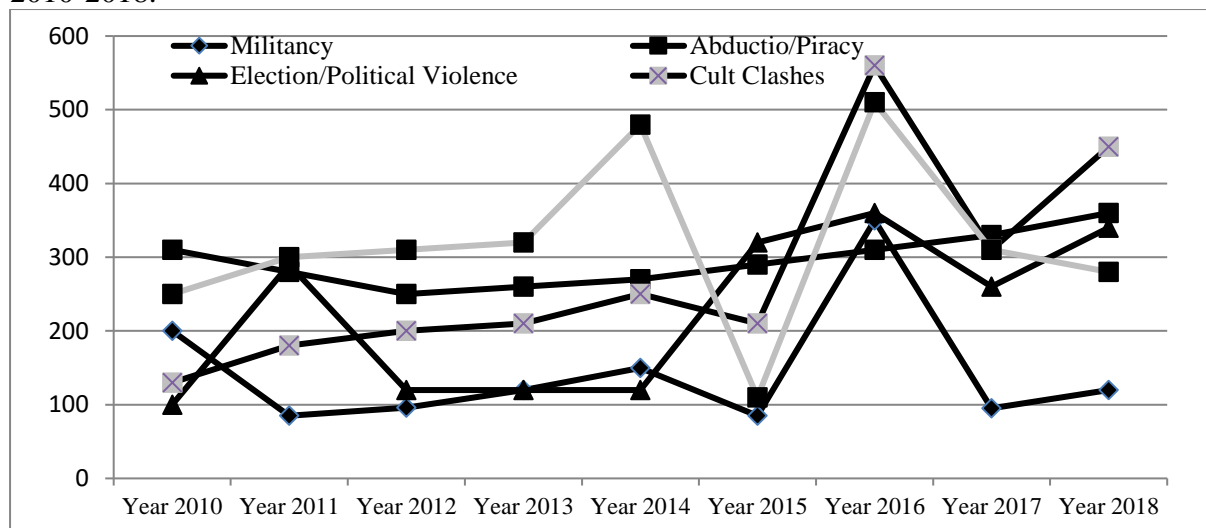


Figure 1. Reported fatalities by year and type in the Niger Delta, 2010 – 2018

Source: PIND, 2018/Authors' modification

Cult violence within the Niger Delta has only deteriorated in recent decades and the hazard in some of the key LGAs in 2015 are portrayed as follows. In *Asari Toru*, stated cult-related violence incorporated a clash of contending groups, stock piling of weapons, robbery attacks, and political thuggery during elections (PIND, 2015). In *Degema*, the cult-related violence reported included an alleged life-consuming clash between cult groups over oil bunkering; cult members were reportedly beaten in political disputes (Chinna and Amabibi, 2019; PIND, 2015). In *Eleme*, two people lost their lives in cult group clashes in April; and in July, about fifteen people died when cultist shot at random into a market place (Kpae, 2016; PIND, 2018). In *Etche*, the contentions between cult groups led to clashes that ended the lives of three cultists in January and heightened communal tensions (PIND, 2015). In *Ikwere*, there were reported conflicts between the cult groups in July, which ruined three lives and raised tensions in the communities (PIND, 2018). In *Obio/Akpor*, two cult groups purportedly clashed in January; although no one was reported dead, but fear engrossed the entire community (PIND, 2015). In *Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni*, police purportedly engaged cultists in a ferocious gun battle that killed more than 20 people; and in July clashes between cult groups took the lives of 17 people.

Overall, the LGA witnessed the most cult-related incidents in the region, with more than 68 people killed during the year (PIND, 2015; 2018). In *Okirika*, cultists and armed gangs allegedly pounced on party supporters during a political campaign rally, taking the life of a police officer and stabbing news media personnel; and in July, a cult-related clash between two communities killed 17 people (PIND, 2018). In *Tai*, two people lost their lives in a cult clash in July (PIND, 2015). In *Port Harcourt*, reported cult-related activities include kidnappings, robbery attacks, and killings (of an ex-militant leader, four men in a restaurant, and a number of others in a bar and night club), political threats in run-up elections; clashes over control of an oil bunkering camp (PIND, 2015). Figure 2 displays reported fatalities type and state in the Niger Delta, 2010-2018.

