

**COMMUNITY RELATION STRATEGIES AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT:
A STUDY OF SHELL PETROLEUM DEVELOPMENT COMPANY LIMITED
(SPDC) AND HER HOST COMMUNITIES IN BAYELSA STATE, NIGERIA**

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Abstract

The objective of the study was to investigate and assess the community relations strategies (CRS) and sustainable development (SD) of Shell Petroleum Development Company (SPDC) and their host communities in Bayelsa state. The study adopted the marginality and mattering theory (MMT) proposed by Schlossberg (1989), as theoretical underpinning for understanding community relation strategies and sustainable development particularly marginalized SPDC host communities in Bayelsa state, and applied descriptive survey research design to generate data. It was reinforced by secondary sources. The study finds that SPDC has not imparted positively to the sustainable development of the host communities in Bayelsa state compared to the negative consequences rising from the exploitation and exploration of oil and gas activities in their host communities, which include: environmental pollution, oil spillage, unemployment, destruction of farmland and other forms of degradation. It also reveals that even the little efforts put towards host community's development projects such as Scholarships, health centre construction/maintenance, school renovations, link road construction, market construction, portable water and electricity supplies, etc, have not been sustained after at least six months of commissioning. Despite this, SPDC's relationship with her host communities has been tense. Thus recommend that government and SPDC should implement capacity-building programmes, assure full community engagement in need identification, and devise measures to foster peace and harmony within SPDC's host communities' operation to takes place.

Keywords: *Community Relation Strategies, Host Communities, Marginality and Mattering, SPDC, Sustainable Development.*

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1. Introduction

Prior to 1990, the relationship between multinational oil companies (MNOCs), in particularly, Shell Petroleum Development Company of Nigeria limited (SPDC), and their host communities where they did business were generally cordial and devoid conflictual relationship. This tread begins to change in the 1990 and both groups are dagger drawn, leading to a relationship that is characterized by violent crisis. This is because the oil producing communities in Bayelsa state feel that they are not receiving a fair share of the resources generated from their land. This was spurred by the increasing awareness of the people through education and self-consciousness to the extent that they are no longer going to accept the age-long neglect of the operator for the oil companies. According to Okoko,

The discovery of oil was seen as a blessing by most oil producing communities in Niger Delta and as such welcomed oil companies into their land ensuring that peace existed for the oil companies to operate however, a year later, the people came to terms with the reality that not only the environment can be explored but their existence as human is threatened (Okoko, 2005:29).

Commenting on these Okoko and Nna, (1998: p: 48), argues that, there have been no adequate development in terms of infrastructural, social amenities and human capital development in these communities. These communities are often protested and resorted to violence against the oil companies and their workers. He also went further to argued that the attitudes of these communities are often manifested in sabotage, hostage-taking and vandalization of oil pipelines, causing oil leakage and pollution of water, land and economic crops and among the many harms oil exploration has done to the oil producing communities (OPC) environment. Collins (2018) asserts that a range of environmental issues have arisen due to human activities. These include the destruction of arable soils, deforestation, destabilisation of soil physicochemical properties, contamination of drinking water, alienation of people from their cultural traditions, air pollution, social and communal conflicts, global warming, heavy downpour, cancerous sun radiation, and noise pollution.

This position captures reality in the oil-producing communities (OPCs) in Bayelsa state, which SPDC activities created various environmental problems for the peoples, and these host communities are in various instance come together to express their anger and dissatisfaction with SPDC, but to no avail. In a communiqué presented to SPDC in 1998 by the oil producing communities (OPCs) in Gbarain clan maintain that SPDC should conduct social and environment impact assessment (SEIA) study and compensate the people for the destruction of

the economy life. In addition, SPDC should also provide alternatives livelihood, especially the employment of all those displaced by its activities and pay tenement rent to hers host communities from 1972 to date. However, over the year SPDC ignored this demand, and these communities in the clan have resorted to riots, violence crisis, work stoppage and blockage by militant youths. This syndrome is replicated in several other host communities in Bayelsa state.

SPDC on its part argue that, they are in partnership with the Federal Government (FG) through Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) and pay tax to the Federal Government. These companies include Shell, Mobil, Chevron, Texaco, Total, Elf, and Agip. These firms form Joint ventures (JVs) with NNPC, which owns around 60% of the stock in Nigeria's offshore oil resource and which the Oil companies often engage in corporate social responsibility (CSR) programmes that help to improve the communities in which they operate in order to ensure socially and ecologically responsible practises and harmonious cohabitation with this OPC. Thus, they do not feel that it is their responsibility to provide social infrastructural demanded by the host communities, in Bayelsa state. Contributing to the debate, Ibaba (2005; p 53) has argued that:

The community of Oloibiri has experienced a significant decline from its previous state. The agricultural sector, which was once the primary source of economic sustenance, has been severely impacted by the destruction of farmlands, cessation of fishing activities, and the depletion of aquatic life resulting from prolonged oil prospecting and exploration activities (Ibaba, 2001, p. 27).

