

Niger Delta Development Commission (N.D.D.C.) and Provision of Infrastructure in Niger Delta Region, 2009-2022.

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the nexus between the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) and the provision of infrastructure in the Niger Delta between 2009 and 2022. Specifically, the study was aimed at determining how violations of the NDDC Act on award of contracts undermined the development of infrastructure in the oil producing areas of Nigeria, as well as whether the projects of the Niger Delta Development Commission alleviated the incidence of inadequate infrastructure in the Niger Delta. The theoretical framework was anchored on the basic propositions derived from the theory of rentier state. *A time series* research design was adopted. The documentary method was used to generate the relevant data. The method of data analysis was content analysis complimented by the use of tables and diagrams. The result of the analysis indicates that the award of contracts without due process undermined the development of infrastructure in the Niger Delta between 2009 and 2022. It also demonstrates that the projects of the Niger Delta Development Commission failed to alleviate the incidence of inadequate infrastructure in the Niger Delta within the study period. Among others, the study recommends that development intervention programs should target structural injustice and inequity, which are the root causes of infrastructure deficit and lack of basic social amenities in the Niger Delta.

Keywords: The Niger Delta, Government interventions programs, Niger Delta Development Commission, Infrastructure, contract

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria is a rentier state since the nation's political economy relies heavily on oil mined from the Niger Delta. However, before crude oil became a critical factor in Nigeria's development, the British Colonial Government had in 1957 recognized that the unique characteristics of the Niger Delta make special development efforts imperative. Hence, in 1958, the Sir Henry Willink's Commission was set up to ascertain the fears of domination expressed by the minorities, and to propose means of allaying such fears. The Commission declared the Niger Delta as a "special area for development" and recommended the establishment of a Board to cater for the development needs of region, which it described as "poor, backward and neglected" [1]. In accordance with the above recommendation, the Nigerian government eventually set up the Niger Delta Development Board (NDDB) in 1961 with the main function of advising the Governments of the Federation, Eastern and Western Region, with respect to physical development of the Niger Delta [2]. Among the functions of the Board were to: (1) ascertain what measures are required to promote its physical development; (2) Prepare schemes designed to promote the physical development of the oil producing areas [3]. Since then, the people of the Niger Delta have seen one government-sponsored development agency after another. In 1980, the Shagari administration created the Niger Delta Basin Development Authority. In response to the growing frustrations of the Niger Delta people over their need for development which gave rise to serious agitations, the Shagari administration also set up a Presidential Task Force (popularly known as the 1.5% Committee) in 1980 and 1.5% of the Federation Account was allocated to the Committee to tackle the developmental problems of the region. However, the protracted legal battles between the Nigerian Federal Government and the Government of the defunct Bendel State (one of the Niger Delta States), prevented the disbursement of the 1.5 percent approved for the rehabilitation of the oil producing states [4]. Although the Committee existed until the early years of 1985/93, it was largely ineffective and unable to handle

the complex ecological problems and deepening poverty in the region [5]. Niger Delta epitomized one of the extreme situations of poverty and underdevelopment amid plenty. Infrastructural development was very low, while poverty and unemployment levels were extremely high. The poverty and unemployment levels were estimated at 80 and 70 percent respectively. Access to basic social amenities was very limited. Indeed, the region fell below the national average in all measures or indicators of development [6]. Juxtaposing the state of social, human, and economic development of the Niger Delta with the above serial developmental efforts, and her wealth, in terms of accounting for about 80% of total government revenue, 95% of foreign exchange, and over 80% of national wealth, [6] described the region as suffering from administrative neglect, crumbling social infrastructure and services, high unemployment, social deprivation, abject poverty, filth and squalor, and endemic conflict. The Nigerian government had variously taken steps to tackle the developmental challenges of the Niger Delta. From the setting up of the Niger Delta Development Board in 1960 to the establishment of the Oil Mineral Producing Areas Development Commission in 1992, it is clear that the Federal Government never shielded away from the development of the Niger Delta. One of the latest in the series of attempts by the government to address the injustice in the Niger Delta is the establishment of the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC). The NDDC was officially inaugurated on December 21, 2000, to hasten the overall development of the Niger Delta. The primary aim of the Commission is to ‘conceive plans and implement programmes for the sustainable development’ of the region [7]. The Nigerian government has demonstrated commitment to the NDDC through financial allocation which amounted to over ₦241.5 billion and ₦593.961 billion from 2000 to 2006 and 2007 to 2011 respectively [8]. All these, it must be admitted, were done to remedy the Niger Delta situation to give the oil-producing communities the special attention that they deserve because of their contributions to the national economy. The extent to which the NDDC has utilized the huge outlay of funds to address decades of social and infrastructural underdevelopment in the Niger Delta has been variously analyzed. Studies such as [9-15] among others have alluded to some variables such as corruption, patronage networking and shoddy execution of projects, fire-brigade approach, political exclusion, award of contracts without due process; non-implementation of the Board's decisions; undue interference and poor funding of Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) which had limited its ability to execute critical infrastructure, such as regional rail line, major roads, and bridges that would impact on the wellbeing of the people. Others focus on what is called the “infrastructure-funding gap” theses [16-20]. This segment of literature either praised or condemned the NDDC for the much or little it achieved in the provision of infrastructure, despite its financial constraints. Apart from these, others such as [21-24] have often rationalized the general neglect of infrastructure by the difficulty of the delta’s terrain, which 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. Altogether, this body of literature has suffered from important shortcomings because despite its profundity and logical elegance, how violations of the NDDC Act on the award of contracts undermined the development of infrastructure in the Niger Delta, as well as the link between the projects of the Niger Delta Development Commission and the incidence of inadequate infrastructure in the Niger Delta have not been systematically examined.

Research Questions

In our examination of the link between the NDDC and the administration of infrastructural development in oil-producing areas of Nigeria, between 2009 and 2022, the following research questions are posed to guide the study:

1. How did violations of the NDDC Act on the award of contracts affect the development of infrastructure in the oil-producing areas of Nigeria between 2009 and 2022?
2. Did the projects of the Niger Delta Development Commission alleviate the incidence of inadequate infrastructure in the oil-producing areas of Nigeria within the study period?

Objectives of the Study

The study has broad and specific objectives. Generally, the study examines the nexus between the Niger Delta Development Commission and the provision of infrastructure in the oil producing areas of Nigeria, between 2009 and 2022. The specific objectives of the study are:

1. To find out how violations of the NDDC Act on award of contracts affected the development of infrastructure in the oil producing areas of Nigeria between 2009 and 2022.
2. To find out whether the projects of the Niger Delta Development Commission alleviated the incidence of inadequate infrastructure in the oil producing areas of Nigeria within the study period.

Hypotheses

The study investigated the understated hypotheses:

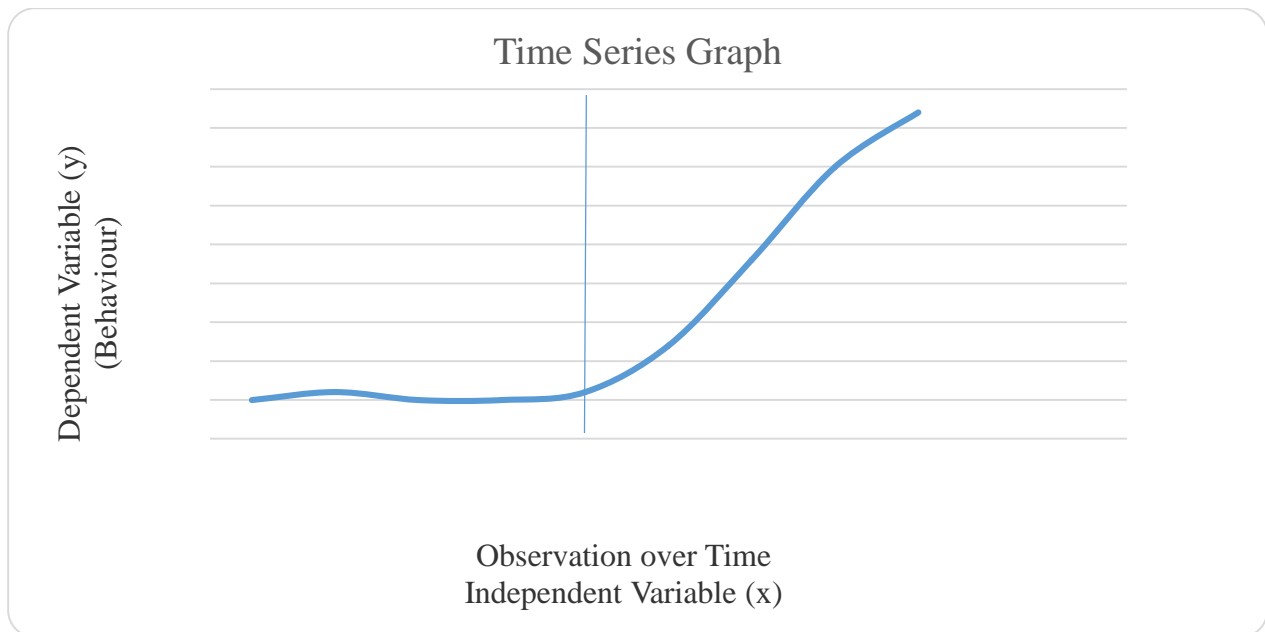
1. Award of contracts without due process adversely affected the development of infrastructure in the oil producing areas of Nigeria between 2009 and 2022.

2. The projects of the Niger Delta Development Commission failed to alleviate the challenges of inadequate infrastructure in the oil producing areas within the study period.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The quality of research findings is usually measured against the quality of the methodology adopted [25]. Research design is the plan, structure, and strategy of investigation conceived to obtain answers to research questions and to control variance [26]. Design does not tell us precisely what to do, but rather suggests the direction of observation-making and analyses. An adequate design, for example, can suggest how many observations should be made, and which attributes are. It tells us what statistical analysis to use, and also outlines possible conclusions to be drawn from the statistical analysis [25]. Against this background, this study adopted the *time series* research design. In this design, measurements of the same variables are taken at different points in time to study social, political, or economic trends. This design calls for a lengthy series of observations and measurements of the dependent variable (**Y**) before the occurrence of a presumed causal event or intervention (**X**). This is followed by another series of measurements of the same dependent variable (**Y**). The change between the last measurement before the intervention (**X**) and the first measurement after it, is the principal focus for measuring the effects of the experiment [27]. These successive observations and repeated measurements of target variables are carried out at equally spaced intervals of time. The time series design is descriptive, which is particularly important when the effect of the causal event or intervention extends over a considerable period. It requires little more than good graphing skills for organizing, storing, and interpreting results. The interpretation of the data occurs through visual inspection and analyses of graphical patterns which reveal trends, levels or variability [28]. The *time series* research design is a powerful tool that may be applied to many existing databases at a minimum cost [27]. The design is represented as follows:



Where:

X axis = independent variable/observation over time/intervention/causal event

Y axis = dependent variable/behaviour or occurrence

O1-O4 = baseline phase before the intervention demonstrates the normal state of behaviour of the dependent variable (**y**).

