

## **Policy Formulation And Implementation In Nigeria: A Study Of The Amnesty Programme In The Niger Delta, 2009-2019**

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**Abstract:** The Niger Delta Region is the largest wetland in Africa and the nerve centre of oil and gas activities in Nigeria. Oil and gas account for over 80% of Nigeria's revenue, but the revenue derived from this petrodollar business is shared to every State in the Federation, yet, the area in which the black-gold is produced is struggling with modernity, their land, water and air are devastated due to pollution caused by the oil led development. The Niger Delta boiled and went into deep crisis in 2007 as a result of the oil led development, which did not impact maximally on the region. The consequence was the drop in the daily oil production to less than 800,000 barrels from over 2,200,000, and the drifting of the region to almost the Hobbesian state of nature, with an uncertainty of lives and properties. To check this imbroglio, the Federal Government of Nigeria led by His Excellency Alhaji Umaru Musa Yar'Adua granted pardon to the militants that held arms and introduced the Amnesty Programme. This research aimed at exploring the reasons and impacts of the Federal Government Amnesty Programme for the Niger Delta Militants. Applying the Frustration and Aggression Theory as the theoretical framework, The investigation revealed that corruption and other institutional factors affected the proper implementation of the programme and recommended amongst others that the Federal Government should review the legislation that establish the Programme to entrench fiscal discipline and accountability in the management of the Programme.

**Key Words:** Amnesty, Niger Delta. Policy, Policy Formulation, Policy implementation

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### **I. INTRODUCTION**

Policy formulation and implementation are key pillars of governance. They not only create the opportunity for the State to forecast and plan, but also provide the right directions for protecting lives and properties, which is a cardinal function of the government. The Amnesty Programme is one of the Federal Government's policies in the eyes of the storm. Launched in 2009 by late President Umaru Yar Adua as a triple prone programme of Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR), the amnesty programme was predicated on providing and arresting hostilities in the Niger Delta region of the country between the security forces fighting to protect oil installations, lives and properties and the warring militants who were agitating over the serial neglect of the region by succeeding Nigerian governments. This policy was made through executive fiat without a legislative enactment in 2009, however, it received legislative instrument in 2018. This to all intents and purposes negated the principle of separation of powers and checks and balances which Egbueze (2020, p. 241) posits 'the doctrine of separation of powers means ordinarily that with power relations and application, the organs of government must deal with boundaries where they have been given powers and authority to function.'

Nigeria, prior the program, almost moved into what could be described as a failed State. Her economy was in shambles and the lives of citizens were in threat and the State drift to almost the Hobbesian state of nature. Anarchy was let loose and the State almost could not hold sway. This hydrophobic state of affair, occasioned by the hydraheaded crisis led to the amnesty programme.

The programme had key challenges which range from unacceptability of some Niger Delta freedom fighters like Assari Dakubo, to the granting of amnesty to some people that were not core militants and finally corruption. Yearly, the appropriation for the Programme is enormous with funds diverted to corruptly and different fronts. The programme lacks fiscal direction, and accountability is zero sum. Importantly, every successive administration budgets billions of Naira annually for the sustenance of the post amnesty programme.

Yet, the ex-militant leaders and their boys still complain of non-payments of stipends and insecurity still persists in the region, oil theft has continued unabated, artisanal refining has continued, threat of destruction of oil installations, among others still persist in the region. Against these challenges therefore and the contending proxies that provoked the rationality of this study, which interrogated the nexus between policy making and implementation, with a study of the Niger Delta Programme in perspective between 2009 – 2019.

## **II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

Bruer & Elson (2017, p.1) opines that frustration–aggression theory, more commonly known as the frustration–aggression hypothesis, ranks among the most seminal and prolific theories in research on aggression . From its beginning in the late 1930s until today, it has been applied and studied in a variety of areas, including clinical and social psychology, ethnology, sociology, criminology, and medical research....The original formulation of the frustration–aggression hypothesis by Dollard, Doob, Miller, Mowrer, and Sears (1939) stated that “the occurrence of aggressive behavior always presupposes the existence of frustration and, contrariwise, that the existence of frustration always leads to some form of aggression”.