The foregoing are indications that, oil spillage has destroyed the economics of the host communities. In a reaction to this gross neglect of the debate of host environment sustainability, Etekpe (2005, P 5) argue that, the unsustainability of environment in host communities prompted, Isaac Adaka Boro to left the University of Nigeria Nsukka to form a militant group and challenge the Nigerian state in 1966. This according to Etekpe (2007:5) led to what Boro regarded as a "twelve-day resolution". Numerous groups have adopted a radical approach, including the Movement for the Survival of Ijaw Ethnic Nationality (MOSIEN), the Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP), the Ijaw Youth Council (IYC), the Movement for the Emancipation of Niger Delta (MEND), and most recently, the Niger Delta Avengers. These groups have emerged as leaders, demonstrating against the disregard for the communities that produce oil.

In a response to the continues conflict crisis and violent in the host communities, the former military administration of general Babangida and Abacha intervened in the matter by repressing the oil producing communities in the state, by sending soldiers, mobile policemen and naval officers to police communities where oil installation was ongoing, with the instruction to shoot-at-sight. Etekpe (2007: p 5-6) reports that in response to the agitation, the Federal Government implemented various developmental strategies. These included the creation of the Niger Delta Development Board in 1962, the Niger Delta River Basin Development Authority (NDBDA) in 1976, the Oil Mineral Producing Areas Development Commission (OMP ADEC) in 1992, the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) in 2000, and the Ministry of Niger Delta Affairs (MNDA) in 2008. He went further to argue, that these commissions and agencies have made no significant impact on the people and are generally regarded as harbingers in the region. To him, the commissions and agencies have rather facilitated the under-development of the oil-producing communities in the state.

Enemaku (2005) suggests that while it can be assumed that many oil-producing enterprises engage in community development initiatives to some extent, the prevalence of poverty, deprivation, and pollution in the region often renders these efforts inconsequential. Moreover, it would be inaccurate to assert that the companies have made significant contributions to the communities, given the substantial amount of resources they extract from these areas and the evident poverty and underdevelopment that persist. Nonetheless, it is important to acknowledge that these firms have not been entirely inactive in their efforts to support the communities. There's a lot of muddle and blame-shifting going on here, when presenting the current condition of sustainable development programmes and projects in relation to the contributions of SPDC to host communities, that creates significant uncertainty and blame-shifting among the SPDC host communities and its stakeholders in the state.

2. Statement of the Problem

With the discovery of crude oil and gas in Bayelsa state, which are usually blessings to the other regions and countries in the world are rather woes to the people of state, since 1956 when SPDC discovered the first oil well in commercial quantity, at Otuabagi community in Oloibiri District of the then Eastern Nigeria, present Bayelsa state. This situation captures reality in the host communities in Bayelsa State and the Niger Delta in general. Shell Petroleum Development Company of Nigeria Limited (SPDC) like any other multinational companies in Nigeria has no congruent and meaningful sustainable programme and project in their host

communities. Bayelsa state is a typical example, and the issue has led to perennial conflict. This became serious as the general perception is that SPDC and other MNOCs have impacted negatively on the people and their environment, the SPDC has become a centre stage of the controversy over the years. This has equally affected the relationship and has serious implications for SPDC host communities in the state, which throws up a fundamental question; has community relation strategies enhanced sustainable development in SPDC host communities in Bayelsa state?

Therefore, this research., evaluated the interaction between SPDC and its host communities in Bayelsa State's in an effort to identify the elements that influence and steer this relationship. Since the oil-producing communities in Bayelsa State have the challenges of development, instability, and unsustainable peace due to the SPDC-host community interaction, it is vital to address this issue. It is the goal of this study to highlight those aspects of the oil company-host community relations in Bayelsa State that are often overlooked or ignored, while oil producing communities express their displeasure through roadblocks/protest, interruption and cessation of business activities, shutting down flow stations and vandalism Destruction or confiscating automobiles for nefarious reasons or boats, and Hostage-taking/kidnapping. Unfortunately, despite the prevalent tendency, there has been relatively little scientific investigation on measures for host-community relations relation strategies and sustainable development in the state. This study is a modest contribution towards the debate.

3. Aim and Objectives of the Study

The main aim of this study was to assess SPDC community relation strategies as means of achieving sustainable development projects and programs in Bayelsa state. The specific objectives were to;

- 1) Interrogates the impact of oil exploration and exploitation activities carried out by the Shell Petroleum Development Company (SPDC) on the sustainable development of host communities in Bayelsa state.
- 2) Examine how S.P.D.C community relation strategies (CRS) initiative has promoted sustainable development in their host communities in Bayelsa State.