In applying the *time series* research design to our study, the test of our first hypothesis involves observing and measuring the behaviour of '**Y**', that is, the dependent variable over a period, prior to, and after the intervention of '**X**' which is a presumed causal event.

The observed changes in '**Y**', was attributed to the intervention and impact of '**X**', which is our independent variable. Thus, the observation and measurement of '**Y**' over a lengthy period, the introduction of an intervening variable '**X**', and the observed and measurable changes in '**Y**', were used to validate our hypotheses.

Methods of Data Collection

Every research is a search for information on some topic, researchers can be more confident of the quality and the appropriateness of their information if they tap all the relevant resources. To generate the relevant data for this study, we relied on documentary method. The documentary method is a way of collecting data by reviewing existing documents. It refers to the analysis of documents that contain information about the phenomenon we intend to study [29]. For [30], the documentary method is used to categorize, investigate, interpret, and identify the limitations of physical sources, most commonly written documents. Documents are produced by individuals and groups during their everyday practices and are meant for their own immediate practical needs [31]. Two types of documents are used in documentary studies. These are primary documents and secondary documents. Primary documents refer to eyewitness accounts produced by people who experienced a particular event or the behaviour we want to study. On the other hand, secondary documents are documents produced by people who were not present at the scene but who received eye-witness accounts to compile the documents or have read eye-witness accounts [29]. The documentary method is used basically to generate secondary data. Secondary data, as explained by [32, 33] refers to a set of data gathered or anchored by another person, usually data from the available data, or archives, either in the form of documents or survey results and code books. [34], articulates the advantages of secondary sources of data to include that of economy. Secondary data are usually adapted from other existing studies, in some cases extrapolating or interpolating such data [35]. As further explained by [32, 33], secondary data refers to a set of data gathered or authored by another person, usually data from the available data, or archives, either in the form of document or survey results. Again, the information of this sort is collected periodically thereby making the establishment of trends over time possible. More importantly, is the obvious fact that the gathering of information from such sources does not require the co-operation of the individual about whom information is being sought. This study therefore relied on official documents such as the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) the National Integrated Infrastructure Master Plan (NIIMP); Infrastructure Concession Regulatory Commission of Nigeria (ICRC) Reports on Revenues, Deductions, Disbursement and Utilization of Funds of the Federal Beneficiary Agencies, among others. Other secondary sources of data used in this study includes books, journals, magazines, conference and workshop papers and other written works which provide a veritable tool for understanding the topic under study.

Methods of Data Analysis

The quantum of data generated in the course of this study was analyzed using content analysis. Content analysis is a technique of making inferences by objectively and systematically identifying specified characteristics of messages [9]. We used the method to organize and synthesize the large volumes of textual data with a view to searching for patterns and discerning what is relevant and on that basis, draw our inferences and conclusions. Content analysis enabled us to holistically sift through the data with relative ease, and systematically reduce them to logical, meaningful, and coherent interpretation. This is with a view to understanding not only the manifest but also the latent content of data so as to discover patterns or regularities.

RESULTS

Empirical Verification

Hypothesis One: The award of contracts without due process adversely affected the development of infrastructure in the oil producing areas of Nigeria between 2009 and 2022.

The oil-producing states consist of nine of the 36 states within the Nigerian Federation and 185 Local Government Councils (LGAs), occupying a surface area of about 112, 110sq.km-12 percent of Nigeria's territory. In 2007, the population of this region was estimated to be 28 million, the overwhelming proportion of which is rural and poor. According to the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC), the population continues to grow very rapidly-3.1 percent per year-and is projected to be over 45 million by 2020. [36], also noted that there are at least 40 different ethnic groups occupying the Nigeria Delta and speaking perhaps 250 languages and dialects. To actualize the developmental aspirations of the oil producing areas, a number of agencies were put in place by the Nigerian government between 1960 and 1992. These include the Niger Delta Development Board (NDDDB) set-up in 1961, following the recommendations of Wiliki's Commission of 1958; the Niger Delta Basin Development Authority (NDBDA) set up in 1976; A Presidential Task Force for the allocation of 1.5% of Federation Account to the Niger Delta; the Oil and Mineral Producing Areas Development Commission (OMPADEC), established in 1992 [36]. In addition to the above-enumerated structures, between 1958 and 1998, no fewer than three commissions/committees were set up by the successive Nigerian governments with a view to resolving the under-development of the oil producing areas. Such commissions and committees include the Justice Alfa Belgore Judicial Commission of Inquiry of 1992, the Ministerial Fact-Finding Team (the Don Etiebet

Committee) of 1994, Major General Popoola Committee of 1998 [36]. Disappointingly, all these efforts failed to meet the developmental challenges of the oil-producing areas. Given these failed efforts, it was not surprising that upon the inauguration of the civilian administration in 1999, the NDDC Bill was the second after the Anti-Corruption Bill sent to the National Assembly by former President Olusegun Obasanjo. The Commission was eventually established by the NDDC Act of 2000 and was inaugurated on December 21, 2000, with a vision "to offer a lasting solution to the socio-economic difficulties of the Niger Delta" and a mission "to facilitate the rapid, even, and sustainable development of the Niger Delta into a region that is economically prosperous, socially stable, ecologically regenerative and politically peaceful" [37]. The NDDC was inaugurated following the Federal Government's renewed interest in the development of the Niger Delta as demonstrated by the initiation of a master planning process for the overall physical and social development to achieve a speedy and global transformation of the Niger Delta. The NDDC Master Plan is meant to be implemented in three phases: the foundation phase (2006-2010); the expansion phase (2011-2015); and the consolidation phase (2016- 2020) [38]. In pursuance of the targets of the NDDC Master Plan, surveys were carried out to determine political boundaries, topography, rivers, streams and waterways, transport networks, population, towns and settlements, oil and gas locations, and pipeline networks among others. These surveys and their result helped the Commission immensely in determining exactly what to do in the area and how to do it (*Special Report. Tell*, September 6, 2004). The Master Plan Strategy encompasses such items as poverty reduction economic development, urban and industrial infrastructure, and rural infrastructure, among others (See Figure 1).

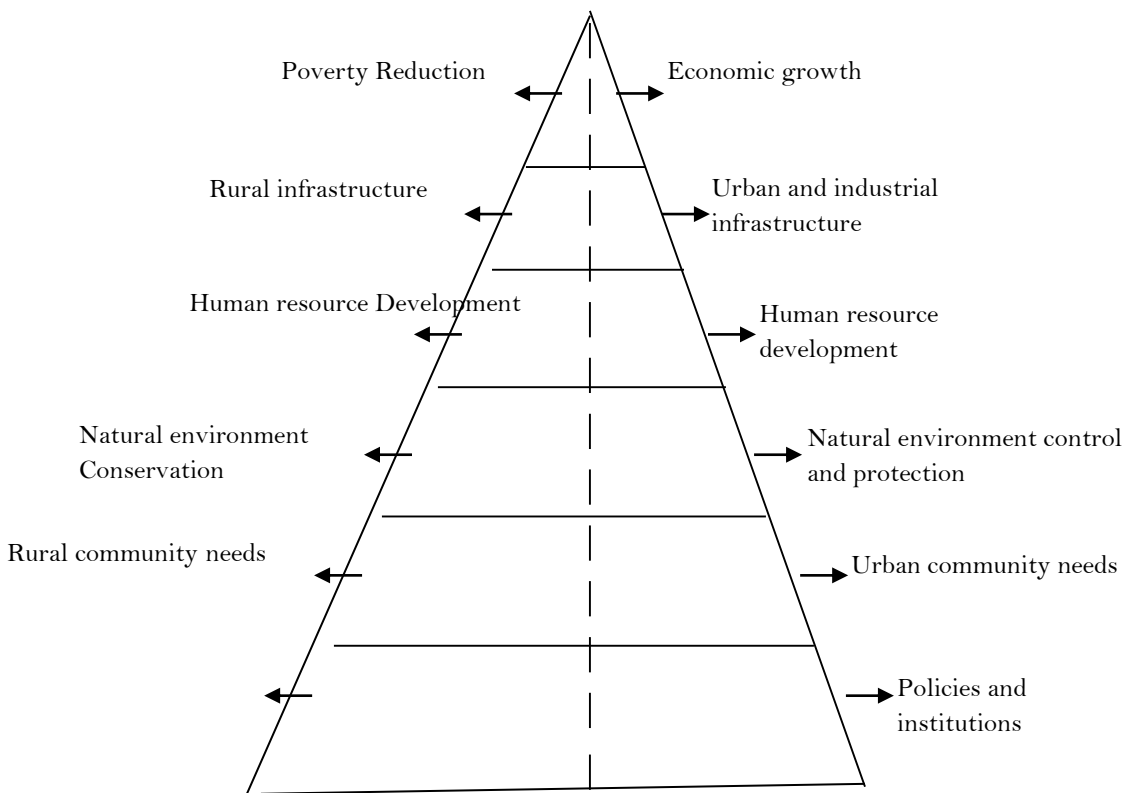


Figure 1: The Master Plan Strategy

Source: Researcher's modeling from the Report of the NDDC Master Plan

The NDDC Act generously provides the following funding sources for the Commission: Federal Government contribution, which is to be equivalent to 15% of the monthly statutory allocation due to member states of the Commission from the Federation Account; oil and gas processing companies' contribution of 3% of their total budget; 50% of the Ecological Fund Allocations due to the Member States, among others [37]. To a greater extent, the Nigerian government has demonstrated commitment to the NDDC through financial allocations.

Allocation and Application of Funds by the Niger Delta Development Commission

The revenue sources for the Commission were well defined in the enabling Act. According to [39], Part V, Section 14, Sub-sections 1 and 2 of the Niger Delta Development Commission Act 2000, which deal with financial provisions spelled out how the Commission shall be funded. Section 14 (2) provides that:

There shall be paid and credited to the fund established under subsection (1) of this section. (a) From the Federal Government the equivalent of 15% of the total monthly statutory allocation due to member states of the commission from the federation account, this being the contribution of the federal government to the commission. (b) 3% of the total annual budget of any oil-producing company operating onshore and offshore in the Niger Delta area including gas processing companies, (c) 50% of monies due to member states of the commission from the ecological fund (d) such monies as may from time to time, be granted or lent or deposited with the commission by the Federal or a state government, any other body or institution whether local or foreign, (e) all monies raised for the commission by way of gifts, loans, grant-in-aid, testamentary disposition or otherwise and (f) proceeds from all other assets that may from time to time, accrue to the commission.