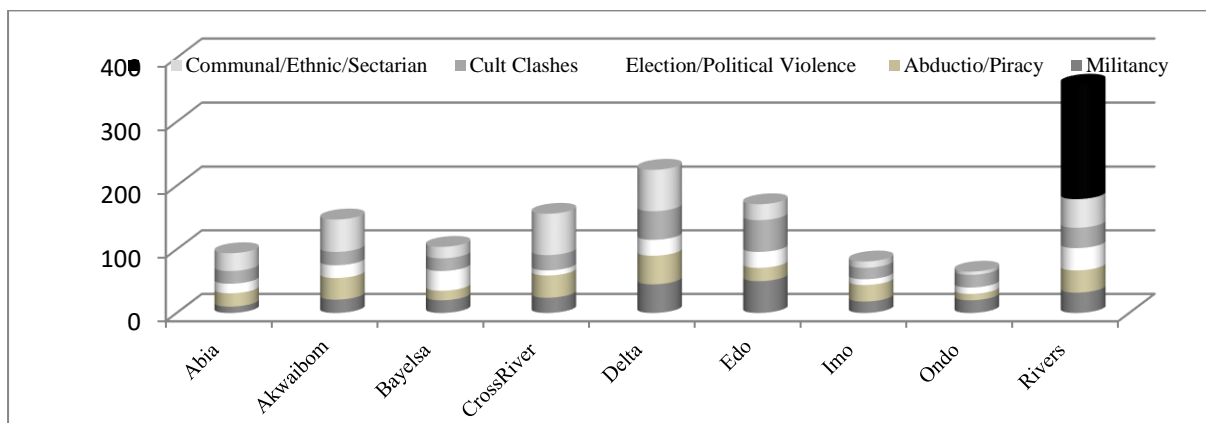


Figure 2. Reported fatalities by type and state in the Niger Delta, 2010-2018

Source: PIND, 2018/Authors' modification

However, one dominant problem with the rise of cult violence in the Niger Delta is still that since the first oil well was drilled in 1958 at Oloibiri, the traditional economies have suffered abandonment, and the youths see no future for themselves in traditional industries livelihood (Uduji and Okolo-Obasi, 2019c). Customarily, the people have been farmers and fishermen, but decades of oil spillage and gas flaring, as well as a fast growing population imply that these traditional sources of livelihood are either no longer viable or have substantially declined. As a result, the region's unemployment rates are higher than the national average and, therefore, open to the idle youths (Uduji *et al*, 2019a, 2019b, 2019c, 2019d, 2019e). Rural youths in the Niger Delta want to work in the striking oil and gas sector, and communities have protested that oil companies often are doubtful about hiring the indigenous workers due to the agitation in the region (NDDC, 2004). However, the positioning of this paper digresses from present-day cult violence literature which has focused on, *inter alia*: cult members and insanity plea (Holoyda and Newman, 2016); cult, violence and religion terrorism (2001); etiology and structure in cultism (Usman, 2008); gate keeping and narrative about cult violence (Introvigine, 2018); using counselling and behavior modification to curb cultism (Osakinle and Falana, 2011), among others.

2.3 Theoretical Underpinnings

This study combined the frustration – aggression theory (Breuer and Elson, 2017), the relative deprivation theory (Walker and Pettigrew, 1984), and an African perspective of CSR (Visser, 2006; Amaeshi *et al*, 2006), to explain the fact that environmental injustice are rising from the activities of the multinational oil companies adversely affect the land and people of the Niger Delta and the youth in particular. The formulation of the frustration – aggression theory focused

on the limited interference with an expected attainment of a desired goal on hostile (emotional) aggression hence; implying that when the youth find it difficult to achieve their goals and targets in any given system or society, they are bound to react otherwise by demonstrating aggressive threats and tendencies. Relative deprivation therefore refers to the discontent people feel when they compare their positions to those of similar situation and find out that they have been less than their peers; hence, it is a condition that is measured by comparing one group's situation to the situations of those who are more advantaged. However, even though the CSR Pyramid of Carroll (1991) is possibly the most well-known model of such intervention, Visser (2006) questioned the accuracy and importance of the CSR Pyramid in the context of Africa. Similarly, Asongu *et al*(2019a, 2019b)suggest that the mainstream CSR agenda has largely been driven by Northern actors and consequently revealed the priorities of Western societies with inadequate space for other concerns. Muthuri (2012) relying on the extant literature on CSR in Africa, posited that CSR issues dominant in Africa include community development, poverty reduction, education and training, sports, human rights, corruption control, economic and enterprise development, health and HIV/AIDS, environment, governance and accountability. Amaeshi *et al* (2006) advocate that the Nigerian conception of CSR remarkably differs from the Western version and should be targeted towards addressing the distinctiveness of the socio-economic development challenges of the country. Thus, this paper embraces a quantitative approach, but deliberates on the outcome from the frustration – aggression theory, the relative deprivation theory, and the African perceptive while looking at the role of cultural context in determining appropriate CSR priorities and programmes for alleviating the rise in cult violence in Nigerian's oil-producing communities.

3. Methods and Materials

Data triangulation at multiple levels is essential in this study; hence, it combined both primary and secondary data for the analysis. We embraced a quantitative method, given the scarcity of quantitative data on the complexities of CSR effect in the region (Uduji and Okolo-Obasi, 2020). The study employed a survey research technique aimed at gaining information from a representative sample of household in the oil-producing communities. Therefore, we collected cross-sectional primary data making use of structured questionnaire to profile the individual, households and communities in the study area. Secondary data from the six major MOCs in the region provided a situational analysis of the GMoU. Also data were obtained from the entrepreneurship development data of National Bureau of Statistics, Nigeria general household survey 2015-2016, and World Development Indicator (WDI) database (World Bank 2018). The Niger Delta region is made up of nine of Nigeria's constituents states (Figure 3).



Figure 3: Constituent administrative states of the Niger Delta, Nigeria

Source: NDDC, 2004

3.1 Sampling procedure

In this process, we made use of a multi-staged sampling method which combined both purposive and simple random sampling to choose the final respondents for the study. Firstly, we intentionally selected two local government areas (LGAs), each from the nine States of the Niger Delta region based on hosting multinational oil facilities. Secondly, three communities from each of the picked LGAs were chosen on the same basis of hosting or being close to a community hosting MOC facilities. From the picked communities, simple random sampling with the help of community gate keepers was used to choose 2400 respondents based on the state population as shown in Table 1.

Recognizing that the foundation of ethical research is ‘informed consent’, we adopted the ethics of informed consent in carrying out this study. Participants in the survey were fully informed of what the questions are, how the data would be used, and that there would no consequences thereafter. Before the survey, we agreed with the community gate-keepers on who the researchers and research assistants were the intention of the study, what data would be collecting from participants, and how the data would be used and reported; as well as the potential risks of taking part in the research. No respondent or participant was forced or coerced into taking part in the study. Anonymity and confidentiality of information was also assured to the voluntary respondents.