Frustration is the feeling of irritation and annoyance when something blocks you from achieving a goal. In the previous scenario, your goal of turning in your research paper on time is being hindered by the printer’s malfunction. You throw your backpack down in exasperation and proceed to kick it several times. This is an example of frustration turning into aggression. Aggression is a malicious behavior or attitude towards someone or something, usually triggered by frustration. As noted in the definition of aggression, frustration doesn’t have to be a behavior, which can be an attitude. For example, a dog that is trying to protect its family’s home may feel threatened by the mail person and will bark fiercely whenever he or she comes around. This is aggression in the form of an attitude or outlook. The dog’s bark is malicious in its desires to hurt the mail person if he or she comes any closer.

Now that we have the definitions of frustration and aggression, the definition of the frustration-aggression theory may seem obvious. The frustration-aggression theory largely implies that aggression is often a result of frustration. This theory was proposed by psychologists Dollard, Doob, Miller, Mower, and Sears in their 1939 book *Frustration and Aggression*.

Frustration and Aggression theory attempts to explain how and why some people, or groups of people, become aggressive during certain situations. The idea is that frustration, when it cannot be curtailed, turns into aggression. This aggression may then turn into violence, which makes the frustrated person to vent out emotional outburst that may be violent in nature. This anger may be directed at another person which may cause violence. Aggression does not always develop into violence because some people have discovered ways to prevent or contain their anger by using this energy constructively.

Frustration is generally defined as the nervousness, worry and tension that may arise when someone is denied from achieving a goal or target. This tension, if not relieved, may build in a person and activate venomous senses that may cause aggression. The adrenaline activated by the tension and aggression requires some kind of outlet. This action could be observed in adults and children, in individuals and groups.

The examination embraces disappointment and hostility as a hypothetical device in breaking down this work. Disappointment and Aggression hypothesis was proposed and created by Dollard and Miller (1939) and Berkowitz (1969). These theorists argued that "animosity is the consequence of blocking, or baffling, an individual's endeavors to accomplish an objective" (Friedman and Schustack, 1999, pp. 204-207). It endeavours to give purposes behind the reasons for viciousness in the general public. The advocates contended that dissatisfaction causes animosity, however, when the premise of disappointment can not have challenged, at that point, the hostility is carried out on the vulnerable.

The theory of frustration and aggression is relevant to this study because it explains the frustration of both the federal government and the Niger Delta individuals that prompted animosity which in the long run prompted the reprieve strategy in the Niger Delta locale, the occupants of the Niger Delta are reacting out of frustration melted on them because of oil investigation and abuse in the area. The dissent began in a peaceful form and no result was achieved by the people, rather harassments, brutality, oppression, deprivation, and killings as exemplified in Odi, Ogoni land and often by the Nigerian State and its specialists with the help of global partnerships working in the district. The dissatisfaction of the Niger Delta people later metamorphosed to armed struggle, militancy, kidnapping, poverty, rape, among others. The young people from the Niger Delta locale got arms and ammo against the Government of Federal Republic of Nigeria and the multinationals working in the area.

Secondly, the central government became baffled on account of the loss of income from oil attributed to the insecurity in the Niger Delta. The contention strengthened and the global firms were deserting the region for other oil producing countries. The security agents deployed to the region were also confronted by the militants, the engagement had great maturity on both ends and increased the degree of arms proliferation. It got to the point where both sides were recording human and material casualties. The crude oil production dropped to

about 800 barrels, a day which was below OPEC quota of 2,000,000 per day for Nigeria. The juxtaposition of frustration and aggression prompted the arrangement of the reprieve program which was planned for re-establishing harmony in the Niger Delta locale. Therefore, frustration and aggression theory was used as the paradigm of analysis of this research because as Breuer and Elson (2017) noted “Over the decades, frustration–aggression theory has consistently been used in both basic and applied research despite several major shifts in aggression theories from a focus on the biological drive to learned responses and environment–behavior contingencies.” This indeed, applies to the question of the Niger Delta and indeed the amnesty programme which was formulated as a policy.