Timi Alaibe, the then NDDC's Acting Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer once observed that between 2012 and December 2017, the Commission received ₦95.97 billion from the Federal Government. He further noted that "the federal government is not the only contributor to the NDDC... we have also generated funds from contractor's registration and banking transactions" [39]. Available records show that between May 2012 and December 2017, the nine states making up the Niger Delta region have collectively received over ₦2.16 trillion representing 70%, and local governments over ₦671 billion, representing 22%. NDDC received over ₦241.5 billion to make up the remaining 8% [40]. Altogether the Niger Delta Development Commission earned about \$1.98 billion between 2007 and 2017, in addition to the sum of ₦594 billion paid to the Commission in local currency during the same period from the following sources: Federal Government; subventions; oil companies contribution; donation and grants; recovery on mass transits; insurance claims; other income; disposal of assets; contractors' fee bank interest [41].

Table 1: Annual Breakdown /Summary of the Total Revenue Received by the NDDC from 1st January 2009 to 31st December 2013 in billion Naira

| Source | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 |
|------------------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Federal Government | 24,000,000,000 | 40,570,000,000 | 51,317,566,107 | 44,937,757,491 | 56,076,920,534 |
| Oil Companies | 40,531,352,200 | 43,942,473,000 | 3,942,473,000 | 89,927,822,349 | 111,576,195,210 |
| Sundry (Other Incomes) | 189,832,000 | 277,491,000 | 329,529,734 | 385,391,640 | 125,064,883 |
| Total | 64,721,184,200 | 84,789,964,000 | 141,574,918,190 | 135,096,525,920 | 167,778,180,627 |

Source: [8]. *Report on Revenues, Deductions, and Analysis of Disbursement and Utilization of Funds of the Federal Beneficiary Agencies – Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC)*, p.2.

As table 1 which presents an annual breakdown of the summary of the revenue distribution by sources indicates, the Commission earned ₦593.961 billion during 2009 and 2013. The Commission's earnings grew from ₦64.721 billion in the fiscal year 2007 to ₦167.778 billion in the fiscal year 2011. This represents 159% growth within the years under review. The cumulative total revenue from all sources was recorded at ₦593.961 billion; the Federal Government has contributed ₦216.902 billion that is, 36.5% while the receipts from oil companies accounted for ₦375.751 billion which also represents 63.3%. However, the sundry incomes such as interest on deposits and others accounted for ₦1.307 billion with a relative share of 0.2%. Collaborating the foregoing report, the Executive Secretary of the Nigeria Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (NEITI), Mr. Waziri Adio disclosed that a total of \$1.98 billion were remitted to the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) between 2007 and 2017, in addition to the sum of ₦594 billion paid to the Commission in local currency during the same period [41]. Further breakdown of the remittances showed that NDDC received ₦594 billion from 2007 to 2011, while \$559 million was paid to the Commission in 2012. It was also indicated that in 2013, the NDDC received \$563 million while in 2014, the sum of \$865 million were remitted to the Commission [41]. What is clear from the foregoing is that a reasonable volume of fund was remitted to the NDDC within the study period to develop the oil-producing areas. The study therefore examines, in the next sub-section, the NDDC and awards of contracts in the oil producing areas of Nigeria.

NDDC and Award of Contracts

To enhance transparency and accountability in the management of public resources, the “Due Process Policy” was introduced into the nation’s procurement system via Treasury Circular by the Federal Ministry of Finance No, TRY/F15775 of 27th June 2001 [42]. It was passed into an Act under President Umaru Musa Yar’Adua’s administration which is now called the “Public Procurement Act” 2007. Due process is the means by which ethical constraints are placed on administrative decision-making [43]. It refers to the procedures and safeguards that constrain administrative decision-making, and a means by which we ensure the ethical use of power by administrative and judicial bodies. The primary goal of the Public Procurement Act 2007 is the “Establishment of National Council on Public Procurement and the Bureau of Public Procurement as the regulatory authorities responsible for the monitoring and oversight of public procurement, harmonizing the existing government policies and practices by regulating, setting standards and developing the legal framework and professional capacity for public procurement in Nigeria, and for other related matters [44]. The BPP reviews and certifies the Federal Government contracts according to established and approved thresholds. At present, there are three approval thresholds for the approval and award of Federal Government contracts in the public sector. The approval of contracts has been categorized into the following: 1. Contracts below N1 million. 2. Contracts above N1 million. 3. Contracts of N50 million and above. Upon conclusion of the contract procedures, the Ministerial Tenders Board shall then forward their conclusions and all relevant supporting documentation to BPP for Due Process compliance review and Certification. It is only after the Due Process Certificate is issued by the BPP that the contract be forwarded to the Federal Executive Council for final approval to award the contract [42]. Specifically, the Due Process Policy covers two (2) major types of tenders. They are: a. Open tendering: This type of tenders deals with contracts, purchases, and services above N10 million which must be advertised in at least two (2) national dailies and or Government Gazette, and on the Notice Boards of the procuring institution. The essence is for pre-qualification purposes to provide bidders equal opportunity and access to information. This type of tendering is also known as competitive tender. b. Selective tendering: In this type of tender, at least three (3) reputable contractors in specific areas of specialization are selected and invited to bid. This type of bid is not open because of the technical nature of the job [42]. The foregoing indicates that the Public Procurement Act highlights the guidelines for the award of contracts and services. However, a lot of misconceptions, doubts, criticisms, and cynicism have been trailing its implementation, particularly how the NDDC Board awards contracts. The NDDC Board has statutory functions as stated in Part II (8) of the NDDC Act. These functions are as follows:

The Board shall have power to: - (a) manage and supervise affairs of the Commission; (b) make rules and regulations for carrying out the functions of the Commission, (c) enter and inspect premises, projects, and such places as may be necessary for the purposes of carrying out its functions under this Act; etc.

Meanwhile, in 2009, a new NDDC Board was sworn in, with Chief Chibuzo Ugwoha as Managing Director (MD) and AVM Larry Koinyan as Chairman. With the advent of Chibuzo Ugwoha as Managing Director of NDDC, it was reported that the Commission became a tale of frustration, underhand dealings, flouting of Due Process, and circumvention of contract awarding procedures [45]. Surprisingly, the beneficiaries were found to be close allies of the MD and the Executive Director of projects [45]. For instance, the Niger Delta Technical Aid Corp (NTAC Projects), which ought to be capacity-building programmes for graduates was grossly mismanaged. An integral part of NTAC Projects was computer Training Programmes. To date, the Commission is indebted to NTAC because the monies for defraying the fees were lodged in private accounts to yield interest for the account holders [46]. One of the hallmarks of the NDDC within the period under study was the unilateral award of contracts, without due process, in clear violation of the Public Procurement Act, 2007, and the Niger Delta Development Commission Authorization Manual. Under Procedure for Award, sub-section F (I) of the NDDC Amended Authorisation Manual, it is stated that “all contracts by the Commission should evolve from the Tenders and Procurement process as approved in the authorisation limits by the Board and in line with due process.” Sub-section F (IV) further stipulates that “the Executive Director, Projects, issues letters of awards and endorses the copy of BOQ/BEME to the contractor”. Contrary to the foregoing, it was reported that the NDDC MD, Mr. Chibuzo Ugwoha, unilaterally awarded about over 51 various projects to cronies and associates without the authorization of the approving bodies and against the commission’s standing financial regulations [47]. Furthermore, it was equally reported that the MD of the NDDC not only gave approval for the award of contracts under the ₦250 million threshold but also decided to issue and sign all award letters by himself contrary to Article 560(f) (iv) of the authorization manual which states: “Executive Director Project (EPD) now issues letters of awards and attaches the endorsed copy of BOQ/BEME to the contractor.” Again, on March 26, 2011, contract valued at ₦101, 026,440 million was awarded to a company – Reimiport & Co. Limited for the installation of solar street lamp at Ozoro, Isoko North Local Government Area of Delta State. The letter of award, personally signed by Ugwoha, and marked NDDC/HQ/MD.18/DTS/06, was addressed to the managing director of the company, but routed through “c/o NDDC office, Warri, Delta State [48]. The same month, the NDDC boss was said to have personally signed a letter of award of contract, valued at ₦53,065,169 million, to a company- Nemberek

Industry Limited - supposedly based at Uyo, Akwa Ibom State, for solar water project at Isi Otoyo, in Eastern Obolo Local Government Area.

Furthermore, the NDDC Board, within the study period, was found to award contracts to unregistered companies. For instance, the results of validity searches at the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC) by Eric Apia & Co., an Abuja-based firm of legal practitioners, property consultants, and Notary Public reveal pieces of documented evidence, including letters of award of multi-billion naira contracts personally signed by the NDDC helmsman to allegedly unregistered companies [47]. The absence of an identifiable office address of the company may have fuelled suspicion and subsequent searches at the CAC, which clearly indicated that the name, Reimiport & Co. Limited, had not been registered with it as a company (Niger Delta Budget Monitoring Group, 2012). Similarly, it was also reported that four other companies awarded contracts by Ugwuoha running into millions of naira were allegedly found to be unregistered at the CAC [47]. Besides, between March and early April 2011, the NDDC chief allegedly embarked on a contract bazaar, awarding 61 jobs at the first instance, and over 350, thereafter within three days, which ran into billions of naira [47]. Of the 61 contracts awarded, 26 were given to companies with no fixed addresses, while 24 went to contractors supposedly based in Rivers, Oguwoha's state of origin. The other two with no addresses were awarded to companies in Imo State [47]. In addition to unilateral award of contracts in violation of the Public Procurement Act 2007 and the Niger Delta Development Commission authorization Manual, as well as award of contracts to unregistered companies, the NDDC was also reported to be engaging Consultants for the Commission's contracts without due approval. All these culminated in the duplication of over twenty-two projects in the project's schedule, with a total contract sum of ₦1.18 billion, with mobilization payments of ₦370.70 million. Sadly, most of the projects were neither identifiable nor scheduled for monitoring and proper management [48,49]. Table 2 below vividly captures the reports of contracts awarded by the NDDC without due process.