- 3) Examine the policies and programmes implemented to improve the relationship between the Shell Petroleum Development Company (SPDC) and its host communities in Bayelsa State.

4. Conceptual discourse

4.1 Community Relation strategies

It is a specialized branch of public relations that focuses on developing mutually beneficial relationships between an organization and its host communities, and it develops methodical procedures that oil corporations employ to handle crises with their host communities.

According to Baskin, Aronoff, and Lattimore (1997), some sociologists and political scientists feel that increasing mobility and communication are causing our communities to disintegrate. Nonetheless, the community is not extinct. As a result, more and more people and organisations are focusing on local issues and concerns. Although organisations may participate in community relations projects across the country and around the world, they must not disregard their surrounding communities, particularly those in where they are located.

They went further to argue that most organizations realized in the 1990s that their community relations activities needed to become more coordinated and proactive. Positive and socially responsible action, they claim, is the key to any successful community relations activity. On behalf of the organization, this will benefit the community. At all costs, the company must guard against negative acts while still working to maintain current ties. In order for the organization to attain its objectives, proactive and constructive measures are required. Community relations strategies are only achievable when an organisation acknowledges its reliance with other institutions and management realises the numerous ways its organisation may positively influence the host community and the level of reciprocal dependency necessary to achieve social balance.

Good community relations strategies enable the organisation secure its requirements from the community while also offering what the community expects: protecting the company's investments, enhancing goods sales, stock value and improving the overall operating atmosphere of business. Several experts have incorrectly assumed that the development difficulties in Bayelsa state are beyond the capacity of community relations strategies. Some

people believe that community interactions do not address the root of the problem in Bayelsa state. As a result, this viewpoint appreciates the essence of community relations. When this oil companies conduct their operations in accordance with the needs of the host communities and adhere to high ethical standards, conflicts and development crisis will be focused on the government, by excluding the multinational oil companies.

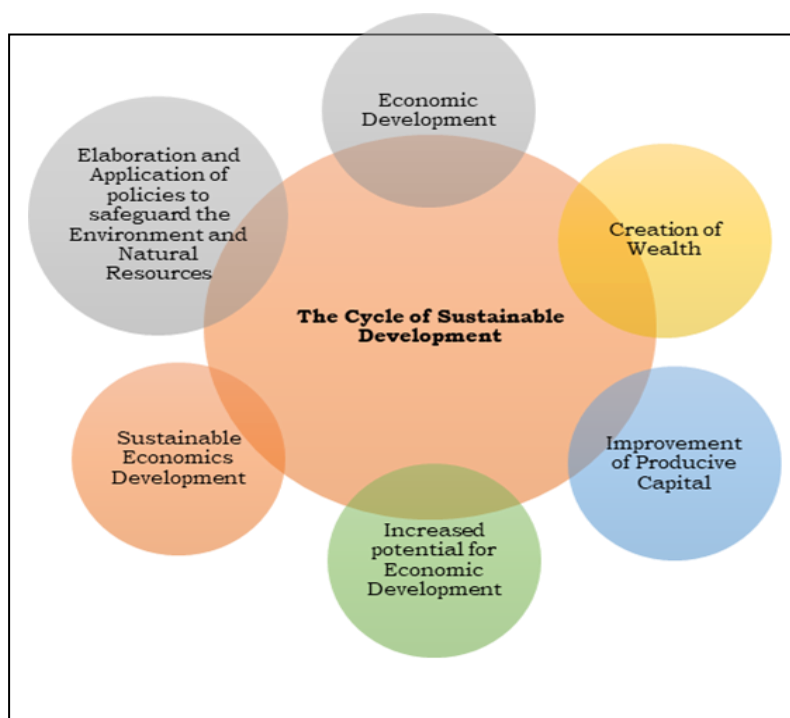
The goal of a community relations strategy is to safeguard the host community, not about window dressing show. According to Baskin et al. (1997), when good community relations tactics are implemented, even the organization's employees will be productive. Given that the majority of a company's casual employees live in the community, any improper or disrespectful behaviour on the part of management might put their lives in jeopardy, as seen by the state's development dilemma.

4.2 Sustainable Development

The idea of sustainability received global recognition at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. This recognition emanated from the Brundtland report in 1987 where the idea of sustainable development was advocated which was premised on value and common well-being. Sustainable development is multifaceted (economic, political, social, and cultural), and it aims to optimize the environment's advantages and contributions to development by fostering the long-term exploitation of natural resources. Imperatively, therefore “Sustainable developments serve to draw attention to the need for compatibility between growth and the preservation of the environment.” It warns against short-termism and narrow-mindedness when it comes to economic modernization and progress, and it stresses the significance of combining economic success with environmental management and social responsibility (SPDC Annual Report 1998; p 10).