### **BACKGROUND TO THE AMNESTY PROGRAMME**

Alogoa (2005, p. 11) opines that the Niger Delta has been built up over ten thousand years from sediments brought down by the Rivers Niger and Benue. Alogoa’s claim is in conformity with the Report of the Technical Committee on the Niger Delta (RTCND) (2006, p. 6), which states, *inter alia* that:

The Niger Delta is the largest wetland in Africa and one of the largest in the world. The Delta consists of 25,900 squares of mangrove forest, fresh water swamps, coastal ridges, forest and dry land. Seasonal flooding and sediments of thousands of years have made the land fertile. The Report further state that “States in the Niger Delta Region has assumed considerable attention and importance both nationally and internationally because of its ecosystem and tremendous natural resources; especially petroleum and gas that abound in the Region (RTCND, P.6)

The Niger Delta region is the hub of oil and gas production in Nigeria that accounts for 95 percent of foreign exchange earnings, 95 percent of the national budget, 80 percent of government revenue and over 80 percent of national wealth. The Niger Delta contains most of Nigeria’s hydrocarbon deposits. By implication, the Delta holds the bulk of the economic resources that sustains the public treasury in Nigeria (Egobueze & Iyama, n.d, p.83). Given this, the people of the region believe that their communities are carrying the burden of development in other parts of Nigeria, while their own human and material development needs are not being addressed. Indeed, studies on the Niger Delta Militancy like that of Akeem (2010, p.11) states: it is worthy to note that the oil from the region is the life blood of the Nigerian economy, Nigeria depends up to 90 percent foreign exchange from oil gotten from the region.. Ojo, (2007), collaborated the above claims by the IYC through their findings that the environmental pollution associated with the oil exploration and the lack of meaningful development in the region has been the source or the aggravating factor for the past agitations and the contemporary militancy in the region. Specifically, there are always cases of water and land pollution as a result of spills, installation and location of exploration facilities such as crude oil and gas carrying pipes that criss-cross most of the communities in the region.

Omenma (2011, p. 2) opined “long before 1956 when oil was discovered in the region in commercial quantities, the minority group of the Niger Delta region had been protesting against domination by three major ethnic groups (Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba). In 1957, during the colonial administration, a four-man Minorities Commission, known as the Henry Willick Commission, was set up to address the genuine fears of the minorities in Nigeria.”

The Niger Delta region is challenged with socioeconomic and environmental factors such a kidnap for ransom, oil theft, economic sabotage, illegal oil bunkering, oil spill, gas flare, pollution, among others. These challenges leave great implications for social-economic development and political stability. These factors that prompted the offer of amnesty and subsequent amnesty programme organized for demobilization, restoration and reintegration of the aggressors who drew in the Nigerian state in armed conflict. The amnesty programme in the Niger Delta was introduced by the President Umaru Musa Yar’Adua in 2009 to verify and guarantee security in the generation of raw petroleum and re-establish harmony especially in their locales and Nigeria in general. The policy was a fallout from an inherent inconsistency emerging from lopsided appropriation of petrodollar incomes that arose from oil exploitation which came environmental injustice as a result of the inability of the state to emphasize best practices in the exploration exercise.

Succinctly put, the Niger Delta uprising unleashed unprecedented threat to national security due to the abrupt reduction in oil prizes. Before the absolution arrangement was detailed and executed in the Niger Delta region, the crude oil production in the Niger Delta had gone down as low as 800,000 bpd, in contrast to 2.2 million bpd for the primary quarter of 2009” (Aliabe, 2010). Significantly, Nigeria’s economy is almost monolithic in nature, almost dependent over 80% on on crude oil and gas. The suggestion for granting pardon to the Niger Delta Millitant as suggested by the Ledun Mittee led Technical Committee was a remarkable, and it sowed the seed for the Amnesty Programme. The Committee’s recommendation on amnesty was consequent on Section 175 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria that gives the President of the Federation unequivocal power to grant all people that have legitimately took an interest in the commission on offenses related with aggressor’s exercises in the district.