Table 2: Reports of the NDDC's Award of Contracts without Due Process

| S/N | Reports of Award of Contracts without Due Process by the NDDC | Sources |
|-----|---|---------|
| 1 | The NDDC MD, Mr. Chibuzor Ugwuoha, unilaterally awarded over 51 various projects to cronies and associates without the authorization of the approving bodies and against the commission's standing financial regulations. | [48] |
| 2. | The MD of the NDDC not only gave approval for the award of contracts under ₦250 million threshold, but also decided to issue and sign all award letters by himself contrary to Article 560(f) (iv) of the Authorization Manual | [49] |
| 3 | Award of contract valued at ₦101, 026,440 million to a company – Reimiport & Co. Limited for the installation of solar street lamp at Ozoro, Isoko North Local Government Area of Delta State. The letter of award, personally signed by Ugwuoha, and marked NDDC/HQ/MD.18/DTS/06, was addressed to the managing director of the company, but routed through "c/o NDDC office, Warri, Delta State | [49] |
| 4 | The NDDC boss was said to have personally signed a letter of award of contract, valued at ₦53, 065,169 million, to a company- Nemberek Industry Limited - supposedly based at Uyo, Akwa Ibom State, for solar water project at Isi Otoyo, in Eastern Obolo Local Government Area. | [49] |
| 5 | Award of contracts to Reimiport & Co. Limited, a company found to be unregistered at the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC) | [47] |
| 6. | Award of about 26 contracts to companies with no fixed addresses, and 24 to contractors supposedly based in Rivers, MD's state of origin. | [47] |
| 7 | Engaging Consultants for the Commission's contracts without due approval. | [8] |

It was in view of the foregoing infractions that the Federal Government ordered a full-scale investigation into the alleged ₦5 billion contract scam rocking the NDDC. It was reported that the Presidency decided to order a probe into the allegation as a result of the confusion that has enveloped the commission over the incessant in-fighting among the management members bordering on alleged unilateral decisions and breach of due process in the award of contracts [50]. Aside award of contracts without due process, there have been reports of a catalog of outright cases of political corruption among the staff of the Niger Delta Development Commission. In 2007, a former legal officer and four others defrauded the agency of about ₦157.5 million and in 2008, the then Chairman of the Commission was arraigned before a Nigerian court for embezzling ₦800 million [51]. What is palpable is that the government's efforts in the region have benefited high-ranking public officials and their allies through corrupt practices. The benefits of such interventions have eluded the poor in the region. Hence, a vicious circle of underdevelopment and misery in the region. As the Report of the Niger Delta Budget Monitoring Group (2018, p.18) noted:

We must clearly state that factoring a cost of ₦154 million for rehabilitation and reclamation of degraded ecosystems in 7 States and not disclosing the exact locations of such projects raises lots of questions. There are other projects on Shoreline/Land Reclamation that have also reappeared in the Ministry's 2013 budget proposal like it has appeared in previous years. Some of the locations are:-Kurutie, Ikuru Town, Effiat, Sime —Tai, amongst others. Is it an error of judgment or capitalization on bureaucratic loopholes for various Ministries to habitually throw in previous budget lines into new budgetary proposals (?). The Budget Office of the Federation (BOF) should not allow such to continue from any of the MDAs. BOF should not be overwhelmed by a systemic fiscal quagmire. Any capital project without an exact location should not pass the test of a costing template (if any). Worryingly, there are some Shoreline and Land Reclamation Projects which have appeared in this Ministry's budget since 2009.

The Report of the Niger Delta Budget Monitoring Group (2018, pp.19-20) further observed as follows:

Sadly, the ₦5, 000 (Five Thousand Naira) projected for the Egbelu in Bayelsa-to-Port Harcourt) with a spur to Degema Egbelu-Ozouba Road (Opposite AIT), Obio Akpor, Rivers State made to connect Ada George Egbelu-Ozouba Road project for 2013 ignites shock. This project appeared under two (2) line items (23020114) with the cost for one line as ₦5, 000 and another as ₦450 million. We have repeatedly lamented about the East-West Road and the souls of hundreds of our brothers and sisters who have perished on that road. However, the Ministry and the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) need to reconcile and harmonize projects concerning the above sites and locations. For example, in 2010 and 2011, NDDC had some projects in the above locations. Specifically, there was Jetty/Shoreline at Ekeremor, budgeted for ₦5 billion in 2010 by NDDC with ₦450 million captured as committed in 2010 and another ₦150 million projected as a requirement for the project in their 2011 budget. There was also NDDC's project in Twon Brass with a commitment of ₦127.6million for the project and further commitment of ₦50million in 2010 and ₦30.5million in 2011 for the "Construction of Okologogo Creek Improvement Works/Jetty in Twon Brass.

As Soni Daniel cited in *Vanguard Newspaper* (August 26, 2015) has noted:

there is palpable tension within Niger Delta Development Commission, NDDC, as its Managing Director, Mr. Dan Abia, comes face to face with the President Muhammadu Buhari to give him a status report on the operations of the agency, which has been rattled by huge debts totaling ₦1.5 trillion "The formation of the NDDC by former President Olusegun Obasanjo was for the development of the Niger Delta region; but the immediate past board of the commission has derailed from the aims and objectives of the commission and turned the commission into a political finance institution by using the money meant for the development of the Niger Delta Master plan to sponsor PDP elections in 2015."We were so shocked that the commission spent over ₦4 billion to sponsor PDP elections whereas abandoned projects by the Commission are scattered all over the Niger Delta region. We call on EFCC to investigate and bring the immediate past board to justice (*Vanguard Newspaper*, August 26, 2015).

As a fallout of the above point, NNDC like its predecessors has become a medium for exploitation and dispossession of the oil-producing states of the benefits of its resources. Bulks of the Commission's funds are diverted to the private coffers of the ruling class through stupendously profitable contracts. This in a lot of ways explains why the NDDC contracts are the most sought after. The primary motive of such an interventionist structure is to further empower the ruling faction of the political class. And because these parastatals were geared towards political patronage, they were also bedeviled by debt crisis and mindless financial mismanagement. We now proceed to examine the implications of the foregoing for infrastructural development in the oil producing areas of Nigeria within the study period.

Provision of Infrastructure in the Oil Producing Areas of Nigeria, 2010-2022

The NDDC sees to the implementation of its mandate by executing relevant projects in the entire oil-producing areas of Nigeria. The projects are conceptualized, designed, and executed based on extensive consultation with locals, input from interested parties, and critical analysis by experts. The NDDC's projects are in the following areas: education, health, transportation, road infrastructures, electrification projections, skill acquisition and youth development, agricultural development programs, security and logistics projects, environment, and waste management, among others. However, like the intervention agencies preceding it, one of the common features of the NDDC is a "top-bottom" development initiative, which is obvious in the Act. Section 14 of the Act provides that all stakeholders in the oil-producing areas and oil companies should help finance the NDDC. The Act mandates Federal Government to contribute to NDDC, 15% of the total monthly statutory allocations due to the Niger Delta states from the federation account. The Act also mandates MOCs, including gas-processing

companies, operating onshore and offshore in the oil-producing states to pay 3% of their total annual budget to the commission [52]. These sources of funds give NDDC a potentially huge capital base. However, in the light of no effective and efficient regulatory mechanisms, this outlay of resources has not translated into improved and adequate infrastructure in the oil-producing areas. The resources have been grossly mismanaged. Hence, despite its immense fiscal potential, the NDDC has been known more for crisis and corruption than for initiating developmental projects. In more than 15 years of its existence, The Commission appears to have failed to make any meaningful impact on the lives of the people of oil-producing areas and has performed dismally in realizing the purpose for which it was founded and funded. For instance, the performance of the NDDC in the provision of infrastructure/projects in the last five years is below an average of 19% in terms of the number of projects completed. The number of projects awarded during the period under review was 1,475 of which 280 were completed while 1,195 projects were yet to be completed. The NDDC's poor performance cut across the five years under review. In the year 2010, of 242 projects awarded, 70 were completed while 172 projects were ongoing. In the year 2011, the projects awarded were 114 out of which 62 projects were completed whereas 52 were tagged ongoing. More so, in the year 2012, the projects awarded were 188 out of which 44 were completed while 144 were not completed. In the year 2013, projects awarded were 538 out of which 60 projects were certified completed while 478 projects were not completed. In the year 2014, projects awarded were 393 out of which 44 were recorded as completed whereas 349 projects were yet to be completed [8]. The foregoing information is in line with the report of the Nigerian Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative (NEITI). According to the Report, twenty-two projects of the NDDC were duplicated in the project's schedule with a total contract sum of ₦1.18 billion, with mobilization payments of ₦370.70 million. It further highlighted that most of the projects were neither identifiable nor scheduled for monitoring and proper management. The report also observed that substantial work has not been carried out in a significant number of projects even though mobilization has been paid. For instance, projects with a total contract sum of ₦284.884 billion and mobilization or advance payment of ₦63.558 billion made were not certified for any work done through the established milestones [8]. Buttrressing the foregoing is the information in Table 3 which shows the NDDC's project performance analysis since inception up to September 2016. Of the entire 8,558 projects awarded, 2,290, representing 26.8% were still ongoing; 3,530, representing 41.2% were completed; 293, representing 3.4% were stalled or abandoned; 2,366, representing 27.6% were awarded projects yet to mobilize to sites; 49, representing 0.6% were terminated projects, while 30, representing 0.4% were taken over by State Governments or other agencies.

Table 3: NDDC's Project Performance Statistics from Inception up to September 2018

| S/NO | ITEM | QTY | % |
|------|--|-------|------|
| 1 | Number of awarded projects since inception as at September 2016. | 8,558 | 100 |
| 2 | Number of ongoing projects as at September 2016 since inception. | 2,290 | 26.8 |
| 3 | Number of completed projects as at September, 2016 | 3,530 | 41.2 |
| 4 | Number of stalled/abandoned projects as at September 2016 | 293 | 3.4 |
| 5 | Number of awarded projects yet to mobilize to sites as at September 2016 | 2,366 | 27.6 |
| 6 | Number of projects terminated as at September 2016 | 49 | 0.6 |
| 7 | Number of projects taken over by State Governments/other Agencies as at September 2016 | 30 | 0.4 |

Source: [37], p.16.

It is quite evident that the NDDC has not fared well as regards the provision and development of infrastructure/projects in the oil producing areas of Nigeria. This is so because the number of ongoing projects and the number of awarded projects yet to mobilize to sites since inception up to September 2016 put together, that is, $26.8\% + 27.6\% = 54.4\%$ are more than the number of completed projects within the same period, that is 41.2% . This reinforces the earlier assertion that the NDDC has not fared well in realizing the purpose for which it was founded and funded. The assessment of contract sums in comparison to the level of work certified between 2011 and 2015, also betrays the weak performance of the Commission in the provision and development of infrastructure/projects in the oil producing areas of Nigeria. Within the afore-stated period, the Commission awarded contracts to the value of ₦497.028 billion. However, the aggregate value of work certified was stated at ₦119.73 billion which indicated a 24% performance rate. The lower rate of projects' performance cuts across the various classifications of programs and projects. On the other hand, a high-performance rate of 86% and 50% was recorded with respect to hospital and other medical equipment and security and logistics programs respectively. The skill acquisition and youth development recorded a 35% completion rate. The annual completion rate of 52% was recorded in the year 2012 being the highest between 2011 and 2015, while the least outturn was recorded in the year 2015 at the rate of 16% completion [37]. In a further demonstration of the poor performance of the NDDC in the provision and development of infrastructure in the oil producing areas, Table 4 presents the percentage share of the Commission's projects on a state basis.