According to Ibaba (2004, p:19) Sustainable development is measured in varied dimensions, social, economic, environmental, political, intellectual, and women's development are all examples of these kinds of developments. It is imperative to note that the above measure is interlinked and anchored on the environment. The attainment of each is a progress towards enthroning sustainable development. Diong and Allard (1994) that is translated into sustainable development cycle as shown in Figure 2.1.

Figure 1.1: Sustainable Development Cycle



Source: Diong and Allard (1994)

Similarly, Ihejirika (2007) argue that sustainable development is a "development that meets the needs of the current generation or a particular country or community without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". According to the SPDC in 2008, sustainable community development refers to the deliberate and systematic planning and utilisation of available resources such as material, financial, and labour to enhance the capacity of a community to generate and maintain socio-economic advancement, health, and overall well-being. For this reason, it is said that an effort to promote development is successful when its goal is achieved and the benefits of its accomplishment are not only long-lasting but also self-sustaining. From a technical standpoint, sustainability refers to the capacity of humanity to sustain itself through the judicious utilisation of renewable resources, while simultaneously avoiding any harm to the ecosystem or excessive exploitation of natural resources. This involves refraining from any actions that may jeopardise civilizations and instead fostering an environment that enables them to thrive and reach their full potential. In general term it suggests that, the concept of sustainable development, we should strive to utilise and manage resources in a way that does not jeopardise the long-term viability of the planet's resources or the quality of life for those who follow us. According to Adekola (2007), the World Commission on Environment and Development, succinctly sums up the essence of

sustainable development by pointing out that resource extraction, investment direction, technological advancement, and reforms in institutions all work together to fulfil human desires and future goals. Sustainable development is characterised by a set of features that encompass various aspects of economic, social, and environmental sustainability.

- 1). Interdependence between development and conservation is emphasised.
- 2). Adopting a long-term perspective in order to protect future generations' interests.
- 3). A strategy to development that includes a wide range of interdisciplinary and interrelated methodologies.

Sustainable development is an essential instrument in community development because of its emphasis on addressing human needs while also creating money, protecting the environment, and improving production capacity. Every corporation doing business in a foreign country must take steps to prevent their operations from obstructing the growth of the host community. SPDC has undergone three paradigm shifts between 1960 and 2004 in order to achieve sustainable development. Each shift was justified by a higher mode of delivery of sustainable development to local communities. The three policy changes were as follows: from 1960-1997, the focus was on community assistance (CA); from 1998-2003, the focus shifted to community development (CD); and from 2004 to present, the focus has been on sustainable community development (SCD) (Adekola and Okogbule, 2013, p. 24).

3. A Theoretical Anchorage

This study adopts the marginality and mattering theory proposed by Schlossberg (1989), put it, isolation is characterised by a lack of connection with other people or with the world around them. Extreme sensitivity can cause a rise in anxiety, depression, and a loss of self-esteem. According to Schlossberg (1989), "mattering" is the experience of having one's well-being cared about by another person. This serves as theoretical underpinning for understanding community relation strategies and sustainable development particularly marginalized SPDC host communities in Bayelsa state. It was Schlossberg's idea in 1989 to develop the Theory of Marginality and Mattering, which emphasised the importance of feeling like a part of something larger than oneself. Host communities are critical to the success of any development plan. The concept of belonging is embodied by the concept of "mattering," which refers to a person's sense of self-identity as a member of a group. In addition to this, he describes

marginality as the experience of being out of place in a group. Community members are more likely to be passionate and persistent if they believe that they are not part of the community's growth, according to his findings. If this isn't the case, they'll be unable and unwilling to help the host community progress. Thus, they may participate in anti-community activities or be antagonistic against their community leaders, government, or SPDC.

Chaves (2006) widened the scope of this approach to include community student challenges. When it comes to student engagement and involvement in the university community, his research shows that a sense of belonging is a crucial component that has a direct impact on how well students do in school. This is a similar approach taken by Heald (2008) to explore the conflict and crisis that has erupted in Manitoba since it was established by Ukrainian immigrants, who have been marginalised by the Canadian government and MOCs. Mattering may be utilised to suppress marginalisation as a component of community relations toward sustainable development, it was stated.

Ikelegbe and Opukri (2010) found that Nigeria's Niger Delta region has been plagued by recurring conflict and underdevelopment due to a lack of attention paid to matters of importance. This is due to the government of Nigeria's disregard and marginalisation of the host communities in terms of participation and engagement in the administration of the profits accruing from their resources. Similarly, Moen and Lambrechts (2013) claim that despite the Niger Delta region's enormous contribution to the national economy, it does not show in the region's socio-economic living style, which has resulted in a divide between the SPDC and the host communities' people. According to Sokoh. (2006:333), the inhabitants of SPDC host communities had expected improvement in living conditions but “the story of great expectation” has turned out to be the “story of non-expectation.” Hence, this theory is applicable for community relation issues particularly sustainable development projects and programmes of SPDC in Bayelsa state.