Pursuant to the above, the late President Musa Yar' Adua made a nationwide broadcast where he stated that "the idea of reprieve is predicated on the ability and status of the activists to give up their arms and be law abiding citizens. The Aggressors were allowed a 60-day ban chance to acknowledge the acquittal offer from August sixth to October fourth and furthermore give up their arms to the Federal Government.

The amnesty policy was an executive declaration of the federal government. According to Eneanya (2009, p.61), "strategy detailing is regularly done by the president and his quick counsels, different individuals from the official branch, vocation and designated authoritative authorities, exceptionally named boards of trustees and commissions, and administrators, who present bills for thought by the National Assembly." Unfortunately, the amnesty policy did not pass through the National Assembly as executive bill, hence, "was not and has not been passed. The aggressors by the details of the reprieve were absolved for all offenses submitted over the span of their activist unsettling" (Ikelegbe, 2010, p.2). The amnesty policy lacked legislative authorization, it was first implemented in 2009, however, at present, the National Assembly had established an Act on Presidential Programme on Rehabilitation and Reintegration for the usage of the Presidential Amnesty Programme in the Niger Delta Area of Nigeria and [other] Related Matters, 2018 (HB.482) making it easier for the legislative arm to approve annual budgetary allocation to the Amnesty Programme.

The effectiveness of policy formulation and implementation in democratic governance require cooperation between the administrative and official arms of government. Thus, formulators of policy do not consider just issues and how to tackle them, but how to get the game plan achieved. Choice or selections of the strategies require some legitimate approval as a part of the rule of open responsibility...along these lines, key contemplations are coordinated towards the legitimating procedure, building support for a proposed course of activities; keeping up help held beforehand; choosing where bargains can be made; computing when and where making the most grounded play, when and where to withdraw, and controlling data stream to advantage. This is finished by the idea of the creation of an administrative arm. At the end of the day, a game-plan is authentic when the larger part in the two places of the governing body supports and the CEO fastens his mark to the measure.

Nevertheless, the absolution was offered out of the need to continue oil generation in the Niger Delta. Truly, the Niger Delta occupants was dominantly ranchers and anglers who delight in nature agreeably before the discovery of raw oil at Olobiri and Umuchem in 1956 and 1957 respectively. Crude oil exploration and exploitation has caused serious mayhem not only to the environment, but also to the livelihood of the inhabitants. Arguing on the same line, The World Bank(1995) pointed out that:

The waters of the Niger delta contain at any rate 6 percent of oil and regularly up to 60 ppm. It additionally clearly catches different appalling components of oil contamination in the Niger delta depends on figures got from a 1995 World Bank study "Characterizing an Environmental Strategy for the Niger Delta."

In the same vein, Ayodele (2010,p.107) also noted that:

Gas flaring, oil and water contamination, bramble consuming and the discharge of carbon monoxide, every one of the a consequence of oil investigation, have left individuals dehumanized and subservient to neediness. This circumstance has, additionally, added to numerous and different clashes, for example, who controls of the characteristic assets, and this has encouraged militancy. While the Nigerian government's way to deal with the aggressor fomentation connected to the regular asset struggle is restorated, it has all the earmarks of being totally quiet on the issue of environmental change to which the area has been presented.

This violent protest and conflict leading to other social crimes was partly attributed to lack of employment of teeming youths, having lost the fertility of their land to environmental pollution. They can never again cultivate on the land which was their customary wellspring of employment. According to Ibeanu (2001,p.12) "the rising neediness in the prevalently remote networks of the Niger Delta is outstanding. Youth joblessness is among the most elevated in the nation, despite fact that the oil segment makes a great many employments every year." Hence, there were continuous protests and agitations by the Niger Delta inhabitants against the disregard, destitution and ecological debasement of the locale, which were frequently restricted by the specialists of the State.