Table 4: Percentage Share of the NDDC's Projects on State Basis, 2010–2018.

| State | Contract awarded (₦) | Work certified | Percentage% | Ranking |
|-------------|----------------------|----------------|-------------|-----------------|
| Abia | 11,380,975 | 2,541,506 | 29% | 3 rd |
| Akwa - Ibom | 50,395,953 | 9,393,413 | 19% | 6 th |
| Bayelsa | 88,486,017 | 31,526,552 | 36% | 1 st |
| Cross-River | 8,179,882 | 1,555,000 | 19% | 6 th |
| Delta | 59,821,583 | 7,546,762 | 13% | 7 th |
| Edo | 19,796,823 | 3,943,123 | 20% | 5 th |
| Imo | 36,271,106 | 5,092,441 | 14% | 6 ^t |
| Ondo | 27,154,765 | 1,902,055 | 7% | 8 th |
| Rivers | 109,518,475 | 27,249,357 | 25% | 4 th |
| Regional | 86,023,200 | 28,980,399 | 34% | 2 nd |

Source: [37], p.19.

It is seen that Bayelsa State outturns with a 36% performance rate while the headquarters recorded 34% completion and the lowest performance rate was recorded in Ondo State with 7% outturns. In sum, the challenges of uncompleted projects, on account of corruption and mismanagement, manifesting in awards of contracts without due process seem to have cast a long shadow on the image of the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC). Unfortunately, the Commission should not be given pass marks for the erection of sign boards including projects that were neither started nor half completed. Sadly, this seems to have been a recurring decimal as one board hands over to another over the years since the Commission was established by the Olusegun Obasanjo administration in December 2000. This hangover, which has remained a big drag on the Commission's performance, runs counter to the main objective of setting up the agency as a veritable change agent. The effects of the unfortunate phenomenon have impacted negatively on its mandate to transform the Niger Delta region which produces over 90 percent of the country's oil wealth. Based on the qualitative data presented and analyzed above, we validate our first hypothesis which states that the award of contracts without due process undermined the development of infrastructure in the oil producing areas of Nigeria between 2009 and 2022.

Hypothesis Two: The projects of the Niger Delta Development Commission failed to alleviate the incidence of inadequate infrastructure in the Niger Delta within the study period

The Projects of the Niger Delta Development Commission

The NDDC sees to the implementation of its mandate by executing relevant projects in the oil-producing areas of Nigeria. The projects are conceptualized, designed, and executed based on extensive consultation with locals, input from interested parties, and critical analysis by experts. They are awarded based on their ability to give maximum impact to the local region and beyond the constraints of the allotted budget. Tables 7 and 11 illustrate the typical projects and programs embarked on by the Commission. While some have been completed, a large number of them were reported to be ongoing. The projects include education which encompasses books, scholarship, and infrastructures; health including drugs, medical professionals, and hospital infrastructures; transportation including mass transit on roads and waterways; road infrastructures such as bridges, landing jetty, and land reclamation; electrification projections; skill acquisition and youth development; agricultural development programs; security and logistics projects; environment and waste management; portable water projects, among others [8]. Tables 5 to 9 below present the breakdown of the NDDC projects between 2012 and 2016.

Table 5: Project Specific Breakdown in 2014

| | CONTRACT SUM | ADVANCE PAYMENTS | TOTAL IPC PAYMENTS | OUTSTANDING COMMITMENT | MOBILIZATION RECOVERED | OUTSTANDING RETENTION | CUMULATIVE PERMANENT WORKS |
|-----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------|------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| | N'000 | N'000 | N'000 | | N'000 | N'000 | N'000 |
| GRAND TOTAL | | | | | | | |
| JETTY/EROSION RECLAIM | 17,904,520 | 5,090,238 | 5,735,782 | 7,078,500 | 3,085,144 | 381,186 | 9,159,539 |
| ROAD & BRIDGE | 59,765,720 | 17,796,052 | 16,297,389 | 25,589,801 | 12,433,929 | 867,446 | 28,921,236 |
| ELECTRICIFICATION | 4,643,810 | 2,040,068 | 402,929 | 2,200,813 | 94,912 | 12,329 | 539,903 |
| WATER PROJECTS | 1,518,305 | 378,745 | 581,273 | 558,287 | 259,100 | 28,814 | 848,987 |
| EDU. INFRAST & DEV. | 247,922 | 91,809 | 111,646 | 44,467 | 78,004 | 488 | 189,750 |
| HOSPITAL & O/MEDICAL | 49,103 | 10,439 | 27,888 | 10,776 | 8,214 | 781 | 39,585 |
| AGRIC DEV. PROG | 1,409,470 | 388,779 | 508,941 | 511,750 | 22,318 | 0 | 517,671 |
| NDDC MASTER PLAN | 32,000 | 16,000 | 16,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 32,000 |
| OTHERS | 396,631 | 60,726 | 306,478 | 29,427 | 17,500 | 0 | 338,078 |
| | | | | | | | |
| | 85,967,480 | 25,872,856 | 23,988,324 | 36,023,821 | 15,999,121 | 1,291,043 | 40,586,750 |

Source: [8]. Report on Revenues, Deductions, and Analysis of Disbursement and Utilization of Funds of the Federal Beneficiary Agencies – Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC)

Table 6: Project Specific Breakdown in 2015

| | CONTRACT SUM | ADVANCE PAYMENTS | TOTAL IPC PAYMENTS | OUTSTANDING COMMITMENT | MOBILIZATION RECOVERED | OUTSTANDING RETENTION | CUMULATIVE PERMANENT WORKS |
|-----------------------|-------------------|------------------|--------------------|------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| | N'000 | N'000 | N'000 | | N'000 | N'000 | N'000 |
| GRAND TOTAL | | | | | | | |
| JETTY/EROSION RECLAIM | 5,330,304 | 1,309,097 | 1,685,050 | 2,336,156 | 565,432 | 94,016 | 2,274,562 |
| ROAD & BRIDGE | 7,051,895 | 1,100,147 | 1,827,559 | 4,124,188 | 527,260 | 101,058 | 2,474,939 |
| ELECTRICIFICATION | 145,750 | 132,519 | 11,246 | 1,985 | 52,924 | 0 | 64,170 |
| WATER PROJECTS | 337,985 | 28,379 | 276,036 | 33,570 | 12,572 | 6,929 | 292,109 |
| EDU. INFRAST & DEV. | 331,067 | 53,635 | 138,218 | 139,214 | 36,685 | 7,502 | 176,819 |
| HOSPITAL & O/MEDICAL | 1,253,342 | 0 | 1,252,346 | 996 | 0 | 0 | 1,156,643 |
| AGRIC DEV. PROG | 573,611 | 11,750 | 515,461 | 46,400 | 0 | 0 | 515,461 |
| NDDC MASTER PLAN | 182,699 | 27,405 | 27,037 | 128,257 | 0 | 0 | 40,296 |
| OTHERS | 1,751,206 | 0 | 1,751,206 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1,751,206 |
| | | | | | | | |
| | 16,957,859 | 2,662,933 | 7,484,160 | 6,810,766 | 1,194,873 | 209,506 | 8,746,205 |

Source: [8]. Report on Revenues, Deductions, and Analysis of Disbursement and Utilization of Funds of the Federal Beneficiary Agencies– Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC)

Table 7: Project Specific Breakdown in 2016

| | CONTRACT SUM | ADVANCE PAYMENTS | TOTAL IPC PAYMENTS | OUTSTANDING COMMITMENT | MOBILIZATION RECOVERED | OUTSDING RETENTION | CUMULATIVE PERMANENT WORKS |
|----------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------|------------------------|------------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|
| | N'000 | N'000 | N'000 | | N'000 | N'000 | N'000 |
| GRAND TOTAL | | | | | | | |
| JETTY/EROSION RECLAIM | 8,328,187 | 1,177,228 | 1,483,870 | 5,667,089 | 207,420 | 39,132 | 1,679,730 |
| ROAD & BRIDGE | 60,109,544 | 9,159,095 | 9,747,055 | 40,135,283 | 2,997,045 | 626,100 | 13,439,302 |
| ELECTRICIFICATION | 934,283 | 68,391 | 632,268 | 233,625 | 43,534 | 11,997 | 682,981 |
| WATER PROJECTS | 190,377 | 19,753 | 101,422 | 69,201 | 7,636 | 4,216 | 109,798 |
| EDU. INFRAST & DEV. | 2,217,839 | 400,578 | 200,983 | 2,217,069 | 26,576 | 1,205 | 258,743 |
| HOSPITAL & O/MEDICAL | 217,176 | 0 | 217,176 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 217,176 |
| AGRIC DEV. PROG | 371,113 | 93,068 | 177,255 | 100,791 | 0 | 0 | 227,126 |
| NDDC MASTER PLAN | 49,835 | 7,475 | 0 | 42,360 | 0 | 0 | |
| PROJ. SECURITY & LOGISTICS | 105,252 | 15,788 | 64,716 | 24,748 | 13,887 | 4,058 | 81,154 |
| OTHERS | 787,200 | 50,992 | 566,828 | 178,040 | 16,999 | 2,460 | 571,413 |
| | | | | | | | |
| | 73,310,807 | 10,992,368 | 13,191,574 | 48,668,205 | 3,313,098 | 689,167 | 17,267,423 |

Source: [8]. Report on Revenues, Deductions, and Analysis of Disbursement and Utilization of Funds of the Federal Beneficiary Agencies– Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC)