Table 1. Sample determination table

States	Total Population	Minimum Sample Per Community	Minimum Sample Per State	% of Pop.	Receiver	Non-Receiver
<u>Abia</u>	2,881,380	26	216	9%	108	108
<u>Akwa Ibom</u>	3,902,051	36	288	12%	144	144
Cross River	2,892,988	30	240	10%	120	120
<u>Delta</u>	4,112,445	40	312	13%	156	156
Imo	3,927,563	38	312	13%	156	156
<u>Ondo</u>	3,460,877	32	264	11%	132	132
Edo	3,233,366	30	240	10%	120	120
<u>Bayelsa</u>	1,704,515	16	120	5%	60	60
Rivers	5,198,716	52	408	17%	204	204
Total	31,313,901	300	2400	100%	1200	1200

Source: NPC, 2017/ NBS, 2017/Authors’ computation

3.2 Data collection

A well-structured questionnaire was administered to the chosen respondents in a form that represents a suitable tool to assess qualitative issues by quantitative information. The questionnaire profiled the individual, household, and the community and focused more on enterprise development and empowerment of the base of the economic pyramid. The researchers directly administered the questionnaires with the help of research assistants. Using the local research assistants was necessitated by the study area being multi-lingual with over 50 ethnic groups that speak diverse local languages and dialects, in addition to the land being very rough with a high level of violence in some areas.

The survey method used for the study was participatory rural appraisal (PRA) techniques, using semi-structured interview questionnaire (SSI). We adopted the use of participatory research technique in collecting data, especially as it concerns Cult Violence in Nigeria and CSR, because the views of the people being studied on all the issues are paramount. The nature of violence and conflict resolution, especially in the oil producing communities, warrants an approach that emphasizes local-level knowledge and experience, which we gathered through a participatory process. There was little personal information sought for, especially in the social economic section; but every other question focused on the perception of the respondents, as to how cult violence affects the oil producing communities in the Niger Delta of Nigeria.

3.3 Analytical framework

Descriptive and inferential statistics were both used to analyze the data, answer questions from the study and test the attendant hypotheses. In addition to the descriptive method of data analysis, which comprehensively uses frequency tables, graph and charts, an advanced econometrics technique of logit model was estimated. This binary choice model makes available the opportunity to identify the probability of households partaking on the subject of the study. This is the probability of household participating in GMoU cluster to empower her member with the CSR support of the multinational oil companies. The dependent variable (probability of participating in GMoU cluster) reverts up against the observable individuals, household and community level; characteristics included receipt or non-receipt of CSR support. Hence, the multivariate linear regression model of the odds ratios is stated thus:

$$P_x = \log \frac{P_i}{1-P_1} = \log 0_i = \alpha + \beta_i I_i \dots + \dots \gamma_i H_i \dots + \pi_i C_i \dots + \mu \quad \text{Equation 1}$$

Where:

α - Vector of coefficient of independent variation,

β = Vector coefficient of variables, which indicates individual characteristics,

γ = Vector coefficient of variables, which indicates household characteristics,

π = Vector coefficient of variables, which indicates community level characteristics,

Y = whether the individual is self-employed or not i.e. 1= self-employed 0= not self-employed,

P_i = probability of $Y=1$

I - Vector of variables, which indicate individual characteristics,

H - Vector of variables, which indicates household characteristics,

C - Vector of variables, which indicates community characteristics and

μ - Error term

In order to make certain a more detailed and properly illustrated work, the marginal impact of the independent variable to the dependent variables were estimated. On the other hand, a multicollinearity test based on variance inflation factor (VIF), correction method for heteroskedasticity problem, and specification tests were carried out to ascertain how the variance of an estimator is inflated by the presence of multicollinearity. In line with the position of Gujarati (2004), the variables are highly collinear if the VIF of a variable surpasses 10. Thus, post optimality tests of endogeneity and multicollinearity were made and the mean VIF result was confirmed to be less than 10.

4. Results and discussion

4.1 Socio-economic characteristics analysis

We commence the analysis of the household in the study with an account of some of the social (location, household income etc), demographic (age, household size, marital status etc), and economic (occupation, business size, household income) characteristics of the respondents. These distinguishing features are vital in understanding the variances in the socio-economic status of the respondent who have received CSR in comparison to their non-receiving counterparts.

Table 2. Socio-economic characteristics of the respondents.

Variables	Freq	%	Cum	Variables	Freq	%	Cum
Sex of Respondents				Household Size			
Males	1,550	65	65	1-4 Person	1,008	42	42
Females	850	35	100	5-9 Person	1,104	46	88
	2,400	100		10-14 Person	216	9	97
Primary Occupation				15 Person and above	72	3	100
Farming	1,270	53	53	2,400	100		
Trading	240	10	63	Annual Income			
Fishing	312	13	76	1000 - 50,000	480	20	20
Paid Employment	184	8	84	51,000 - 100,000	672	28	48
Handicraft	174	7	91	101,000 - 150,000	480	20	68
Others Entrepreneurs	220	9	100	151,000 - 200,000	312	13	81
	2,400	100		201,000 - 250,000	216	9	90
Age of Respondents				251,000 - 300,000	168	7	97
Less than 20 years	216	9	9	Above 300,000	72	3	100
21-25 years	432	18	27	2,400	100		
26-30 years	504	21	48	Average income of other household members			
31 - 35 years	624	26	74	None	288	12	12
35 - 40 years	264	11	85	1000 - 50,000	480	20	32
Above 40 years	360	15	100	51,000 - 100,000	432	18	50
	2,400	100		101,000 - 150,000	576	24	74
Level of Education				151,000 - 200,000	384	16	90
None	192	8	8	Above 200,000	240	10	100
Primary	648	27	35	2,400	100		
Secondary	1,080	45	80	Receipt of direct empowerment CSR			
Tertiary	480	20	100	Yes	600	25	25
	2,400	100		No	1,800	75	100
Marital Status				2,400	100		
Single	600	25	25				
Married	1,104	46	71				