4. Methodology

The study adopts the descriptive survey. According to Neuman (2007, p;167) by using surveys for self-reported beliefs or behaviours is permissible. The study's population consisted of individuals residing in the oil-producing communities that host SPDC in Yenagoa, Ekeremor, Southern Ijaw, Ogbia, Nembe, and Sagbama local government areas in Bayelsa

State. It is estimated that there are 68,695 people living in the entire area. The study's population are shown in detail in the table below (see Table 1.1).

TABLE 1.1: Population of the Study

LGA	Selected communities	Population	Total
Yenagoa	Obunagha	3,169	7,585
	Opolo	4,416	
Southern Ijaw	Angiama	9,476	18,902
	Peremabiri	9,426	
Ekeremor	Egbemagalabir	4,193	9,848
	Amabolou	5,655	
Sagbama	Ebebebiri	1,633	4,430
	Bolou-Oru	2,797	
Ogbia	Oloibiri	8,557	14,613
	Imiringi	6,056	
Nembe	Akakumama	5,348	10,317
	Dorgu-Ewoama	4,969	
TOTAL	12	65,695	65,695

Source: National Population Commission (2006)

The study utilised the purposive sampling method to choose six (6) local government areas (LGAs) in Bayelsa State that serve as hosts communities to SPDC, by a random sampling method was used to select two (2) host communities that accommodate SPDC from each of the Local Government Areas (LGAs). Thus, twelve (12) host communities were selected for the study. An appropriate proportional sample method was utilised because of the high population size of the research area (67,695): 5% was selected for every community. Table 1.2 below shows the method of the sample selection.

TABLE 1.2: METHODS OF SAMPLE SELECTIONS

LGA	Communities	Population	5% Selected
Yenagoa	Obunagha	7,585	379
	Opolo		
Southern Ijaw	Angiama	18,902	945
	Peremabiri		
Ekeremor	Egbemagalabir	9,848	492
	Amabolou		
Sagbama	Ebebebiri	4,430	221
	Bolou-Oru		
Ogbia	Oloibiri	14,613	730
	Imiringi		
Nembe	Oloibiri	10,317	515
	Imiringi		
TOTAL= 6	12	65,695	3,282

Source: Researchers Fieldwork 2023

The study utilised a total sample size of 3,282 respondents from the host communities of SPDC within the Local Government Areas under investigation. This study's research instruments is structured questionnaire titled community relation strategies and sustainable development SPDC in host communities in Bayelsa state (CRSSDBS). The instrument contained fifteen structured items in three categories was developed to reflect the options of strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree, popularly called the four (4) points modified Likert scale. The validity and reliability of the instrument were assessed through testing. The instrument's reliability coefficient of 0.83 was confirmed, indicating its suitability for data collection purposes. The study utilised the Arithmetic Mean analysis technique to analyse the collected data.

5. Data Results and Analysis

RQ1: what are the effects of oil exploration and exploitation activities on SPDC host communities' sustainable development in Bayelsa State.

TABLE:1. 3: Mean scores of respondents' responses on effects of oil exploration and exploitation activities of SPDC in Bayelsa State

	Items	RESPONSES				TOTAL	MEAN	REMARKS
		SA	A	D	SD			
		4	3	2	1	10	X	
1	SPDC Operation activities have made your community to experience oil spillage	1,115 (4460)	1,102 (3306)	803 (1606)	262 (262)	3282 (9634)	2.9	Accepted
2	SPDC operations frequently pollute your neighbourhood.	1,107 (4428)	1,111 (3333)	820 (1640)	244 (244)	3282 (9645)	2.9	Accepted
3	The community's aquatic life and farmland have been adversely affected by SPDC pollution.	1,200 (4800)	1,116 (3348)	906 (1812)	60 (60)	3282 (10020)	3.0	Accepted
4	When oil is spilled or	1,222	1,109	850	101	3282	3.0	Accepted

	polluted, it causes havoc on the water systems in your neighbourhood.	(4888)	(3327)	(1700)	(101)	(10016)		
5	Mining and exploitation operations by SPDC devastate community and agricultural roads.	1,322 (5288)	1118 (3354)	800 (1600)	42 (42)	3282 (10284)	3.1	Accepted
	Grand Mean – Criterion Mean = 2.5						2.9	

Source: Researchers Fieldwork 2023

Table 1.3 In the table above, the mean values obtained from the weighted replies of SPDC's oil exploration and exploitation activities in Bayelsa State are shown. With mean scores of 2.9, 2.9, 3.0, 3.0 and 3.1 over the criteria mean of 2.5 for Items Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5, it is clear that SPDC activities cause oil leakage, pollution, destruction of aquatic life and agriculture as well as other problems. Oil spills and pollution from SPDC's exploration and exploitation activities have also desecrated waterways and the community's settlement and route to its farms. SPDC seismic and geological surveys reveal this more clearly. SPDC activities have been proven to inflict environmental and social harm in the host communities, with a grand mean of 2.9. These challenges have impacted the socioeconomic life of the host communities' populations since they can lead to poor crop yields, environmental degradation, famine, water-borne illness, and associated health problems.