Table 8: Project Specific Breakdown in 2015

| | CONTRACT SUM | ADVANCE PAYMENTS | TOTAL IPC PAYMENTS | OUTSTANDING COMMITMENT | MOBILIZATION RECOVERED | OUTSDING RETENTION | CUMULATIVE PERMANENT WORKS |
|----------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------|------------------------|------------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|
| | N'000 | N'000 | N'000 | | N'000 | N'000 | N'000 |
| GRAND TOTAL | | | | | | | |
| JETTY/EROSION RECLAIM | 20,106,755 | 3,572,437 | 2,248,608 | 14,285,710 | 482,965 | 22,899 | 2,748,699 |
| ROAD & BRIDGE | 98,720,630 | 14,621,724 | 12,152,221 | 71,797,300 | 2,554,684 | 746,754 | 14,981,020 |
| HOUSING TOWN HALLS | 683,678 | 102,552 | 0 | 581,126 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| ELECTRICIFICATION | 4,013,809 | 521,395 | 769,280 | 2,723,134 | 90,780 | 45,038 | 868,395 |
| WATER PROJECTS | 2,977,826 | 503,077 | 422,612 | 2,052,137 | 88,818 | 25,881 | 517,444 |
| EDU. INFRAST & DEV. | 547,522 | 76,728 | 36,000 | 434,794 | 16,203 | 1,000 | 57,353 |
| HOSPITAL & O/MEDICAL | 1,223,713 | 94,331 | 594,841 | 534,541 | 0 | 0 | 594,841 |
| SKILL ACQU/ YOUTH DEV. | 995,000 | 149,250 | 0 | 845,750 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| PROJ. SECURITY & LOGISTICS | 367,768 | 49,448 | 140,332 | 177,989 | 17,372 | 7,922 | 157,716 |
| OTHERS | 66,967,444 | 17,076,067 | 3,673,752 | 283,195 | 4,641 | 1,451 | 13,264,859 |
| | | | | | | | |
| | 196,604,146 | 36,767,008 | 20,037,646 | 93,715,676 | 3,255,464 | 850,946 | 33,190,326 |

Source: [8]. Report on Revenues, Deductions, and Analysis of Disbursement and Utilization of Funds of the Federal Beneficiary Agencies– Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC)

Table 9: Project Specific Breakdown in 2017

| | CONTRACT SUM | ADVANCE PAYMENTS | TOTAL IPC PAYMENTS | OUTSTANDING COMMITMENT | MOBILIZATION RECOVERED | OUTSTANDING RETENTION | CUMULATIVE PERMANENT WORKS |
|------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------|------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| | N'000 | N'000 | N'000 | | N'000 | N'000 | N'000 |
| GRAND TOTAL | | | | | | | |
| JETTY/EROSION RECLAIM | 10,124,308 | 1,422,452 | 632,906 | 8,068,950 | 0 | 6,159 | 624,170 |
| ROAD & BRIDGE | 75,086,855 | 10,710,583 | 5,433,857 | 58,721,611 | 699,182 | 312,077 | 6,302,867 |
| HOUSING TOWN HALLS | 642,009 | 79,208 | 57,580 | 505,220 | 0 | 2,886 | 57,725 |
| ELECTRIFICATION | 23,701,284 | 3,309,464 | 5,501,207 | 14,890,613 | 940,572 | 69,931 | 6,444,991 |
| WATER PROJECTS | 3,988,123 | 541,683 | 318,054 | 3,092,427 | 14,116 | 17,026 | 340,516 |
| EDU. INFRAST & DEV. | 791,754 | 33,438 | 436,396 | 178,683 | 146,205 | 502 | 439,760 |
| HOSPITAL & O/MEDICAL | 3,301,605 | 19,546 | 3,171,297 | 110,762 | 0 | 0 | 3,171,297 |
| SKILL ACQU/ YOUTH DEV. | 534,434 | 0 | 534,434 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 534,434 |
| AGRIC DEV. PROG. | 4,001,265 | 599,640 | 3,665 | 3,397,960 | 0 | 0 | 3,665 |
| OTHERS | 2,016,849 | 0 | 2,020,479 | (3,630) | 0 | 0 | 2,020,479 |
| | 124,188,486 | 16,716,014 | 18,109,875 | 88,962,596 | 1,800,075 | 408,582 | 19,939,903 |

Source: [8]. *Report on Revenues, Deductions, and Analysis of Disbursement and Utilization of Funds of the Federal Beneficiary Agencies– Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC).*

Table 10: The Project Performances Analysis of the NDDC State Projects, 2012 - 2017

| Year | 2012 | | 2013 | | 2014 | | 2015 | | 2016 | | CUMMULATIVE 2012-2017 | | Percentage |
|-------------|------------------|---------------------|------------------|--------------------|------------------|--------------------|------------------|--------------------|------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|----------------|------------|
| STATES | CONTRACT AWARDED | WORK CERTIFIED | CONTRACT AWARDED | WORK CERTIFIED | CONTRACT AWARDED | WORK CERTIFIED | CONTRACT AWARDED | WORK CERTIFIED | CONTRACT AWARDED | WORK CERTIFIED | CONTRACT AWARDED | WORK CERTIFIED | |
| | N'000 | N'000 | N'000 | N'000 | N'000 | N'000 | N'000 | N'000 | N'000 | N'000 | N'000 | N'000 | |
| Abia | 975,214 | 755,354 (77%) | 29,996 | 29,996 (100%) | 4,357,824 | 374,848 (32%) | 3,484,125 | 209,509 (6%) | 2,533,816 | 171,800 (7%) | 11,380,975 | 2,541,506 | 22% |
| Akwa - Ibom | 5,185,700 | 3,558,106 (69%) | 4,860,659 | 1,338,611 (69%) | 8,232,797 | 3,316,443 (69%) | 9,396,995 | 1,615,623 (17%) | 22,719,802 | 564,630 (2%) | 50,395,953 | 393,413 | 19% |
| Bayelsa | 49,445,344 | 21,838,312 (44%) | 5,371,429 | 2,334,013 (43%) | 9,322,133 | 3,516,748 (18%) | 11,432,860 | 2,991,975 (26%) | 2,914,250 | 845,504 (29%) | 88,486,017 | 31,526,552 | 36% |
| Cross-River | 481,873 | 515,173 (107%) | 35,940 | 4,803 (97%) | 3,377,107 | 537,375 (16%) | 1,567,730 | 288,636 (18%) | 2,717,233 | 179,014 (7%) | 8,179,882 | 1,555,000 | 19% |
| Delta | 1,648,012 | 1,365,428 (83%) | 541,009 | 351,557 (65%) | 1,662,473 | 764,760 (46%) | 31,909,438 | 2,170,709 (7%) | 24,060,651 | 2,894,308 (12%) | 59,821,583 | 7,546,762 | 13% |
| Edo | 433,596 | 277,582 (64%) | 359,789 | 311,983 (87%) | 4,839,758 | 2,647,427 (55%) | 5,841,727 | 105,041 (2%) | 8,321,953 | 601,091 (7%) | 19,796,823 | 3,943,123 | 20% |
| Imo | 461,301 | 158,634 (34%) | 119,231 | 118,458 (99%) | 3,067,466 | 1,616,010 (53%) | 18,709,530 | 2,128,576 (11%) | 13,913,577 | 1,070,762 (8%) | 36,271,106 | 5,092,441 | 14% |
| Ondo | 309,143 | 9,047 (3%) | 1,692,713 | 654,264 (39%) | 1,255,477 | 65,520 (5%) | 20,791,420 | 412,255 (2%) | 3,106,013 | 760,969 (24%) | 27,154,765 | 1,902,055 | 7% |
| Rivers | 21,287,508 | 11,127,460 (52%) | 609,577 | 501,220 (82%) | 25,673,993 | 3,232,898 (13%) | 33,470,615 | 9,537,998 (28%) | 28,476,783 | 2,849,780 (10%) | 109,518,475 | 27,249,357 | 25% |

Source: [8]. *Report on Revenues, Deductions, and Analysis of Disbursement and Utilization of Funds of the Federal Beneficiary – Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC)*, p.38.

The projects and programmes profile of the Commission indicates that within the study period, priority was placed on the construction of roads and bridges, electrification, and landing jetty/erosion/reclamation with the least emphasis on educational infrastructure and development, skill acquisition and youth development, water projects, hospital and other medical equipment, and Security and logistics and regional master plan. Table 11 presents the project status and categories of projects executed by the NDDC between 2016 and 2018, while Table 12 shows a state-by-state summary of NDDC development projects since Inception.

Table 11: Projects Status Summary and Project Categories Report, 2016-2018

| | (a) | (b) | (c) | (d) | (e) | (f) | (g) | Project type |
|-----------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Project Type | No. of Projects awarded in 2012 | No. of projects awarded in 2013 | No. of projects awarded in 2014 | No. of projects above 90% | Total no. of projects completed | Total no. of projects commissionable | Total no. of projects commissioned | |
| Bridge | - | 2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | Physical infrastructure |
| Building | 402 | 15 | 0 | 328 | 294 | 133 | 138 | Physical infrastructure |
| Canalization | 9 | 9 | 0 | - | - | - | 0 | Physical infrastructure |
| Electrification | 30 | 24 | 2 | 29 | 14 | 49 | 46 | Social infrastructure |
| Flood control | 1 | - | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | Physical infrastructure |
| Jetty | 41 | 6 | 0 | 32 | 32 | 16 | 11 | Physical infrastructure |
| Road | 40 | 17 | 2 | 25 | 19 | 14 | 4 | Physical infrastructure |
| Water | 51 | 25 | 2 | 38 | 77 | 34 | 21 | Social infrastructure |
| Total | 574 | 98 | 6 | 454 | 438 | 247 | 220 | |

Sources: [8]; Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC), Project File, 2017. p. 5.

Table 12: State by State Summary of NDDC Development Projects since Inception

| | ABI | AKS | BYS | CRS | DEL | EDO | IMO | OND | REG | RIV | TOT |
|---------------------------------|------------|--------------|------------|------------|--------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|--------------|--------------|
| <i>Roads/Bridges</i> | 224 | 390 | 306 | 186 | 721 | 251 | 319 | 153 | 54 | 925 | 3,520 |
| <i>Jetty/Shore Protection</i> | 0 | 2 | 64 | 5 | 91 | 1 | 1 | 23 | 21 | 56 | 264 |
| <i>Canalization/Reclamation</i> | 1 | 5 | 40 | 0 | 120 | 0 | 9 | 13 | 7 | 10 | 205 |
| <i>Electricity/Power</i> | 152 | 237 | 165 | 96 | 317 | 89 | 101 | 218 | 10 | 189 | 1,574 |
| <i>Water Supply</i> | 92 | 184 | 125 | 65 | 180 | 110 | 85 | 122 | 1 | 209 | 1,173 |
| <i>Buildings</i> | 98 | 276 | 184 | 63 | 229 | 174 | 175 | 252 | 49 | 207 | 1,707 |
| <i>Flood control/Erosion</i> | 1 | 7 | 2 | 9 | 4 | 9 | 1 | 0 | 4 | 1 | 38 |
| <i>Equipping/Furnishing</i> | 0 | 8 | 2 | 6 | 13 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 13 | 21 | 68 |
| TOTAL | 568 | 1,109 | 888 | 430 | 1,675 | 635 | 694 | 782 | 159 | 1,618 | 8,558 |

Source: [8], p.16.