Widow/ Divorced/Separated	696	29	100
	2400	100	

Source: Authors' compilation based on household survey

The analysis in Table 2 shows that about 53% of the respondents are full-time farmers, while 13% participate in fishing and only about 8% are engaged by either the government or the private sector in non-farm activities. The remaining 9% are involved in other forms of entrepreneurship. The respondent's average age is 33 years, while average experience is 12 years; with about 9% having more than 15 years of experience in their different businesses. In addition, the analysis (Table 2) indicates that only about 8% of the respondent population in the study area is wholly uneducated; the rest are literate at least to basic education level. About 25% of the respondents are single, 46% are married while 13% are widowed, probably as a result of incessant violence in the region. 16% are separated. Despite the rich potential of traditional enterprise (farming and fishing) in these communities, the average annual revenue of the respondents is less than NGN100, 000 (equivalent of 328 USD) per annum. While 25% of the respondents have taken part in a form of capacity building programme of the MOCs, 75% have not even heard much about it; hence, about 43% say they have never enjoyed any form of CSR support. This finding somewhat questions the assertion of Shell (2013) that by 2012, MOCs had achieved signing an agreement with 33 GMoU clusters, covering 349 communities, which is roughly 35% of the local communities around their business setups in the host communities.

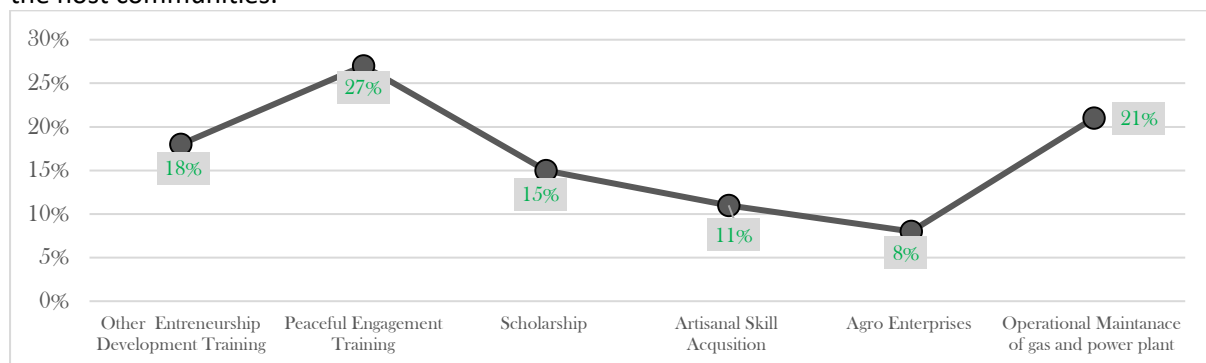
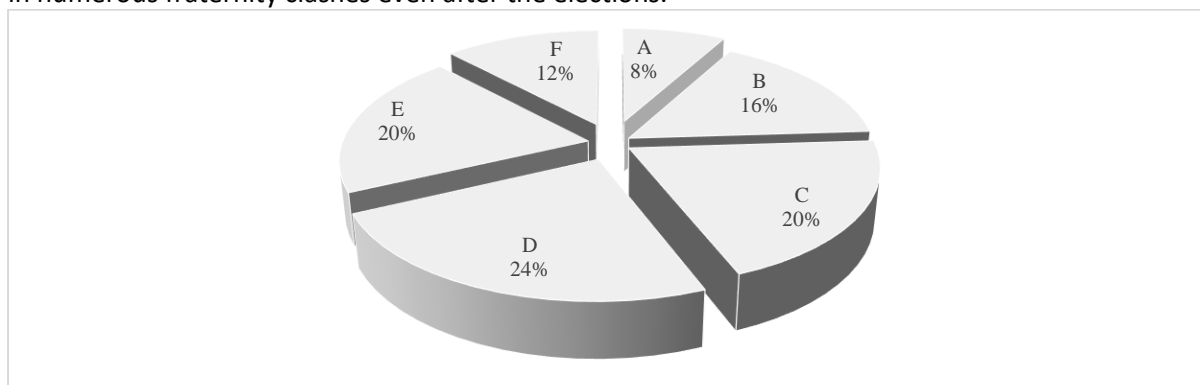


Figure 4. Percentage distribution of CSR intervention of MOCs by sectors in the Niger Delta.

Source: Uduji and Okolo-obasi, 2019/Authors' modification.

The analysis in Figure 4 shows the catchment areas of MOCs capacity building using GMoU; 27% went into peaceful engagement training, while 21% went into operation/maintenance of gas and power plants; agro entrepreneurship development received only 8%, while other entrepreneurship development and training received 21%. These insights show that the CSR of the MOCs are mostly aimed at areas of interest that assure their exploration in a peaceful atmosphere, while minimal resources are channeled toward improving the capacity and business development of the host communities. Uduji *et al* (2019f, 2019g, 2019h, 2020a, 2020b) have the same views in that the recipients of such interventions are mainly urban based, while there is little consideration for the majorities living at the base of the economic Pyramid (BOP) in rural areas. This implies that while these vulnerable groups of rural youths and women in the region are still widely excluded from economic progress, the political actors

exploit this loophole in using the youths to cause violence thereby equipping them to continue in numerous fraternity clashes even after the elections.



¹Figure 5. Rate of receipt of GMoU CSR intervention by household.

Source: Authors' compilation based on household survey.