RQ 2: Has S.P.D.C community relation strategies (CRS) initiative promote sustainable development in their host communities in Bayelsa State.

Table 1.4: Mean scores of respondents' responses on S.P.D.C community relation strategies (CRS) initiative to promote sustainable development in their host communities in Bayelsa State.

	Items	RESPONSES				TOTAL	MEAN	REMARKS
		SA	A	D	SD			
6		4	3	2	1	10	X	
		907	1.152	1106	117	3282	2.8	Accepted

	Community assistance (CA) approach promotes host community's development	(3628)	(3450)	(2212)	(117)	(9405)		
7	Community development (CD) approach promotes host community's development.	1,102 (4408)	1.109 (3327)	902 (1804)	169 (169)	3282 (9708)	2.9	Accepted
8	Sustainable community development (SED) approach promotes host community's development.	1.213 (4852)	900 (2700)	908 (1816)	260 (260)	3282 (9628)	2.9	Accepted
9	The MOU model promotes host community's development	890 (3560)	909 (2727)	1,108 (2216)	375 (375)	3282 (7878)	2.4	Rejected
10	The GMOU model promotes host community's development.	1,102 (4408)	1,111 (3333)	950 (1900)	119 (119)	3282 (9760)	2.9	Accepted
	Grand Mean – Criterion Mean = 2.5						2.7	

Source: Researchers Fieldwork 2023

Table 1.4: above show the mean values were calculated based on the weighted responses of the respondents regarding the method use by S.P.D.C community relation strategies (CRS) to initiative promote sustainable development in their host communities in Bayelsa State. Item number 6, 7, 8, and 10 with mean score of 2.8, 2.9, 2.9, and 2.9 respectively which are above the criterion mean of 2.5 revealed that community relation strategies by SPDC include community Assistance approach, community development approach, sustainable community development and as well as Global memorandum of understanding (GMOU).

Conversely, item 9, with mean value of 2.4 revealed that the memorandum of understanding (MOU) model does not promote host community's development. With a grand mean of 3.7, it is established that SPDC has operated all the above strategies of community

relation in various time in a bid to bring sustainable development to host community in Bayelsa state.

RQ 3: what are policies/programmes measures that enhanced SPDC and her host sustainable development in Bayelsa state?

Table 1.5: Mean scores of respondents’ responses on S.P.D.C policies/programs measures that enhanced SPDC and her host sustainable development in Bayelsa state.

	Items	RESPONSES				TOTAL	MEAN	REMARKS
		SA	A	D	SD			
		4	3	2	1	10	X	
11	Human resources development programmes by SPDC lead to host community’s development	908 (3632)	1,125 (3375)	1,105 (2210)	144 (144)	3282 (9361)	2.8	Accepted
12	Provision of infrastructural facilities in host communities promote between SPDC and CRS initiative?	1,101 (4404)	909 (2727)	870 (1740)	401 (401)	3282 (9272)	2.8	Accepted
13	Agricultural development programmes by SPDC encourages the level of community’s development?	1,112 (4448)	1,108 (3324)	586 (1172)	476 (476)	3282 (9420)	2.8	Accepted
14	SPDC's relationship with your community is strengthened when it provides community development projects.	1000 (4000)	987 (2691)	854 (1708)	441 (441)	3282 (8840)	2.6	Accepted

15	Button-top participation by SPDC to host communities promote sustainable development.	1,108 (4432)	992 (2976)	703 (1406)	479 (479)	3282 (9293)	2.8	Accepted
	Grand Mean – Criterion Mean = 2.5						2.7	

Source: Researchers Fieldwork 2023

The analysis of the data from the above **Table1.5:** reveals that item 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15 generated mean values of 2.8, 2.8, 2.8, 2.6 and 2.8 respectively. This implies that items number 11 with mean value of 2.8 reveal that Human Resource Development Programmes lead to host community’s development. While items 6, 7 and 8 provision of infrastructural facilities by SPDC, Agricultural Development programmes, provision of community development project and Button-top participation by SPDC to host community’s development strategies has potential measures to promote cordial community relation between SPDC and host community in Bayelsa state. A grand mean (x) of 2.7 revealed that all the above-mentioned items stand as SPDC community relation strategies (CRS), policies, projects and programmes in the selected SPDC host communities’ development in Bayelsa State.