The foregoing information shows government intervention efforts aimed at addressing the infrastructural challenges in the oil producing areas of Nigeria within the study period. The major focus was on physical

infrastructure. While social infrastructure was undermined, institutional infrastructure was completely neglected. We proceed now to examine how the NDDC projects have impacted infrastructural development in the oil producing areas of Nigeria with the study period.

Adequacy of Infrastructure in the Oil Producing Areas of Nigeria, 2009-2022

The NDDC, as an interventionist agency, is meant to address decades of social and infrastructural underdevelopment in the oil producing areas of Nigeria. However, if underdevelopment, as [53] has defined, is “inability, failure, refusal or structural prevention of a people to use existing mental, physical, and material resources available to society at a given time and space to bring about qualitative and quantitative improvement in the standard of their lives” then the oil producing areas, despite numerous projects provided by the NDDC, is roundly underdeveloped, socially, and economically. The available social development indicators in the oil producing areas of Nigeria point to inadequate, unavailable, and poor-quality infrastructure and social services, from water to telecommunication. The historical neglect of the region’s development poses a steep barrier to attaining socio-economic transformation and poverty alleviation [45]. In the oil-producing areas of Nigeria, the situation is like that at the national level. Except for Rivers and Bayelsa States, where poverty incidence seems to have stabilized at around 44% after an initial jump from 7%, poverty incidence declined between 1996 and 2004 [51]. Poverty has become a way of life due to economic stagnation; agricultural underdevelopment from soil infertility; unemployment; poor quality of life due to shortages of essential goods, facilities, and money; isolation and poor communication; government insensitivity; unhealthy environment, and malnutrition. Such conditions influence most members of the affected areas because it is not only income poverty that is the problem but also the lack of access to social and physical infrastructure. As poverty bites harder in the oil-producing areas of Nigeria and concrete development retard rather than progress, so are basic amenities lacking. The status and availability of social services are low, despite the areas performing better than the national average in terms of poverty rates. Houses in the areas are usually of poor quality, e.g., mud-walled houses with a stilt foundation [53]. School and healthcare facilities are severely deteriorated, and there are shortages of qualified teachers and basic health services. Critics, such as UNDP have expressed concern that the oil producing areas of Nigeria have suffered neglect, particularly inadequate infrastructure at the hands of the government as well as the multi-national oil companies [53]. We proceed now to examine in detail the challenges of inadequate infrastructure in the oil-producing areas.

Water Supply

Data from the National Bureau of Statistics, reveal that water in most of the oil producing areas comes from unsafe supply facilities, including rivers, lakes or ponds, unprotected wells and boreholes. The Bureau classifies available sources of potable water for household consumptions as: pipe borne, untreated pipe, borehole, protected well, unprotected well, river/lake/pond, vendor trucks, and other categories (see table 13). In five of the nine oil-producing states, Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Ondo and Imo-water problems are very acute and result in supplies of unsafe water in more than 50% of the cases. Therefore, poor access to adequate drinking water has had serious implications for the general health, environment, economic activity, and sustainable livelihoods of people in the areas.

Table 13: Sources of Water to Households in the Niger Delta

| State | Pipe-borne | Untreated Pipe | Protected Well | Unprotected Well | River Lake, pond | Vendor trucks | Other | Safe | Unsafe | Total |
|---------|------------|----------------|----------------|------------------|------------------|---------------|-------|-------|--------|-------|
| A’Ibom | 7.37 | 5.36 | 33.48 | - | 9.15 | 31.92 | 0.22 | 12.50 | 46.21 | 53.79 |
| Bayelsa | 7.49 | 2.17 | 4.11 | - | 8.21 | 76.09 | 0.72 | 1.21 | 13.77 | 86.23 |
| C/River | 2.43 | 0.88 | 19.25 | 0.44 | 14.38 | 31.64 | - | 30.97 | 23.01 | 76.99 |
| Delta | 2.89 | 1.84 | 31.32 | 16.05 | 26.05 | 20.53 | 0.26 | 1.05 | 52.11 | 47.89 |
| Edo | 9.70 | 1.21 | 28.89 | 19.19 | 10.51 | 24.24 | 4.85 | 1.41 | 58.89 | 41.01 |
| Rivers | 12.42 | 4.04 | 23.60 | 10.25 | 31.99 | 16.15 | - | 1.55 | 50.31 | 49.69 |
| Ondo | 5.97 | 1.12 | 16.04 | 19.4 | 7.09 | 50.0 | 0.37 | - | 42.54 | 57.46 |
| Imo | 6.15 | 2.69 | 30.77 | 4.62 | 11.54 | 30.38 | 4.62 | 9.23 | 44.23 | 55.77 |
| Abia | 3.38 | 2.54 | 54.95 | 0.23 | 1.80 | 34.91 | 0.45 | 0.68 | 62.16 | 37.87 |
| Mean | 6.40 | 0.93 | 27.00 | 10.02 | 13.41 | 35.10 | 1.64 | 7.32 | 43.69 | 56.31 |
| Nigeria | 13.56 | 2.43 | 17.27 | 17.21 | 19.64 | 24.12 | 3.31 | 2.40 | 50.52 | 49.48 |

Source: National Bureau of Statistics (2020).

Transport

According to the UNDP's Niger Delta Human Development Report [7], most Niger Delta roads are in a bad state of disrepair. Efforts by local government authorities to repair the roads have worsened them and left the local people with more hardship. Although urban road transportation development has been given some priority [7], less regard has been given to rural transportation, especially water transport, which most of the rural populace depends on. Some roads have so many death traps that motorists avoid them. Analysts refer to transport and communication in the area as a source of misery.

Telecommunication

The dearth of telecommunication infrastructure in the oil-producing areas of Nigeria stifles the advancement of information technology and development as well as the technical empowerment of the populace. Most rural communities are largely unconnected and completely unable to take advantage of modern trends in telecommunications and technology as tools for accelerated rural development. Available data show that the number of telephone lines (landlines) in the areas works out at about 38 per 10,000 people [51]. Growth in the number of landlines has stalled in the last few years due to the introduction of the GSM (global system of mobile communication).

Power and Fuel

Data from the National Bureau of Statistics (see Table 14) show that across the region, on average, only 34% of people use electrical lighting; 61% use kerosene or a lantern. Less popular sources of lighting are gas (1.2% on average), generators (1.5%), batteries (0.2%) candles (0.6%), firewood (1.8%), and others (1.2%). The general sources of household fuel are firewood, charcoal, kerosene, gas, electricity, and others. The modal fuel or primary energy source in the region is firewood (a mean of 73%), followed by kerosene (24.8%) and gas (1.2%).

Table 14: Percentage Distribution of Sources of Light

| State | Kerosene | Gas | Electricity | Generator | Battery | Candle | Firewood | Others | Total |
|---------|----------|-----|-------------|-----------|---------|--------|----------|--------|-------|
| A'bom | 71.5 | 1.7 | 22.1 | 0.5 | 0.2 | - | 3.7 | 0.2 | 100.0 |
| Bayelsa | 86.7 | 1.3 | 3.5 | 4.5 | - | 0.5 | 1.3 | 2.1 | 100.0 |
| C/River | 78.2 | 1.1 | 18.9 | 0.2 | - | - | 1.6 | - | 100.0 |
| Delta | 43.0 | 0.9 | 53.3 | 1.1 | - | - | 1.7 | - | 100.0 |
| Edo | 24.6 | 1.1 | 70.7 | 0.4 | - | 0.7 | 1.3 | 1.1 | 100.0 |
| Rivers | 77.6 | 2.5 | 18.3 | 2.9 | - | - | 2.2 | 2.5 | 100.0 |
| Ondo | 59.7 | 0.2 | 38.3 | - | - | - | - | 0.8 | 100.0 |
| Imo | 58.6 | 0.8 | 38.1 | 1.2 | - | - | 0.8 | 0.4 | 100.0 |
| Abia | 49.9 | 1.0 | 45.4 | 0.8 | - | 0.5 | 1.5 | 1.0 | 100.0 |
| Mean | 61.1 | 1.2 | 34.3 | 1.5 | 0.2 | 0.6 | 1.8 | 1.2 | 100.0 |
| Nigeria | 62.5 | 1.1 | 31.6 | 0.5 | 0.1 | 0.2 | 3.5 | 0.6 | 100.0 |

Source: National Bureau of Statistics (2020).

Housing

Housing in the oil-producing areas of Nigeria is predominantly of poor quality, especially in the swamps and creeks where dwellings are made up largely of mud walls, and stilt or strip foundations. A survey of 40 locations by the Niger Delta Environmental Survey (NDES) that included Warri, Port Harcourt, and Sapele revealed that 30.4% of houses had mud walls, 53.8% had corrugated – iron sheet roofing, and 46.6% had a strip foundation. Flooring materials vary widely but are predominantly concrete followed by mud.

Table 15: Type of Housing Construction by Households

| State | Mud | Cement | Burnt Bricks Or Concrete | Stone | Iron sheets | Others |
|---------|-------|--------|--------------------------|-------|-------------|--------|
| A'lbom | 32.96 | 49.44 | 0.67 | 2.67 | 0.45 | 13.81 |
| Bayelsa | 33.73 | 41.20 | 1.45 | 0.48 | 3.86 | 19.28 |
| C/River | 61.06 | 35.18 | 0.88 | 0.66 | 1.33 | 0.88 |
| Delta | 17.06 | 68.77 | 3.67 | 0.79 | 0.26 | 9.45 |
| Edo | 17.98 | 76.97 | 4.04 | 0.20 | 0.20 | 0.61 |
| Rivers | 24.53 | 58.70 | 2.48 | 0.93 | 0.93 | 12.42 |
| Ondo | 56.34 | 35.45 | 2.24 | 0.37 | 0.37 | 5.22 |
| Imo | 11.54 | 76.92 | 2.31 | 1.54 | - | 7.69 |
| Abia | 11.24 | 82.47 | 2.47 | 0.22 | - | 3.60 |
| Mean | 29.6 | 58.34 | 2.2 | 0.9 | 1.1 | 8.1 |
| Nigeria | 52.85 | 36.90 | 2.37 | 0.70 | 0.50 | 6.67 |

Source: National Bureau of Statistics (2020)

Education

Statistical estimates have put the proportion of children attending primary school at 80% (which compares favourably with the estimated national average of 54%) [36]. But across the oil-producing areas, nearly all school facilities are in a state of extreme disrepair, requiring major rehabilitation. The secondary school systems have been seriously afflicted by shortages of quality teachers, a regional pattern that is becoming increasingly acute due in large part to discordance between investments in infrastructure outside a well-coordinated planning process. While 76% of Nigerian children attend primary school, in the areas, the figure drops appallingly to between 30 and 40%. Revealing the immense challenge to the development and provision of social amenities for sustainable livelihoods, an [54] noted that in some of the oil-producing areas, covering some 30,000 square kilometers and an estimated eight million people, there were only 2, 169 primary schools. This implied one primary school per 3,700 people serving an area of 14 square kilometers, and one school for every two settlements. For secondary schools, the ratio is one school per 14,679 people serving an area of 55 square kilometers, and one school for every seven settlements.