The analysis in Figure 5 points out that from the respondents that have received direct intervention as CSR via the MOCs, only 12% of them have received above NGN500, 000 (equivalent of 1,640 USD), 24% of the women have received NGN200, 000 (equivalent of 548 USD) or less, while 64% have received more than NGN200, 000 but less than or equal to N500, 000. This discovery opposes the claim of Chevron (2014) that the GMoU of MOCs has generated over 258 projects in more than 400 communities, villages and chiefdoms benefitting over 600,000 people in the host communities. Besides, the finding tends to query the declaration of Chevron (2017) that projects worth more than \$83 million have been completed, which in turn has enhanced the quality of life in the host communities.

Table 3. Percentage distribution of receipt of CSR by sex, age and location

States	Sex		Age				Location	
	Male	Female	Below 20	21-30	31-40	Above 40	Rural	Urban
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Abia	71	29	16	25	42	17	58	42
Akwa Ibom	64	36	22	41	22	15	34	66
Bayelsa	67	33	18	37	32	13	36	64
Cross rivers	65	35	21	28	39	12	28	72
Delta	55	45	25	36	28	11	26	74
Edo	57	43	30	37	24	9	31	69
Imo	78	22	15	44	33	8	61	39
Ondo	81	19	16	29	31	24	41	59
Rivers	58	42	27	39	23	11	29	71
	66	34	21	35	30	13	38	62

Source: Authors' compilation based on household survey.

¹A = 1000 – 100,000, B = 101,000 – 200,000, C = 201,000 – 300,000, D = 301,000 – 400,000, E = 401,000 – 500,000, F = Above 500,000

The analysis (Table 3) reveals the spread of receipt of CSR along socio-economic characteristics in the oil-producing communities of Nigeria. It shows that of the region along sex, 66% of the direct recipients are males, while 34% are females. Along age, 21% of the recipients are below 20 years, 35% are between 21 and 30 years, 30% are between 31 and 40 years, and only 13% are above 40 years. Along location, 38% of the recipients are in the rural areas, while 62% are in the urban areas. This finding shares the same view with PIND (2015), in that criminality and cult violence tends to get worse in the region during election cycle; as many of the groups secure jobs from the patronage of political elites, who either hire them as informal security, and most of the time use them to hurt and attack opponents.

Table 4. Distribution of respondents according to their major challenges pushing them into cult violence in Niger Delta

Description	GMOU cluster participants			GMOU cluster non-participants		
	High	Moderate	Low	Low	Moderate	High
Unemployment			X			X
Underemployment		X				X
Exclusion from decision making		X			X	
Lack of opportunities			X			X
Lack of capital		X				X
Poor level of education			X		X	
Government neglects	X					X

Source: Authors' compilation based on household survey.

Table 4 indicates how the youths in the various households particularly at the base of the pyramid have faced many challenges in business growth/labour market involvement. For the groups that have received direct CSR from the MOCs either as direct employment or partaking in capacity building programme, the unemployed is lowered, while underemployment is moderate. On the other hand, for those who have not received assistance from GMOU, both the challenges of unemployment and under employment are still high. Moreover, the analysis shows that omission from decision making is a temperate challenge to both the GMOU and non-GMOU receiving groups. Other identified challenges that push the youth in cult violence are lack of opportunities, poor level of education, and lack of capital and government neglects. This disclosure is consistent with Kpae (2016) in that politically motivated violence in this region also controls supremacy battles among the several rival cult groups, in an attempt to attract the patronage of the political elites. For example, in March 2016, over 40 people were allegedly killed by political thugs during a re-run election in Tai LGA (PIND, 2018); and it is assumed that the stronger and better armed the cult gang, the higher its chances of being engaged by the political elites.

We identified in Figure 5, the respondents' rate of interventions of multinational companies in the area using the GMOUs. The rating suggests that the method is not totally bad but can be enhanced to benefit the vulnerable groups especially women and youths at the base of economic pyramid. The poor need to benefit from the oil wealth, especially the youths by funding their involvement in capacity building that will equip them to avoid cult activities. The GMOU

should concentrate on initiatives targeted at developing skills and capacities to grasp opportunities of revenue sources in modern business enterprises. This revelation comes to an understanding with Asongu *et al* (2019c, 2019d, 2020) in that another group of Africans that have remained extensively excluded from recent progress are the youths, and the shortage of gainful employment for them (the youths) is one of the most critical policy challenges of our time. The findings also suggest that private sectors generally, is well suited to address the lack of gainful employment for young Africans, which is one of the critical policy challenges of the continent.

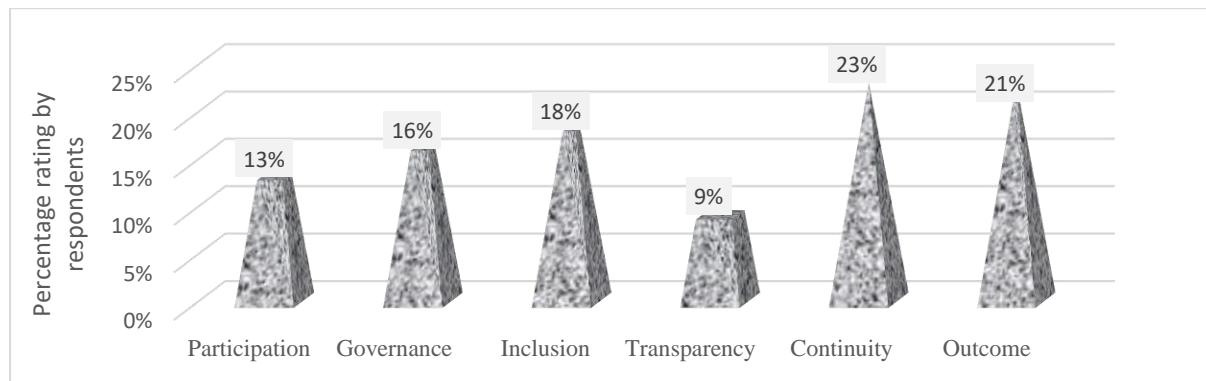


Figure 6: Rating of the cluster development boards (CDBs) by the respondents based on governance, inclusion, transparency, continuity, outcome and participation (GITCOP) in the Niger Delta.

