

DELTA STATE OIL PRODUCING AREAS DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (DESOPADEC) PROVISION OF SOCIAL AMENITIES AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF OIL HOST COMMUNITIES IN DELTA STATE

Boye-Akelemor, Ejiro Edith*, Dr. G. Otto² and Professor L. Ohale³

Delta State Polytechnic Otefe-Oghara School of General Studies, Department of Economics*
Department of Economics, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Port-Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria^{2,3}

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The study investigated the Delta State Oil Producing Areas Development Commission (DESOPADEC) provision of social amenities and the development of oil host communities Delta State. The objective of the study is to investigate if DESOPADEC provision social amenities lead to the development of oil producing communities in Delta State. In other to carry out the study, one hypothesis was formulated. Review of related literature was based on both theoretical and empirical studies on development. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The sample for the study was 366. The proportionate stratified sampling technique was adopted in selecting the respondents. The result of the study shows that DESOPADEC provision of social amenities to oil host communities has brought significant development to oil host communities. The study also established that the commission has to a very great extent impacted on the development of the oil host communities. Based on the results, it was suggested that the commission should be more funded so as to achieve more based on the mandate of setting it up.

Keywords: Development, social amenities, employment and poverty reduction

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The Niger Delta region of Nigeria which includes Delta state is richly endowed with both renewable and non-renewable natural resources. It contains 20 billion of Africa's proven 66 billion barrels of oil reserves and more than 3 trillion cubic meters of gas reserves (Omajemite, 2008). Boye, Erhinyodavwe, Oroka, and Atomato (2014) Boye- Akelemor (2015) asserted that Oil and gas resources account for over 85% of Nigeria's gross domestic product (GDP), over 95% of the national budget and over 80% of the nation's wealth. Akuodu (2011) stated that despite the rich endowment of renewable and non renewable natural resources, the state still lack major basic infrastructures and oil spillages have rendered many of the communities within the state homeless. Akuodu (2011) suggested that the federal government should as a matter of urgency pay attention to the ordeals to the people and communities of the Niger Delta region.

Omajemite (2008), Okaba (2008), Akpabio (2009), Akuodu (2011), Ogbonnaya (2011), Ebegbulem, Ekpe, and Adejumo (2013), and Boye, Erhinyodavwe, Oroka, and Atomato (2014) have all asserted that, the Niger Delta region that includes Delta State remains the poorest region due to the unfriendly operation of oil and gas and state policies that expropriate the indigenous people of the Niger Delta, of their rights to these natural resources. Environmental devastation, which is occasioned by the activities of multinational oil companies (MNOCs) have rendered useless farming and fishing, which was previously the mainstay of the Niger Delta rural populace. The Niger Delta environment is not developed to further sustain the people after the destruction of the ecosystem that had kept the people together. The height of it is that environmental degradation continuously occur through oil exploration activities such as gas flaring, oil spills, seismic explosives discharge etc. They all call for developmental attention in the region to show for the much that is taken from the region.

Despite the several years of oil exploration and exploitation by Multinational Corporations, and the hazards of spillage and gas flaring which accompany it, have degraded the environment of the region and left the communities desolate. Not only have farming and fishing, the major occupations of these mostly riverine minorities been decimated, their territories have continuously lacked basic infrastructure and amenities - electricity, roads, schools, hospitals, portable water, etc (Ebegbulem, Ekpe. and Adejumo, 2013).

Ogbonnaya (2011) stated that World Bank conducted a study of the environmental hazards in Niger Delta. The study entitled "Defining an Environmental Development Strategy for the Niger Delta" was quick to note that "the Niger Delta has been blessed with an abundance of physical and human resources, including the majority of Nigeria's oil and gas deposits, good agricultural land, extensive forest, excellent fisheries, as well as developed industrial base, and a vibrant private sector" (World Bank Report, 1995). However, the region's tremendous potential for economic growth and sustainable development remains unfulfilled and its future is threatened by deteriorating economic conditions that are not being addressed by government policies and actions. The report went on to say that despite the vast oil reserve in the Niger Delta; the region remains poor with education level below the national average. According to the report, while seventy six percent (76%) of Nigerian children attend primary schools, the level in some parts of the Niger Delta has dropped.

The outcry of populace in the Niger Delta region over the years on the activities of the multinational oil companies has attracted the attention of successive government at both the national and state level, hence the introduction of different agencies and commissions to handle the development of the region. Prominent among them are the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) and the Oil Producing Area Development Commission (OPADEC), with each state of the Niger Delta Region having its acronym. This is why we have the Delta state oil producing areas development commission (DESOPADEC).