This destruction of the biological system by the worldwide oil organizations sponsored by the government gave ascend from quiet dissent to violent agitation in the region. The situation defines a political arrangement lacking in social justice, which was attributed to challenges of policy failure of the federal government. The World Bank (1995, p.65) noted that:

It is part of internal Nigerian policy failure where the oil producing areas...having all the environmental disruptions and socioeconomic costs of the oil activities, but acquire little compensation. The policy failure results in a lack of direct benefits and the abundance of indirect cost (including the environmental degradation) from the oil activities.

Sadly, the unlawful detention and continuous harassment by the agents of the State against the Niger Delta inhabitants did not bring harmony in the area, rather, heightened the emergency in the district, particularly after the capture, detainment and execution of Ken Saro - Wiwa and eight others from Ogoni ethnic extraction in 1995 by the late General Sani Abacha's organization. The contention and violence intensified to the point where the youths of the region fostered a siege mentality. The Niger Delta area turned into a flashpoint of inward clashes emerging from oil legislative issues motivated by State and Non-State actors, entertainers and the corresponding forceful responses of different intrigue, bunches from the district (Ojo,2015, p.920). The Niger Delta region became an ungovernable place where violence, kidnapping, insurgency, hostage-taking, gang war, crude oil theft, and other criminal enterprise excelled. This State of affairs led to socioeconomic losses on both the State and the people of the Niger Delta. The amnesty programme became inevitable, especially after the Ledum Mittee led Technical Committee on the Niger Delta submitted their report with far reaching recommendations which included granting of amnesty to the militants after they have repented and dropped their arms. The above scenario underscored this research which interrogated 'policy formulation and implementation in Nigeria: A study of the amnesty programme in the Niger Delta, 2009-2019 in perspectives'

### **UNDERSTANDING THE AMNESTY POLICY**

According to Omokhoa (2015), "The word absolution is a Greek word got from "amnestia" which is a demonstration of beauty by which the incomparable power in a state re-establishes the individuals who may have been blameworthy of any offense against it to the situation of guiltless people (Novus homo) and it incorporates more than pardon, in as much as it annihilates every legitimate recognition of the offenses." Imongan and Ikelegbe (2016), argued that the savagery in the Niger Delta is a significant risk to financial exercises in the locale. The amnesty programme was anchored on good intention with the hope that the militants will end the youth restiveness in the region. An amnesty, most often time is as a rule inside a particular time in which wrongdoers concede the wrongdoing and exploit the general absolution." The substance of the programme included pardoning and programmed opportunity, and being excluded from any type of oppression in the land. However, this declaration was welcomed by all and sundry in the country which propelled a few worldwide bodies to promise their help for the pardon programme. This was anchored on the fact that, previously, a few harmony building endeavors planned for hindering the brutal unsettling failed. Nevertheless, there is no refuting that the absolution offered to the Niger Delta aggressors has not yielded any positive outcome on the financial steadiness in the locale. However, there were challenges afterward. The larger part of the occupants of the Niger Delta district live in degraded neediness, this has influenced social-monetary advancement. The cause of this is the absence of good jobs for the unemployed.

Ejovi and Ebie (2013) argued that the Niger Delta biological system has been corrupted by the global oil organizations working in the district. The region has experienced an oil spill which destroyed the farmlands and water, gas flare increased the weather temperature, among others. Against this backdrop, the youths in the region began to agitate for reparation and control of their resources. This agitation adversely impacted negatively on the volume of daily production of crude oil. This led to repression by the State wellspring of the activities, incorporate the execution of Saro Wiwa and eight others from the equivalent Ogoni ethnic extraction in the district in 1995 by the late Sani Abacha drove military organization, the Umuechem Massacre of 1990, Ogoni genocide, Odi Massacre and a few different networks in the Niger Delta area. The outcome of these restraints was the loss of property, murdered, maimed, unlawful detention, displacement and exile of community members. The essence was to suppress the occupants of the Niger Delta district from voice out the barbaric treatment liquefied on them and their environment. Consequently, the youths in the region responded through kidnap, oil theft, destruction of oil installation, pipeline vandalism, bombing of oil facilities, oil sabotage, even killing of perceived agents of the state and their collaborators, filled wither the invades of these challenges, late President Musa Umaru Yar Adua promised to look into the Niger Delta crisis by setting up a technical committee headed by Barrister Ledum Mittee. The technical report recommended amnesty for the militants. The high occurrence of brutality in the locale prompted pardon activities.