Source: Authors' compilation based on household survey.

Apparently (Figure 6) the respondents were asked to rate six criteria related to the management of the CDBs. The responses indicate that inclusion in the management is 18%, meaning that inclusivity in the management is about 18%, which suggest that a significant number of the vulnerable group (women and youths) are included in deciding the area that the CSR intervention will take place. On the other hand, transparency of the CDBs in the whole process is lower than 10%, as it is rated 9%. However in the opinion of the respondent, 53% agrees that, the GMoUs of the MOCs have significantly enhanced the involvement women at the base of the economic pyramid, and also the youth in active economic and political activities of the region; which has improved access to goods and services by many young people in the Niger Delta. This insight is a sort of compromise with Uduji *et al* (2019f, 2019g, 2019h, 2020a, 2020b) in that women's involvement in social, economic and political development is hindered by unequal access to resources and opportunities in addition to unacceptable levels of interpersonal violence. This has resulted in direct harm to women and their children as well as wider costs to African economies. Africa, in sum, owes its women and youths a better deal; and this study proposes that the Nigeria's oil producing region needs targeted MOCs' GMoU interventions to improve on women and youths' economic status to frustrate aggression and rise of cultism in the Niger Delta.

4.2 Econometric analysis

In line with the carefully chosen characteristics which capture the GMoU receivers and their counterparts' relevant observable differences, the probability of receiving GMoU is projected. The Logit model as built has the reported analysis in Table 5. Showing the estimated coefficients, the odd ratio is expressed in terms of odds of $Z=1$, the marginal effect and standard error. Examining single observables, it is revealed that the educational level of the respondents,

primary occupation, and perception of the GMoU are factors that positively impact on their engagement in the GMoU clusters.

Table 5. Logit model to predict the probability of receiving strategic CSR conditional on selected observables

Variables	Coefficient	Odd Ratio	Marginal Effect	Std. Error
Age	-.037	.983	.009	.019
PriOcc	.319	.962	.120*	.142
Edu	-.007	1.017	.051**	.012
AY	-.016	.908	.00114	.042
MS	-.013	1.930	.00135	.130
HHcom	-.319	.562	.0012	.205
Inpsou	.451	1.31	.0521	.013
Perception of GMOU	1.241	11.143	.061*	.052
Constant	1.816	5.131	.00261	.667
Observation	2400			
				Likelihood
Likelihood Ratio - LR test ($\rho=0$)		$X^2(1)=1135.23^*$		Ratio - LR test ($\rho=0$)
Pseudo R ²	0.21	Pseudo R ²		

*= significant at 10% level; ** = significant at 5% level; and * * * = significant at 1% level

Source: Authors' compilation based on household survey.

A test of the full model against a constant only model was statistically significant, showing that the predictors as a set reliably distinguished between the “yes” and “no” effect of strategic CSR (chi square = 38.721, $p < .000$ with $df= 8$). Nagelkerke's R^2 of .792 revealed a strong relationship between prediction and grouping. Prediction success overall was 92% (91 percent for yes and 93 percent for the no). The Z- value for the perception of GMOU is 7.137, with an associated p-value of .008. Based on the set 5 percent significant level, the study concludes that GMOU interventions have made substantial impact on encouraging the youths at the base of the economic pyramid to shun cult violence. Also, the exponential B value (EXP.B) of the Predictor – Perception of GMOU is 11.143, which implies that if the MOCs raise their GMoU intervention aimed at improving welfare of the base of the pyramid(BOP) women and youths by one unit, which is equivalent of 1USD, the odds ratio is 11.1 times as large. Hence, people will be 11.1 times more engaged to be involved in cult violence in the Niger Delta region.

In all, the finding of this study consents to the frustration – aggression theory as it suggests to scholars and researchers of human nature that when they see aggression they should turn a suspicious eye on possibility that the organism or group is confronted with frustration; and that when they view interference with individual or group habits such as cult violence, it should be

on the lookout for, among other things, aggression. In the case of the Niger Delta, the cult violence is suggested to be caused by frustration in the environmental injustice caused by oil extraction activities of MOCs, as youths are prevented from reaching their goals and targets in life. The finding also tallies with Kalama and Asanebi (2019), in that aggression is usually directed towards the cause of the frustration but where this is not possible, the aggression may be displaced or directed to others hence, the Niger Delta youths have for so long craved to enjoy the proceeds of the oil deposit in their lands but unfortunately what they get in return is pollution, gas flaring, and environmental disaster caused by activities of oil companies. The finding also shows that the frustration that emanates from the insensitivity of oil extraction activities eventually turns the region into a complex operating environment, characterized by cult violence, bandits, and armed groups. However, this study proves the significance of cultural context in determining appropriate CSR priorities and programmes in Africa. The findings come to terms with Amaeshi, Adi, Ogbechie and Amao (2006), in that CSR in Nigeria should be aimed towards addressing the peculiarity of the socio-economic challenges of the country (e.g., poverty alleviation, healthcare provision, infrastructural development, education, etc.) and should be informed by socio-cultural influences (e.g. communalism and charity). They might not necessarily reflect the popular Western standard/ expectations of CSR (e.g. consumer protection, fair trade, green market, climate change concerns, social responsibility investments, etc.). In line with Visser (2006) and Amaeshi *et al* (2006), we illustrate the need for plasticity in approaches to CSR policy and practice by multinational corporation's operative in Africa and globally. However, by extension and contribution to the public-private partnership deliberation on the challenges of cult group as a social problem, we reason that Nigeria's oil-producing communities need targeted MOCs' GMoU interventions to raise young people's economic status in order to deter aggression and rise of cultism in the region. It is our belief that MOCs through their GMoU intervention programmes are well suited to address some of the logistical, and cultural challenges that limit young people's access to capacity building programmes. Besides, they are also designed to equip them with pertinent skills required for peaceful engagement and, thus, complement governments' efforts in the planning and implementation of development agenda for their respective communities. These will help towards enhancing the environment for doing business in the region.