DESOPADEC as the acronym implies is "Delta State oil producing area development commission". It was established in 2006 as a means of bringing sustainable development to the long neglected oil rich state of the Niger Delta region. According to Sobotie and Whiskey (2008), 'the crisis in the oil producing communities is as a result of underdevelopment' stressing that after four decades of exposure to petroleum based industrial development, engendering and propelling petroleum- driven national economy, the Niger Delta region continued to rank low, while poverty and unemployment continued on the upward trajectory with 72% of its population within a defined poverty bracket. In response to the agitation of the people of the region on the unwholesome activities of multinational oil companies and long neglect, the Delta state oil producing area development commission was set up to cater for the development of the state. Kpogho (2013) commenting on the journey so far on DESOPADEC stated that the Delta state oil producing areas development commission was established by the Chief James Onanefe Ibori administration, through an act of the State house of Assembly in 2006. Accordingly, the establishment of the commission was perceived as historic and significant to the realization of the dreams and aspirations of long neglected people of the oil producing areas to be given special attention in terms of development. Secondly it was seen as fulfillment of the Chief Ibori's pledge to seek immediate and enduring solutions that will bring profound peace and progress to the people of the oil and gas communities.

1.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objective of the study is to investigate if DESOPADEC provision social amenities lead to the development of oil producing communities in Delta State.

The specific objective is to investigate the extent to which DESOPADEC provision of social amenities have improved on the standard of living in oil host communities

1.3 HYPOTHESIS

In order to effectively ascertain the level of significance of DESOPADEC provision of social amenities on the development of oil host communities in Delta state, the researcher formulated one Null hypothesis

H01: DESOPADEC provision of social amenities have not significantly improved standard of living in oil host communities in Delta State

Alternative Hypothesis: The provision of social amenities by DESOPADEC have significantly improved the standard of living in oil host communities

1.4 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

According to Boye-Akelemor (2017) Meaningful development without infrastructures that can face the test of time may not be achievable. Hence for the development of any community, there must be meaningful infrastructures that can help facilitate economic growth. Without basic infrastructures like good roads, bridges, pipe borne water, electricity and schools, development will be difficult. Infrastructure as it implies are many and diverse. They include roads, tunnels, bridges, railways, airports, canals, subways and tramways, dams, irrigation networks, water pipes, water purification plants, sewers, water treatment plants, dumps and incinerators, power plants, power lines and distribution networks, oil key role in Adam Smith's vision of economic development. No roads, no transport, no trade, no specialization, no

economies of scale, no productivity progress, and no development. Yet, during the 19 century, and much of the 20 century, infrastructure virtually disappears from economics (Remy, 2004).

The general neglect of infrastructure, often rationalized by the difficulty of the Delta's terrain, has worsened people's access to fundamental services such as electricity, safe drinking water, roads and health facilities that are taken for granted in many other parts of Nigeria. Other elements include the negative impacts of the oil industry, a constricted land area, a delicately balanced environment and extreme economic deprivation (Niger Delta Human Development report. 2006). Ogbonnaya (2011) stated that, the available social development indicators in the Niger Delta region point to inadequate, unavailable and poor quality infrastructure and social services, from water to telecommunication. According, to UNDP (2006:27), the historical neglect of the "region's development poses a steep barrier to attaining socio-economic transformation and poverty alleviation.

Agenor (2010) stated that Lack of infrastructure continues to be a key obstacle to growth and development in many low-income countries. Remy (2014) citing a research study carried out by Gramlich (1994) established that infrastructures have a strong influence in determining sustainable development. Agenor (2010) asserted that in order to alleviate the constraints to growth and poverty reduction, several observers have advocated a large increase in public investment in infrastructure, in line with the "Big Push" view of Rosenstein Rodan (1943). In a study carried out by Oruonye (2011) on the socioeconomic impact of resettlement at Lake Chad, Nigeria. Oruonye explained that infrastructural facilities like good school, modern health centres, market stores, boreholes, viewing centres and police office to enhance their security, have to a large extent help in the development of the communities that were once neglected. In a study carried out by Alphonsus and Shatar (2015), the impact of the provision of electricity on the environment was seen as a great socioeconomic importance on reduction in use of woods as fuel prevents deforestation, reduces wastage of energy generated as good modern appliances are energy saving and keeps good unpolluted climate. Alphonsus and Shatar (2015) further asserted that Poverty is a global issue that has gained the attention of many international organizations and governments and the means of eradicating poverty varies from location but in all countries, access to infrastructures like electricity, good drinking water, health, good and cheap means of transportation, education, per capita income etc forms good indicators for measuring level of poverty. Dinkelma (2008) in a study discovered that rural electrification reduces unemployment among the rural dwellers especially artisans including women who engaged in home made goods and services in South Africa. In a study carried out by Akpoborie and Ehwarimo (2012) they asserted that the provision of boreholes supplying water to oil host communities have reduced water related diseases as they have been found to be of good quality.