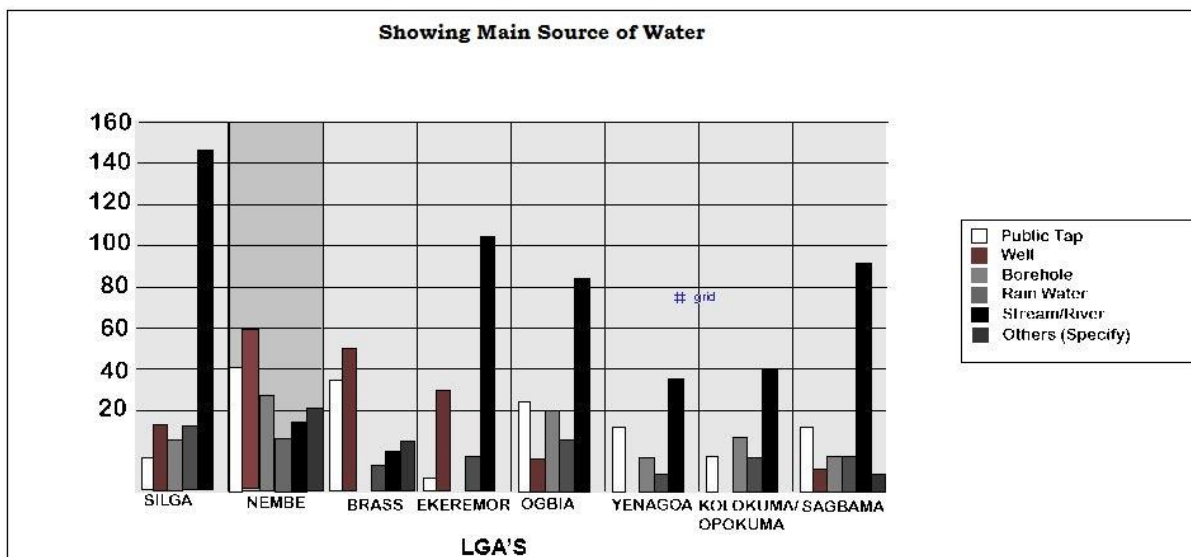
6. Discussion of Findings

This section is mainly dedicated to discussion of findings arising from mean analysis of the research questions. The analysis is supported with secondary information. These are the subheadings in which the findings will be addressed in detail.

6.1 The Effects of Oil Exploration and Exploitation Activities on SPDC Host Communities’ in Bayelsa State.

Table 1.3 reveals that SPDC's operation have resulted in environmental degradation and oil spills, as shown Farmers' livelihoods suffer, fisheries are depleted and people go hungry as a result of this environmental catastrophe. Igbuzor and UNDP (2006) reported that poverty in Bayelsa State increased dramatically between the 1990s and the 2000s, which is consistent with the findings presented in this report. This implies that oil spills and pollution damage the socioeconomic life of host communities, resulting in food shortages and poverty in Bayelsa State. The findings also support the Niger Delta Human Development Report (2000), which

found that over sixty percent (60%) of the people relies on the natural environment, both living and nonliving, for their livelihoods. The report further avers that, the environmental consequences of oil and gas exploration, industrialization, and urbanisation have resulted in a wide range of changes in the environment. As a result, habitat loss, biodiversity loss, deforestation, and pollution have all occurred as a direct result of these destructive actions. Exploration and exploitation efforts have also resulted in neglect and denied access to farmlands and fishing grounds for rural and urban residents, as extensive sections of healthy forest and arable lands are ripped up to facilitate the laying of pipe for crude oil transportation. This agrees with the findings of a poverty baseline survey conducted by the Bayelsa state micro credit administration agency (BSMCAA), which revealed that only an infinitesimal proportion of the rural populace have access to potable water. Figure 1: showing main source of water for household in rural communities of Bayelsa state.



Adopted from Ibaba (2010; p 45)

The lack of adequate water has created socio-economic problem as households spend a sizeable sum of income to purchase water. According to Ibaba (2010; p45), in Bayelsa state households of five members spend about 6000 monthly to purchase water, when the minimum wage is 7500. In Delta and River state, it is about 1500 monthly. This is equally applicable to primary health care facilities in the state where the ratio of one facility to 9,805 or one facility to 43 settlements, while the secondary healthcare facilities are in the ratio of one facility to 131,174 or one facility to 48 settlements.

6.2 SPDC Community Relation Strategies (CRS) That Promote Sustainable Development in Their Host Communities in Bayelsa State.

As shown in table 1.4, SPDC has gone through many important paradigm transformations since its inception in 1960, with the goal of providing better service to the host communities of Bayelsa state. This initiative method includes, community assistance (CA), community development (CD) sustainable community development (SCD), memorandum of understand (MoUs) and Global memorandum of understanding model (GMOU). SPDC community relations techniques have a considerable impact on the degree of sustainable development in Bayelsa state's host communities, despite the MoU/GMOU model's unique implementation obstacles.