5. Concluding Implications and Future Research Directions

Reports of cult violence have increased sharply in Nigeria's oil-producing region since the beginning of 2014. Thus, we set out to determine the impact of GMoU cluster interventions of MOCs in alleviating the spread of cult violence in host communities. The research builds on the scant scholarly evidence on the relevance of public-private partnership in alleviating the rise of cult violence in Nigeria. Two thousand four hundred (2400) respondents were sampled across the nine states of the Niger Delta region. Results from the use of estimated logit model indicate that MOCs via GMoU cluster intervention programmes are well in position to raise the economic status of young people and deter aggression and spread of cultism in the region. The findings give consent to Visser (2006), in that African conception of CSR should be remarkably different from the Western version; and if Carroll (1991) basic four-part model is accepted, it is suggested that the relative priorities of CSR in Africa are likely to be different from the classic, American Ordering. It is also suggested that the Western version of CSR may not be the best for understanding CSR in developing countries, and in Africa in particular. In terms of implication for practice, the oil-producing communities needed some targeted GMoU interventions that are capable of addressing the logistical and cultural barriers to young people's access to capacity building programmes; which are designed to equip them with relevant skills to complement government efforts in the execution of development agenda for

their communities. This will in turn contribute towards enhancing the environment for doing business in the Niger Delta.

In terms of implications, it is apparent from the findings that when people perceive that they are alienated, oppressed and prevented from achieving a goal, their frustration is likely to turn into aggression like the case of cult violence in Nigeria's Niger Delta region. In the same way, relative deprivation as applied in this study is the experience of being deprived or denied of something to which they believe that they are entitled to have. However, the main limitation of this study is that, it is targeted only on the oil-producing communities in Nigeria. Hence, the findings cannot be easily applied on other developing countries with the same policy challenges. Therefore, reproducing the analysis in other developing countries is worthwhile in order to find out if the established nexus of this study withstands empirical scrutiny in varying contexts of developing regions.

Disclosure Statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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Appendix 1

***DRAFT QUESTIONNAIRE FOR RURAL HOST COMMUNITIES IN NIGER
DELTA***

State _____ LGA

City/Town _____

Name of
Respondent: _____

1. Sex of Respondent :

Male [] Female []

2. Age Bracket:

a) Between 20 – 30 [] b) Between 31 – 40 [] c) Between 41 – 50 []

d) Between 51 - 60 [] e) Above 60 []

3. Marital Status:

a) Married [] b) Single [] c) Separated [] d) Widowed [] e) Divorced []

4. Number living in household at present (Household Size):

5. Highest Educational Qualification of Respondent:

a) None [] b) Primary [] c) Secondary [] d) Tertiary []

6. Religion of the Respondent

a) Christianity [] b) Islam [] c) Traditional d) others []

7. Employment status of Respondent

a) Government Paid Employment [] b) Private Paid Employment [] c) Farming [] d) Trading [] e) Handicraft (eg brick-laying, carpentry, motor mechanics, bicycle repairing etc. [] f) Unemployed [] g) Others [] Please Specify

8. What is the employment status of your spouse (if you are married)

a) Government Paid Employment [] b) Private Paid Employment [] c) Farming [] d) Trading [] d) Handicraft (eg brick-laying, carpentry, motor mechanics, bicycle repairing etc. [] e) Unemployed [] g) Others [] Please Specify

9. If engaged in handicraft, what are the major handicrafts you are involved? (tick as many as applied)

Handicraft	Fully involved	Partly involved	Not involved
Leather Work			
Textile Making			
Grass and Cane weaving			
Ceramics work			
Painting/Makeup art			
Fibre Making			
Bead and Jewelry Making			

Local Pottery			
Hair braiding, plaiting and weaving			
Sculpture/wood work			
Ivory Carving			
Calabash Decorations			
Cloth Weaving			
Brass work			
Bronze Work			
Tie and Dye Textile			

10. How long have you been engaged in this your current employment:
- a) 0- 10 Years [] b) 11- 20 Years [] c) 21 - 30Years [] d) 31 - 40 Years [] e) Above 40 Years []
11. What is your range of monthly income from your current employment?
- a) (0- 50,000) [] b) (51,000 – 100,000) [] c) (101,000 – 150,000) [] d) (151,000- 200,000) []
- e) (201,000 – 250,000) [] f) (251,000 – 300,000) [] g) (301,000 - 350,000) [] h) 351,000- 400,000 [] i) Above 400,000) []
12. Does any other person(s) in your household earn income?
- a) Yes [] b) No []
13. If yes, what is the range of the monthly income from other household members put together
- a) (0- 50,000) [] b) (51,000 – 100,000) [] c) (101,000 – 150,000) [] d) (151,000- 200,000) []
- e) (201,000 – 250,000) [] f) (251,000 – 300,000) [] g) (301,000- 350,000) [] h) 351,000- 400,000 [] i) Above 400,000) []

Knowledge of cultism

14. Have you heard about cult violence in your neighborhood before
- a) Yes [] b) No []
15. Can you briefly tell us what you know about cult violence -----
-
-
-
-
-

16. Have you been involved in any cult violence before

Yes b) No c) No comment

17. Have you seen any of your friends or relative get involved in cult violence before now?

b) Yes b) No

18. Do you think that cult violence is a common issue now in your community?

Yes b) No c) Not sure

19. If yes, do you think that the presence of many oil company workers in community has a role to play in the spread of cult violence in your community?