1.5 METHODOLOGY

The descriptive survey research design was used for the study. A total of 400 questionnaires were administered and 366 representing 91.5% was returned. The sample for the study was 366. It comprises of staff of DESOPADEC. Traditional leaders, Community Youth Leaders, heads of schools, medical personnel in hospitals and health centre, from various ethnic nationalities of Urhobos, Itsekiri, Ijaws, Isokos, and Ndokwa areas of Delta state that are the oil producing areas. The proportionate stratified random sampling technique was adopted for the selection of the sample for the study. Each of the ethnic nationalities formed a stratum from where respondents were drawn.

Table .1a: Table of ethnic groups in oil producing communities in Delta State

Ethnic Group	Frequencies	Percent	Cumulative
Urhobo	182	49.73	49.73
Itsekiri	63	17.21	66.94
Ijaw	40	10.93	77.87
Isoko	41	11.20	89.07
Ndokwa	40	10.93	100.00
Total	366	100.00	

Table 1b: Analysis of the Respondents' based on Questionnaire returned rate

Ethnic Nationalities	Traditional Chiefs	Youth leaders	Heads of schools	Medical personnel's	Total
URHOB	54 (51)	42 (40)	54 (49)	43 (42)	193 (182)
ITESEKIRI	22 (18)	18 (17)	15 (13)	15 (15)	70 (63)
IJAW	15 (10)	10 (10)	12 (12)	8 (8)	45 (40)
ISOKO	16 (11)	10 (10)	11 (11)	9 (9)	46 (41)
NDOKWA	16 (13)	10 (8)	11 (10)	9 (9)	46 (40)
Total	123 (103)	90 (85)	103 (95)	84 (83)	400 (366)

The table indicates 103, traditional chiefs, 85 youth leaders, 95 heads of school and 83 medical personnel were the actual respondents used for the study. The table also shows the numbers of respondents from the different ethnic nationalities. A total of 123 traditional chiefs, 90 youth leaders, 103 heads of schools, and 84 medical personnel's were used for the study. A total of 366 respondents comprising of 103 traditional chiefs, 85 youth leaders, 95 heads of schools and 83 medical personnel dully completed and returned the questionnaire that was used for data analysis.

With the aid of twelve trained research assistants, the researcher visited all five ethnic nationalities and the instrument that was self constructed and validated by experts with a reliability of $r.075$ were administered and retrieved. The data generated for the study was analyzed using the chi square analysis. The hypotheses were tested at 0.05level of significance. The statistical package of social science (SPSS version 22) format computer programme was used for data analysis.

1.6 RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Table 2: Respondents responses on the extents to which DESOPADEC provision of social amenities have improved the on the standard of living in oil host communities

S/N	Items	Very great extent	Great extent	Moderate extent	Never	Total
1	Road constructions	186 (50.8%)	120 (32.8%)	60 (16.4%)	-	366 100%
2	Drainages constructions	50 (13.6%)	275 (75.1%)	40 (10.9%)	-	366 100%
3	Bridges	30 (8.2%)	120 (32.8%)	145 (39.6)	71 (19.4%)	366 100%
4	Jetty	70 (19.2%)	183 (50.0%)	105 (28.7%)	8 (2.1%)	366 100%
5	Buildings	100 (27.3%)	165 (45.0%)	70 (19.2%)	31 (8.5%)	366 100%
6	Provision of bore holes	97 (26.5%)	189 (51.6%)	68 (18.6%)	12 (3.3%)	366 100%
7	Electrification/ electric equipment	73 (19.9%)	221 (60.4%)	59 (16.1%)	13 (3.6%)	366 100%