Benjamin (2010) in the work titled "Assessing the Crisis Goals, Strategies in the Niger Delta Region" recognized that absence of significant improvement in the locale is a significant reason for the Niger Delta emergency. The individuals need versatile drinking water, no good road network, schools, and electricity. Indeed, the issue of the Niger Delta is that of absence of touchy improvement of the district, that is, absence of bureaucratic nearness and the Federal Government's heartlessness toward the desires and goals of the individuals, additionally, there is an absence of satisfactory compensation from multinational corporations, and ethnic and cultural problems. The underdevelopment problem is also conceptualized in relative terms in the sense that there is a region that provides over eighty percent of the resources of the country and nothing appears to have returned back to them. This is a major reason for the agitation in the region over the control of its own resources. The author disclosed that the Niger Delta people contend that the people of Niger Delta never held a meeting anywhere to decide the militant option; it is organized by a few persons to benefit the few. The

emergence of a militant mode of struggle means that there was no consultation. Invariably, the militant movement is not that of a people's movement; but a terrorist act. It is about some criminal elements that have crept into the system and taken the fight as an opportunity to amass wealth for themselves. The author further disclosed that in the past everybody that owns a camp was settled by the government and at the end of the day, more camps were established so as to get more money from government.

Osah (2016), revealed that the amnesty programme was implemented for about 30,000 activists from the Niger Delta, with point of accomplishing suffering harmony in the district tormented with conflict and violence. The author revealed that the fundamental parts of the projects incorporate demilitarization, retirement and reintegration (DDR). He praised the programme put together for the Militants in the Niger Delta. Furthermore, he highlighted that the cause of failure in the previous peace building programmes was as a result of inability given to perform in their assigned task of development, negotiation and security in the Niger Delta region. The writer disclosed that instead of the situation to become better, the level of poverty, unemployment and environmental degradation worsened on a daily basis. Therefore, he placed those significant explanations behind the powerlessness of the different way to deal with accomplishing the craving objective failure. Some of the teething challenges include bureaucratization, delay in planning and arrival of assets, under funding, defilement, absence of political will, expanding dependence on simply military methods, among others. He commended the absolution program for the ex-activists by the government. He kept up that it is one of the moves by the central government to handle the extended conflict in the Niger Delta area, yet he uncovered that the pardon programme needed lawful structure and that has eased the pace of progress in the social and financial reproduction contrasted with the achievement accomplished.

Omenma (2011) opined that, essentially, the Niger Delta Amnesty policy consists of three stages. The first is the disarmament of the militants and the capture of biometric data through the completion of a form. The data include a basic social and historical profile of the ex-militants with the aim to extract as much information as possible from the ex-militants. The second stage involves the rehabilitation of the ex-militants, which is expected to last for a period of about 4 weeks for each group and will entail reorientation, counseling and moral/spiritual regeneration of the ex-militants. The final phase consists of training the ex-militants and giving them the opportunity to acquire more skills.

#### **AMNESTY POLICY IMPLEMENTATION AND THE CHALLENGES OF SUSTAINABLE PEACE IN THE NIGER DELTA.**

Available literature on the Niger Delta region suggests that right from the colonial era till date, the people of the region had consistently complained about fear of domination and the challenges of development. Due to this factor, the region has been restive with the people holding arms against the Federal government of Nigeria, over the ownership and control of their resources. There is no gain stating the obvious that the region is abundantly blessed with natural resources, hence, the area is described as 'the goose that lays the golden egg.' However, the golden hen is consumed by all, with a little sum left in the region, thus, explaining the metaphoric situation of the region.