Yes b) No c) Not sure

20. What do you think is the major reason that push people into cultism and cult violence? (tick as many as applied)

- a) Unemployment
- b) Underemployment
- c) Exclusion from decision making
- d) Lack of opportunities
- e) Lack of capital
- g) Poor level of education
- h) Government neglects

21. How can you rate the following as curses of cult violence

Courses	High	Moderate	Low
Unemployment			
Underemployment			
Exclusion from decision making			
Lack of opportunities			
Lack of capital			
Poor level of education			
Government neglects			
MOC's neglect			

22. In this issue of cult violence, have your community ever received any form of support from any of the oil companies?

c) Yes b) No

23. If yes to 22, what is the nature of the support

- a) Infrastructural development
- b) Bursary
- c) Training of security volunteers
- d) Subsidized health care
- e) intervention in prevention of security network
- f) Awareness creation
- g) Scholarship
- h) Entrepreneurship Development/Skill acquisition
- i) Others (please Specify _____)

24. You as a person, have you ever received any form of support from any of the oil companies in respect to managing cult violence ?

d) Yes [] b) No []

25. If yes to 24, what is the range in monetary value you can attach to the support.

a) (1000 - 50,000) [] b) (51,000 – 100,000) [] c) (101,000 – 150,000) [] d) (151,000-200,000) []

e) (201,000 – 250,000) [] f) (251,000 – 300,000) [] g) (301,000- 350,000) [] h) 351,000-400,000 [] i) Above 400,000) []

Section B Knowledge and Participation in GMOUs

26. Are you aware of the GMoUs of the Multi-national oil companies?

a) Yes [] b) No []

27. If yes, from 1- 12 (1 the most important) rate the activities of the MOCs in the following area

Activities		Rate 1 - 11
Housing and Roads		
Other Health Services		
Education		
Fishing		
Fighting HIV/AIDS		
Agriculture and rural Farming		
Skill Acquisition		
Rural Electrification		
Policy Advocacy		
Eco Cultural tourism		
Chieftaincy Matter		
Direct Youth Employment		

28. from the GMOUs is there anything the oil companies supposed to do to the host communities concerning cult violence

Yes [] No [] c) No idea []

29. If Yes, to 28 above, can you tell us more about that? -----

30. Do you think that there is any impact the oil companies are making to curb this menace of cult violence

Yes [] No [] c) No idea []

31. When a member of the Household is sick, how is (s)he treated?

a) By a qualified doctor in a hospital [] b) We buy drugs in a drugstore (chemist) []

c) We see a traditional medical expert [] d) We treat him/her ourselves [] e) We just pray []

f) We do nothing [] g) We take other actions (please specify)_____

32. How and where do you get the Household drinking water?

a) Tap [] b) Stream [] c) River [] c) Borehole [] d) Hand dug Well [] e) Rain

Water []

Other (please specify)_____

33. Educational qualifications of members of the household?

Level of schooling	No in Household
No schooling	
Primary education	
Junior secondary education	
Senior secondary education	
College of Education/Polytechnic	
First Degree (University)	
Postgraduate Qualifications (PGD, MSc, PhD, etc)	
Other (Special, Islamic, etc) Education	

34. Do you have any project(s) in education (School Building, Library, Scholarship etc?) in your community sponsored under any GMOU?

a) Yes [] b) No []

35. If yes, how has it affected the development of education in your community?

a) It has provided more opportunities to the less privileged []

b) it has widened the inequality gap []

c) it has increased the level of literacy in the community[]

d) it has not made any impact []

36. Do you have any health project(s) (hospitals, maternities, HIV test centre etc) sponsored under GMoU in your community ?

37. a) Yes [] b) No [] c) No Idea

38. If yes to 28, how has it affected the development in your community?

a) It has provided more access to health care facilities []

b) It has reduced the incidence of infant mortality []

c) It has reduced the incidence of maternal mortality []

d) Has made no impact []

39. Do you have any water project(s) (Boreholes, Taps etc) sponsored under GMoU in your community?

a) Yes [] b) No [] c) No Idea

40. If yes, how has it affected the development in your community?

a) It has provided more access to clean water []

b) it has reduced the incidence of water born diseases []

c) it has increased labour man-hour by reducing the amount time spent going to stream []

d) it enhances the breeding of mosquitoes []

e) it has not made any impact []

41. Name any other project sponsored under GMOUs in your Community

42 At what state is each of the projects?

Project	Completed and in use	Completed but not yet in use	Nearly Completion	Just Started	Just Proposed
Housing and Roads					
Health Services					
Education					
Fishing					
Agriculture and rural Farming					

Skill Acquisition					
Rural Electrification					
Policy Advocacy					
Eco Cultural tourism					
Chieftaincy Matter					
Direct Youth Employment					

43 In your opinion, what is the impact of such project on development of your community?

44 In your view, what do you think the impact of GMOU overall is with respect to HIV/AIDS Menace?

a) Positive [] b) Negative

45 If Positive, in what ways do you think it help?

- a) It protects the youth from the deadly disease []
- b) It takes proper care of the orphaned and vulnerable children youth []
- c) It has helped to keep the victims healthy with subsidized drugs
- d) it has prevented transmission from pregnant mothers to children
- e) Others (please specify) _____

46 How will rate these criterions of the CDBs in your community (Rate appropriately from 1% - 100%)

Criterion	Rate
Governance	
Inclusiveness	
Transparency	
Participation	
Continuity	
Outcome	

We thank you most sincerely for your time and support in completing this questionnaire.

Name of Enumerator: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____