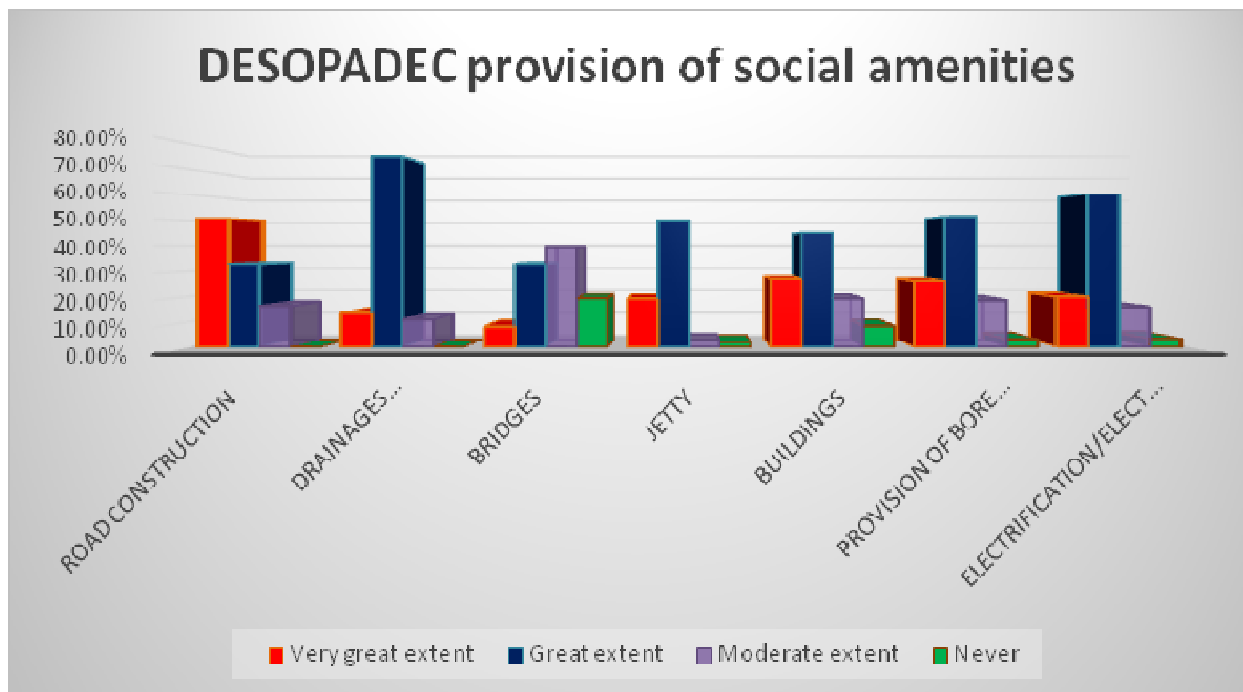


Fig 1: is a representation of the Extent to which DESOPADEC provision of social amenities have improved on the standard of living in oil host communities

Table 2 and fig.1 reveals that 50.8% of the respondents indicated that road construction by DESOPADEC have improved the standard of living of oil host communities in Delta State in a very great extent, while 32.8% indicated great extent and 16.4% indicated moderate extent. The general responses of respondents on the extent to which DESOPADEC provision of social amenities have improved the standard of living in the oil host communities was very positive. The results displayed on the table and figure 1 revealed that over 70% of the respondents are of the opinion that DESOPADEC provision of social amenities has greatly improved the standard of living in the oil host communities.

Testing of Hypothesis One (HO₁)

DESOPADEC provision of social amenities have not significantly improved standard of living in oil host communities in Delta State

There is no significant association in the opinions of the respondents on DESOPADEC provision of social amenities and improved standard of living in oil host communities in Delta State

Table 2: Chi-square (X^2) Analysis of the Association in the Opinions of the Respondents on DESOPADEC provision of Social Amenities and Improved Standard of Living

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	406.419^a	9	.000
Likelihood Ratio	457.618	9	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	241.955	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	366		

From the result presented in table 2, a Chi-square test of independence was calculated comparing the opinions of the respondents on DESOPADEC provision of social amenities and improved standard of living. A significant interaction was found (X^2 (9) = 406.419, $p < 0.05$). The null hypothesis of no significant association tested is rejected. This implies that there is a significant association between DESOPADEC provision of social amenities and improved standard of living. This can be interpreted to mean that DESOPADEC provisions of social amenities have led to improved standard of living in oil host communities in Delta State.

The findings from this study corroborate earlier studies which affirm that development is a product of availability of social amenities. Kanagawa and Nakata (2007) in their study linked development to provision of infrastructures. Similarly, Alphoosus and Shatar (2015) from their study asserted that provision of electricity is a major way for the attainment of development. The findings are also in According with Remy (2014) which asserted that infrastructure have a strong influence in determining sustainable development.

The present study is in line with Agenor (2010) which asserted that Lack of infrastructure continues to be a key obstacle to growth and development in many low-income countries. The provision of basic social amenities is key to development.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study investigated the Delta State oil producing areas development commission provision of social amenities (infrastructures) and the development of oil host communities. The result reveals the provision of social amenities by DESOPADEC as a significant predictor of development of the oil host communities in Delta State. DESOPADEC should improve on road construction, grading of roads, and markets. The study also affirmed that the commission has to a great extent improved on the standard of living in the oil host communities. Based on the finding the it is been recommended that funding of the commission should be encouraged so that desire developmental strides can be attained in the oil host communities.

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