Available literature highlight and suggest that the amnesty programme impacted the peace and stability of the region. Nigeria pre the Programme was drifting into precipice. The Nation was frail and peace and stability became a global concern. Kidnapping of all sorts became the order of the day, and as noted earlier, the Hobbesian state of nature was the order. The introduction of the amnesty Programme was greeted with satisfaction by local indigenous Nigerians and friends of the Country abroad. The consequences of the policy could be critiqued from political through economic, psychological, and social directions. The Programme was the noblest decision of the century for Nigerian and those that do business with Nigeria. The South – south region witness a semester war and human lives was worthless. Omenma (2011, p.9) states 'The Amnesty granted to the militants of the Niger Delta by the late President, Alhaji Umaru Musa Yar'Adua has been widely acknowledged as the high point of his administration.'

Omenma further states that the Joint Annual Review of the Development Cooperation between Nigeria and the European Union describes the Amnesty programme this way:

The biggest governmental achievement in 2009 was the amnesty offered by President Yar'Adua to militants in the Niger Delta. A large number of militant leaders and their followers surrendered their arms and subscribed to the amnesty process (Nigeria-EU, 2010:6).

Politically, before the Programme, especially in 2007, most Niger Delta States were almost un governable. In Rivers State for instance, the Government House was almost overran by the Militants, the Omehia's administration found it difficult to achieve political stability till the Military was fully drafted into the area. Citizens had to move out of most areas in Port Harcourt the capital city, with their hands – up. Government activities and general governance were almost grounded. But the Programme and policy led to a change of direction, peace was restored and the people heaved a sigh of relief.

Economically, the Programme led to the extermination of poverty which the Nation was almost experiencing due to the militancy. All the States of the Federation depend extensively on allocation got from the Federation account for their survival. Therefore, a quake in oil production, which is the mainstay of the economy of Nigeria, is a shock to the economy of the sub-national governments as well. The national economy was in shambles, so hunger and starvation pervaded the country. Peace was restored and oil production, which hitherto dropped less than eight hundred thousand barrels due to the militancy in the Niger Delta increased to over two million barrels. Today, the Nigerian government has been able to manage the poverty which pervades the country due to the rumbles in the economy. Most of the militants were trained abroad and others locally and they have become employers of labour.

Socially, the amnesty programme re-invented the Nigerian state from disorder to order. There was arms trading and the militarization of the Delta. The army consistently engaged the militant and the locals slept with their two eyes open. The conflicts led to death of many and the maiming of others. The world was almost to witness the worst refugee crises given the population of Nigeria; there was emerging serious threat to regional security. However, the Programme changed the currency of activities in Nigeria. Peace was restored through the Programme and the Militant re-integrated to the Society. Today, some of the Militants are recognized traditional rulers, with staff of office given by the State Governor, Members of Local Government Councils, State Houses of Assembly and Executive Councils of States and National Assembly.

The Amnesty Programme led to psychological healing of wounds. Besides the pogroms that culminated to the civil war and the war era, Nigerian has not suffered psychological woes like the militancy era in the Nigerian Delta era. The Nation witnessed one of the worst eras in her trajectory. Today, the perceptions of the residents of the Delta and Nigerians in general have positively changed from conflicts and wars to peace and stability which are enduring catalyst for socioeconomic development. Peaceful coexistence is seen as a desideratum to national development. National development is anchored on the existentiality of peace. Despite the seeming gains of the programme; there are still concerns which need to be unraveled. These gaps would be reviewed through the following prongs:

**Poor policy formulation and implementation:** Generally, public policy is what the government chooses to do or not to do. Policy formulation is considered as part of the pre-decision phase of policy making including goal grafting in order to determine priority and concerns, costs as well as the costs and benefits of each option, and the externalities of the environment wherein the policy would be implemented. Policy implementation is the execution of the policy that had been made and it is done basically by the bureaucracy of the State. Dialoke, Ukah and Maduagwuna (2017), argued that over the years in Nigeria, there have been robust and excellent policies formulated, however, the challenge is the ability to implement the policies holistically. Policy implementation has suffered a lot of challenges in Nigeria. This also is the case with the Amnesty Policy. It is important to note that the Policy was implemented initially through the Executive fiat without the instrumentality of law. The Act that established the programme was enacted about ten years after the programme had commenced. With the exception of the Ledum Mitee led Committee Report, further studies had not been made to evaluate the Post – Amnesty Programme with the aim of identifying the gaps and proffering solutions where need be. A post-amnesty programme is desirable at this point.