Health and Health Service Delivery

Due to dismal health and health service delivery, hospitals, clinics, and primary health care centers; and a lack of effective operational plan for holistic health management, the majority of Niger Delta communities living in isolated areas lack the most basic modern medical care, including first aid. There is also the absence of formal health care services in much of the hinterlands (the NDDC Regional Master Plan, 2014/2015). According to a [54] report on primary health care, there is a ratio of only one healthcare facility for every 9,805 people, with the average facility serving an area of 44 square kilometers. There is one facility for approximately every 43 settlements. The numbers worsen for secondary health care. There is only one facility for every 131,174 people, serving an area of 583 square kilometers. A single facility serves an average of 48 settlements. Poor access to health care reduces people's quality of life and increases their poverty. To illustrate, available figures show that there is one doctor per 82,000 people, rising to one doctor per 132,000 people in some areas, especially the rural areas, which is more than three times the national average of 40,000 people per doctor. Only 27% of people in the Delta have access to safe drinking water and about 30% of households have access to electricity, both of which are below the national averages of 31.7% and 33.6%, respectively. Only 6% of the population of the oil-producing areas have access to telephones, while 70% have never used a telephone [55,56]. For added measure, apart from a Federal Trunk B road that crosses Bayelsa State, the State has only 15 kilometres of tarred road. Poverty remains widespread, worsened by an exceptionally high cost of living created by the petro-economy. Given the social and economic conditions described above, it is of interest, considerably, to see how the oil-producing areas of Nigeria fare on human welfare indices. The incidence of poverty in the areas has been on the increase since 1980 (see Table 16). Except for Rivers and Bayelsa States, where poverty incidence seems to have stabilized at around 44 percent after an initial jump from seven percent, the poverty level increased between 1980 and 2020.

Table 16: Incidence of Poverty in the Niger Delta, 1980-2020

| | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 | 2010 | 2020 | |
|----------------|------|------|------|------|---------|-----|
| Edo/Delta | 19.8 | 52.4 | 33.9 | 56.1 | Delta | 45. |
| | | | | | Edo | 35 |
| Cross River | 10.2 | 41.9 | 45.5 | 66.9 | | 33. |
| Imo/Abia | 14.4 | 33.1 | 49.9 | 56.2 | Imo | 09 |
| | | | | | Abia | 41. |
| Ondo | 24.9 | 47.3 | 46.6 | 71.6 | | 61 |
| Rivers/Bayelsa | 7.2 | 44.4 | 43.4 | 44.3 | Rivers | 27. |
| | | | | | Bayelsa | 39 |
| Nigeria | 28.1 | 46.3 | 42.7 | 65.6 | | 22. |
| | | | | | | 27 |
| | | | | | | 42. |
| | | | | | | 15 |
| | | | | | | 29. |
| | | | | | | 09 |
| | | | | | | 19. |
| | | | | | | 98 |
| | | | | | | 54. |
| | | | | | | 4 |

Source: [55].

What is evidence from the foregoing is that several Federal Government initiatives including the NDDC have so far failed to address the fundamental problems of exclusion, deprivation, and marginalization, which have thrown up the crisis of development in the region. The fact is that most of the Federal Government's interventionist policies, actions, and structures were not based on the understanding that the issues at stake in the oil-producing areas of Nigeria are interwoven, multidimensional, and complex. No simplistic and palliative measures can in any way resolve such structural and fundamental issues. The point being made is that the NDDC has not recorded a meaningful improvement in the welfare of the oil-producing areas. As presently constituted, the NDDC gives room for financial misappropriation, and this is one of the strong factors fuelling the continuing crisis of youth restiveness and resistance against the Nigerian state. Like the previous developmental agencies, the Commission has been highly incapacitated in addressing the myriad of developmental challenges in the region. For the most part, the legacy of these schemes translates into a picture of missed opportunities, low value for money, and, not least, enormous disappointment for the oil-producing states whose hopes, and aspirations have been raised and then repeatedly shattered [56]. These Federal Government interventionist structures, to say the least, are products of ethnic power calculation and therefore not only elitist in nature but also specifically designed to protect the oil and gas interest of the elites of the dominant ethnic groups. This largely explains why the agency is under the tight control of the Presidency and its commissioners, politically appointed (mainly members of the ruling party). Invariably, NDDC like its predecessor is constrained by the placement of politics before the development agenda of the region. It is against the backdrop of the above evidence that we validated our second hypothesis which state that the projects of the Niger Delta Development Commission failed to alleviate the incidence of inadequate infrastructure in the Niger Delta within the study period.

Findings

From the above analysis, the following observations were made:

1. The state-by-state data showed that the NDDC priority programs and projects have been on the construction of roads and bridges, landing jetties/erosion/land reclamation with least emphasis on social and institutional infrastructure, and regional master plan.
2. There was a lack of proper monitoring and management of projects and inflations of non-existing expenses in terms of the observed existence of upward variation or overpayments of contracts. Hence, the award of contracts without due process in the oil producing areas of Nigeria by the NDDC tends to be at variance with Due process and this has negatively affected the development of infrastructure in the area.
3. There was an incidence of a low rate of projects across the various classifications of programs and projects in the oil-producing areas of Nigeria. Hence, the projects of the Niger Delta Development Commission failed to alleviate the incidence of inadequate infrastructure in the oil producing areas of Nigeria within the study period.

DISCUSSION

The study examined the interconnectedness between the Niger Delta Development Commission and the provision of infrastructure in the Niger Delta, between 2009 and 2022. The NDDC is an interventionist institution meant to address decades of infrastructural underdevelopment in the oil producing areas of Nigeria. The NDDC was established by the Nigerian government as an intervention measure which is aimed at remedying the situation of the oil producing areas. It is to bring about a positive measure to redress the imbalances in the area. Different scholars attributed the problems of the oil producing areas to some variables like corruption, patronage networking and shoddy execution of projects, fire-brigade approach, political exclusion, award of contracts without due process; non-implementation of the Board's decisions; undue interference, and poor funding of Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC), others focus on what is called the "infrastructure-funding gap" thesis. Yet, other scholars highlight the difficulty of the delta's terrain and the negative impacts of the oil industry among others. However, studies on the Niger Delta Development Commission and the administration of infrastructural development in the oil-producing areas of Nigeria have focused on the linkage between economic exploitation of natural resources and marginalization. These studies primarily argue that the state of infrastructural development in the oil-producing areas is because of the limited quantum of funds allocated to the Commission. Thus, while providing a framework for understanding the dynamics of the administration and management of government intervention programs, the extant studies on government intervention programs have not systematically articulated the nexus between the Niger Delta Development Commission and the administration of infrastructural development in the oil producing areas of Nigeria between 2009 and 2022. Two research questions were formulated to guide the study. The framework of analysis was predicated on the theory of rentier state. The theory is used to classify those states that earned all or a substantial portion of their revenues from the rent paid by external clients and which creates, in the same process, a rentier mentality and a rentier class in these states. By relying on external factors for what it earns, a rentier state bothers less to disturb its citizens' overpayment of

taxes. The citizens, on the other hand, do not equally bother to put the government to task in the event of its inability to govern effectively. A rentier state is usually blessed with abundant mineral resources. Such a state fundamentally earns its income by capturing economic rent through manipulation or exploitation rather than by earning profits through economic transactions and the production of added wealth. The study relied on the documentary method to generate data from secondary sources like official documents such as the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) the National Integrated Infrastructure Master Plan (NIIMP, Infrastructure Concession Regulatory Commission of Nigeria (ICRC) Reports on Revenues, Deductions, Disbursement and Utilization of Funds of the Federal Beneficiary Agencies, and other secondary sources of data such as books, journal articles, conference and workshop papers and other written works which provide a veritable tool for understanding the topic under study. We adopted the *time series* research design. Content analysis was used to analyze the data generated. The analysis moved further into the domain of interpretation because effort is made to understand not only the manifest but also the latent content of data to discover patterns or regularities in the data.

CONCLUSION

The Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) as packaged by the Federal Government was supposed to be a development intervention agency instituted to execute projects and programs to alleviate the plight of the neglected and battered peoples of the oil producing areas of Nigeria. But today, the supposed intervention agency is in dire need of an intervention to save it from self-destruction. Most importantly, state efforts at initiating development in the region have been subverted by the forces of corruption, manifesting in the award of contracts with due process, the exploitative relationship between the state/oil companies and the oil communities, violent socio-political crises, and alienation. Most often, development projects are primarily designed to ensure that the spoils of electoral contests go around. They are mainly handled by urban elites who have completely lost touch with the people in the local communities and whose interests are completely at variance with the actual needs of the people. Therefore, the feeling of alienation and powerlessness is pervasive among the people. Paradoxically, these are the same forces that precipitated underdevelopment and poverty in the region. The Niger Delta development debacle can be situated within the locus of the character of the Nigerian State and those at the head of it. Within this ambit, all efforts have been directed at the conventional practice of treating the symptoms of underdevelopment and poverty instead of arresting the root cause. Hence the approaches of various development intervention agencies have been mainly palliatives. This is in concord with our theoretical (Rentier state) postulations which provide that “the common interest of both the peripheral bourgeoisie and foreign capital in preserving the long-term interests of capital and capitalism through the reliance on external economic rent undermine the development of infrastructure in the oil-producing areas” and that “reliance on rent which does not allow for the development of reciprocal obligations with citizens via the nexus of democratic taxation accounts for the government interventionist institutions and agencies serving as mere palliatives, since the Nigerian government is neither interested in addressing the deeper-lying, structural problems nor alleviating the challenges of inadequate infrastructure in the area.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the above findings, and to make government development intervention agencies more developmental-oriented, the following suggestions are proffered:

- I. Management should ensure prompt completion of audited accounts of the Commission for outstanding years this will ensure transparency, probity, and accountability with the intent to ensure strict adherence to the enabling law.
- II. Periodic reconciliations should be routinely undertaken on the project master schedule in the Directorate of Finance and the Projects Monitoring Unit to ensure that the lists of projects are correctly recorded by the different departments.
- III. The Commission should carry out a comprehensive review of their projects to determine their status. Where contracts have been abandoned, contractors should be prosecuted to enable the commission to recover advances to them. Where a contractor deliberately delays a job with the intention of obtaining price variation, such contractor should be made to deliver on the old, agreed price, or the contract should be canceled and re-awarded.

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