Community assistance, as described by UNDP (2002) and Nya, (2002), focused on providing services (such as water, health care, and transportation) to the host villages surrounding SPDC exploration facilities. Ite (2005) posits that the community assistance approach adopted by the company was primarily reactive, responding to the expressed desires or demands of the communities. The approach was characterised by a focus on short-term, one-time donations rather than investments in sustainable development. This assertion is not far-fetched from the community development approach. He further avers in 2007, that sustainable community development and Global memorandum of understanding has the potential to succeed where others failed, if it is implemented within a tri-sector partnership framework involving shell, the Nigerian government and civil society.

6.3 The Policies and Programmes Measures That Enhanced SPDC and Her Host Sustainable Development in Bayelsa State.

As revealed in table 5, SPDC in a response to increasing protects and demand for host community sustainable development have adopted the following policies and programmes which include; Human resource development program, provision of infrastructural facilities, Agricultural development programmes, Provision of community development projects and Button-top participation by SPDC to host communities promote sustainable development, which have significant relationship.

Arugu (2013) has provided evidence to support the notion that S.P.D.C has exhibited a favourable response towards fulfilling its corporate social responsibility to the communities in which it operates. The author argues that S.P.D.C, being a business entity, adheres to

government regulations as part of its corporate status. In pursuit of this objective, the entity fulfils its tax obligations to the government. As the elected representatives of the populace, it is incumbent upon the government to furnish the citizenry with infrastructure for development. Arugu further argues that;

It is not in doubt that the SPDC has contributed to host community development in the Niger Delta. However, the contributions of the company have not met the expectations of the oil producing communities due to the number of factors. These includes: the huge environmental cost of their operation which make their contributions insignificant; the provision of amenities/infrastructure that do not meet the needs of the communities; the absence of good governance which has resulted to poor service delivery by governments at all levels; and as well the exposure of community members to violence conflict (Arugu 2013, p:63).

On this, Kimse Okoko (1999) reported that between 1986 and 1998 alone, SPDC executed about 600 projects in over 200 communities at a cost of concerning one billion naira. The involvement of the SPDC in community development has continuing to rise on a yearly, human resource development, infrastructure, Agriculture and as well as community empowerment and development projects and programs. SPDC publication (2000), notes that human resource development of the S.P.D.C involve the award of scholarship at post-primary and university (undergraduate) levels and vocational training, that is also known as the Youth Development Scheme (YDS). It includes science teachers' scheme, adult literacy program and the provision of educational infrastructures on infrastructural development in the host communities by the SPDC involves road construction, construction of bridges, provision of hospitals and medical equipment, water scheme, classroom blocks, Science blocks, town hall, electrification and construction of market stalls. On agriculture, it provides Agricultural extension service and supplies farm inputs such as fertilizer, pesticides/ insecticides and seedlings. All these costs the S.P.D.C millions of United States dollars.

7. Conclusion and Recommendations

The study's findings lead it to draw the following conclusion, SPDC community relations strategies toward sustainable development in their host communities is characterised by hostile relationship in Bayelsa state. As a result, there are complex dynamics that are outside the control of both important participants, such as 90% of the laws governing the oil and gas business are one-sided and repressive. As a result, although the federal government enjoys a high level of security, the communities hosting SPDC are forced to deal with the consequences of their actions. It will be impossible to improve the acrimonious relationship between SPDC

and the host communities as long as the legislation and its execution are not in their best interests. Despite the fact that Bayelsa State's oil-producing, they have been subjected to the detrimental effects of oil exploration and exploitation for over 60 years, poverty, unemployment, hunger, and a lack of infrastructure are prevalent in most host communities. As Groves (2009) points out, any attempt to establish long-term, friendly community relations methods will be doomed if it fails to make significant changes to the long-term growth of the host community. In light of the aforesaid findings, the following recommendations are made.

- 1.) SPDC and NAOC should improve their CSR efforts by investing one (1%) out of the three (3%) each settlor contributes to host communities' development trust as recommended by the PIA to educational policies and programmes in form of awarding of scholarship scheme to deserving students from the host communities as education serve as the key to sustainable development of every.
- 2.) SPDC should strive to apply the ideas of participatory rural appraisal (PRA) and participatory learning approach (PLA) to the concerns of programmes and projects in their host communities in Bayelsa state.
- 3.) Environmental management through the enactment of standard and enforceable laws which must be known to the host communities (the people) and within the context of community-based collaboration to limit the environmental consequence of oil exploration and exploitation activities in Nigeria.
- 4.) SPDC should promote capacity building programmes to induced youth restiveness and unemployment rate in the host communities, through skill acquisition programmes to train and empower the youths.
- 5.) Public participation to enhanced Bottom-top participation by the host communities in corporate social responsibility projects and programmes to avoid patristic manner, so that a sense of ownership would be in calculated and ensure sustainability of such projects and programmes.

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