**The amnesty Policy alienated civil and orderly members of the Community:** The Community members who did not believe in arms trading and handling and who were orderly and respected laws and orders were alienated from the Programme. This negates the spirits and letters of the Chapter IV of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (As Amended). The Nigerian state is a metaphor of consolidation of injustice; while citizens that hold arms that should have been treated as criminals are given primacy in the society; those that obey the law are even denied the basic essence of life. Those that do not hold arms are therefore taught to hold arms and rise against the State. The only language the State knows is that of violence, conflicts, crises and wars. The lessons are bitter and smelt down to the futurity in our development history.

**Corruption:** The Amnesty Programme has come under criticism, especially of being frantically corrupt. Right from its creation in 2009 till date, all the persons that have headed the office have been described as being corrupt. In terms of training, the office not only send the ex-militants to schools with low academic recognition, but also are not prepared to train them to be useful in economic and social re-engineering of the Society. Several revolts have erupted against the Amnesty Office. Recently, as reported by the Sahara Reporter, a group of former Militant disowned the current leadership and stated inter alia: ‘...consequently, the operation of the agency seems to have been hijacked by his cronies who took advantage of his weaknesses and ignorance to turn the office to a house of corruption. Thus, instead of concentrating on the development of the youth who are supposed to be his core objective, Dokubo is seen flirting with all manners of people, both male and female who do not have any business with the Agency’ (Sahara Reporter, 2018).

### **Crisis of Confidence**

The Amnesty Programme was designed with a lot of expectations from the people in the Niger Delta and the generality of Nigeria. The programme premised on restoration and re-integration of the Niger Delta youths to becoming useful citizen, yet, the programme failed to meet this desired expectation. Omenma (2011, p.9) states that ‘How can the ex-combatants trust the Nigerian government to play the role of the mediators when it is part of the conflict? That is why there is a lack of trust in the process, because the government is playing a double role. On what basis is militants handing over arms to a party with whom they are involved in a conflict?’ The integrity of the militants to their surrender was in question. Most of the militants leaders did not completely surrender their arms, so they still had influence and managed MEND to consistently oppose the programme, especially which divide and rule was applied by the Office. Among some of the Militant leaders were Henry Okah, who later was accused of the Abuja bombing; Ateke Tom, currently a traditional ruler in Rivers State; Mujahid Asari Dokubo, Government Tompolo, Soboma George; Ngologolo Toroma; Ebebiwakei Victor (a.k.a General Boyloaf), Commander John Togo, Solomon Ndigbare (a.k.a Osama bin Laden), amongst others.

### **III. CONCLUDING REMARKS**

The research reviewed the nexus between policy formulation and implementation with the Amnesty Programme in perspective. The Amnesty Programme was a strong, reasonable and logical activity that could profoundly affect the contentions in the locale. The policy was formulated to address the fragility of peace in the Niger Delta in order to continue with the petrodollar business, which is the mainstay of Nigeria’s economy. The findings of the research showed a faulty policy formulation with an attendant weak implementation strategy that have bred corruption. To address the circumstances or challenges, the post Amnesty Programme requires a holistic restructuring approach that would entrench accountability and transparency in service. There is a need for the Federal Government to conduct a post mortem of the Programme through setting up of the technical committee and organizing of post amnesty conferences, where some of these issues raised as findings of this research would be scintillated, discussed, and decisions on how to reinvent the Programme. The government has to protect the region and entrench fiscal regimes that ward –off corruption.

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