



Effects of the Activities of Oil Companies on Sustainable Community Development in Kula Kingdom of Rivers State

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ABSTRACT

This work focused on the effects of the activities of oil companies and the measures adopted by oil companies to ameliorate the problems faced by the people of Kula Kingdom. It is a descriptive survey study. One research question guided the study. Both primary and secondary sources were used in gathering data for the study and the data obtained was interpreted by means of mean statistic tools such as tables, frequency and chi-square. Finding of the study revealed that activities of oil companies affect the people of Kula Kingdom are several ways including youth restiveness and environmental degradation. It was recommended that prompt attention should be given in payment of compensation alongside the creation of a good working relationship between the oil companies and the people of Kula Kingdom and the establishment of adequate developmental projects to enable them contribute meaningfully to national development.

Keywords: oil companies

INTRODUCTION

A community is a social unit of any size that shares common values, or that is situated in a given geographical area; e.g. a village or town. (Kobani and Alozie, 2015). Although communities are usually small, they may also refer to large groups, such as national communities, international communities, and virtual communities. In human communities, intent, belief, resources, preferences, needs, and risks, may be shared in common, affecting the identity of the participants, and their degree of cohesiveness. A community therefore, is a social group, occupying a more or less defined geographical area, and based on the feeling that people have for one another.

The overriding objective of a community development programme is to improve the living standard of individuals in a community to the extent that the community's resources human and material can accommodate. Oil companies are instrumental to community development in the state they bring about change in the lives of the community i.e. the provision of scholarship for students both in secondary and tertiary institutions, employment for both graduates and non-graduates, electricity, pipe borne water and the building of health care centres, schools and community multi-purpose halls.

The process of oil exploration, leading to gas flaring, oil spillage, crop and aquatic environment destruction as a result of careless abandon which the oil companies have adopted as a method, is the major cause of agitation by

the host communities of oil companies. The main aim of the study was to assess the effects of the activities of oil companies on sustainable community development in Kula Kingdom of Rivers State.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Design: The design of this research was descriptive survey method design because it elicited information from the respondents.

Research Question: *What are the various activities carried out by oil companies in Kula Kingdom?*

Table 1: Responses to activities of oil companies

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	UD	TOTAL	MEAN	REMARK
1.	Oil exploration activities	80 (400)	20 (80)	3 (9)	2 (4)	7 (7)	500	4.5	Accepted
2.	Oil exploitation and extraction	90 (450)	12 (48)	3 (9)	2 (4)	5 (5)	516	4.6	Accepted
3.	Community infrastructure and amenities activities	2 (10)	3 (12)	7 (21)	10 (20)	90 (90)	153	1.4	Rejected
4.	Capacity building/human capital development and scholarship activities	12 (60)	70 (280)	15 (45)	5 (10)	10 (10)	405	3.6	Accepted
5.	Payment of compensation	5 (25)	10 (40)	12 (36)	15 (30)	70 (70)	201	1.8	Rejected
6.	Release of grants to deserving small holder businessmen	2 (10)	10 (40)	20 (60)	70 (140)	10 (10)	260	2.3	Rejected
7.	Release of fishing gears and materials	2 (15)	3 (12)	17 (51)	80 (160)	10 (10)	244	2.2	Rejected
8.	Training of fishermen and middle men on fish preservation	3 (15)	2 (8)	17 (51)	80 (160)	10 (10)	244	2.2	Rejected
9.	Training on artisanal fisheries capture	2 (10)	3 (12)	30 (90)	70 (140)	7 (7)	259	2.3	Rejected
10.	Training on fisheries culture and fishpond management	5 (25)	5 (20)	30 (90)	60 (120)	12 (12)	267	2.4	Rejected
11.	Training on fisheries marketing	10 (50)	7 (28)	15 (45)	70 (140)	10 (10)	273	2.4	Rejected
12.	Provision and training on use of motorized fishing gear	3 (15)	7 (28)	30 (90)	60 (120)	12 (12)	265	2.4	Rejected
13.	Community assistance financially on community leadership	10 (50)	10 (40)	12 (36)	20 (40)	60 (60)	226	2.0	Rejected
14.	Company field days/ exhibitions	5 (25)	10 (40)	30 (90)	50 (100)	17 (17)	272	2.4	Rejected
15.	Assistance to communities on community event days	50 (250)	30 (120)	10 (30)	2 (4)	20 (20)	424	3.8	Accepted
	Total mean score							40.3	
	Grand mean score							2.7	

The table above illustrates that some of the activities been carried out by oil companies had positively affected the people of Kula Kingdom in the areas of capacity building/human capital development and scholarship activities, assistance to communities on community event days, oil exploration, exploitation and extraction, despite it possibilities it had more negative affection on the people of Kula Kingdom. Such activisms are; community

infrastructure and amenities, community assistance financially on community leadership, payment of compensation, etc.

DISCUSSION

Findings of the study revealed that the analysis of research question 1 (table) showed that the responses of the respondents to all (15) items, what this means is that the various activities carried out by oil companies had negative affect the people of Kula Kingdom because of the exploration, exploitation and extraction activities and also the lack of community infrastructure and amenities activities, payment of compensation, release of grants etc. The findings of the study have revealed that the activities of oil companies have had very negative effect on sustainable community development in Kula Kingdom.

Educational Implications

This study has alerted the people of Kula Kingdom in particular and Rivers State at large about the effects of the activities of oil companies on sustainable community development and that government should properly address the effects of oil companies' activities. The import is to keep the people abreast of the effects of oil companies' activities so that they will continue to dialogue with the oil firms and government to chart a lasting blue print for the development of their communities.

CONCLUSION

Based on the researched views and opinion earlier cited in the course of this study and the facts obtained from investigation carried out in the study, the researcher is fully convinced and can succinctly conclude that activities of oil companies had negatively affected on the people of Kula Kingdom to the extent that it hampers their overall development. The researcher infers also that oil companies have not done enough as behoves them in spreading development to Kula Kingdom which suffer from their exploration, exploitation and extraction activities, therefore Kula Kingdom is cut off from the mainstream of national development.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ❖ Oil companies should be prompt in community infrastructure, capacity building/human capacity development, amenities and scholarship activities.
- ❖ Oil companies should be prompt in the payment of compensation for damages and release of grants to their host communities.

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